



City of Wolverhampton SACRE

7 February 2024

Time 4.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Other Committees
Venue Hybrid – Committee Room 2, 3rd Floor Civic Centre

Membership

Louisa Craig	Representative of the Roman Catholic Church
Councillor Jacqui Coogan	Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council
Danielle Fannell	Representative of National Education Union
Natalie Wilson-Jones	Representative of National Education Union
Tracey Welsh	Representative of National Education Union
Kirsty Holyhead	National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers Representative
Kay Cresswell-Green	Association of Teachers and Lecturers Representative
Laura Jude	Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council
Alison Smith	Representative of the Church of England
Rebecca Wood	Representative of the United Reformed Church
Janine Wright	Representative of the Church of England

Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Democratic Services team:

Contact Shelley Humphries
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Copies of other agendas and reports are available from:

Website <http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk>
Email democratic.services@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Agenda

PART 1 – Items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1 **Welcome and Introductions**
- 2 **Election of Chair and Vice Chair**
[To elect and appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair of City of Wolverhampton SACRE for Academic Year 2023 – 2024.]
- 3 **Apologies**
- 4 **Declarations of interest**
- 5 **Minutes of previous meetings** (Pages 1 - 8)
[To approve the minutes of the meeting of 15 June 2023 and 19 October 2023 as a correct record.]
- 6 **Matters Arising**
[To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2023.]
- 7 **Report from Religious Education (RE) Today** (Pages 9 - 12)
[To receive an update report from RE Today.]
- 8 **Service Level Agreements 2023 - 2024**
[To consider and agree SLAs for City of Wolverhampton SACRE.]
- 9 **Local Authority Updates**
[To receive a presentation from the City of Wolverhampton Council Representative outlining ongoing work.]
 - 9a **Self-Evaluation and Skills Audit Update**
[To apprise City of Wolverhampton SACRE of the forthcoming self-assessment exercise.]
 - 9b **Westhill Project Update**
[To receive an update on the progress of the Westhill Project.]
- 10 **Ofsted Findings During the Last Quarter**
[To receive an update on Ofsted findings during the last quarter.]
- 11 **Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) and Inspection 48 Findings During the Last Quarter**
[To receive an update on findings from SIAMS and Inspection 48 Visits.]

12 **Dates of further meetings**

Proposed dates for 2024 – 2025:

- 6 June 2024
- 17 October 2024
- 6 February 2025

13 **Any other business**

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 <p>CITY of WOLVERHAMPTON STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</p>	<h2>City of Wolverhampton SACRE</h2> <h3>Minutes - 15 June 2023</h3>
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Attendance

Members of the City of Wolverhampton SACRE

Martin Gomberg (Chair)	Representative of the Jewish Community
Cllr Chris Burden	Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council
Laura Jude	Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council
Alison Smith	Representative of the Church of England
Rebecca Wood	Representative of the United Reformed Church

In Attendance

Lat Blaylock	RE Today
Shelley Humphries	Democratic Services Officer

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Welcome and Introductions**
- 2 **Apologies**
Apologies were received from Janine Wright.
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting**
Resolved:
 That the minutes of the meeting of 9 March 2023 as a correct record be approved, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present.
- 4 **Matters Arising**
There were no matters arising from the minutes from the last meeting,
- 5 **Report from Religious Education (RE) Today**
Lat Blaylock, RE Today presented the Report from Religious Education (RE) Today and highlighted key areas of interest.

It was reported that Ofsted had appointed an acting RE subject lead, Hazel Henson, and the Spirited Arts competition themes had been announced for this year.

It was announced that online RE Hubs had been launched as a platform to share subject resources and connect RE professionals.

A call was made for participation in the NATRE Secondary Teachers' Survey in order to gather data on how the subject was taught in schools.

The report also provided links to and information on a number of other resources and continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities available to teachers.

Resolved:

That the Report from Religious Education (RE) Today be received

6 Local Authority Updates

Laura Jude, Representative for City of Wolverhampton Council delivered the Local Authority Updates presentation which provided information updates on projects previously discussed at SACRE.

6a Finance Process Update

The Chair reported that, following points raised at the last meeting around agreeing invoice payments, conversations had taken place between colleagues in Education Excellence and Democratic Services and the recommendation has been made to pass delegation to the Authority, with approval from City of Wolverhampton SACRE. This would mean details of financials would still be included in the annual SACRE Action Plan, with any in-year financial decisions made internally and reported back to SACRE via the City of Wolverhampton Council representative, Laura Jude. This was intended to avoid delays in payment of any invoices for work undertaken or funding allocations.

Resolved:

That the proposal to delegate financial decisions to the Local Authority be approved, subject to ratification by consultation with SACRE Board members not present.

6b Westhill Project Update

Laura Jude, Representative for City of Wolverhampton Council reported on the Cross Phase Conference scheduled for 29 June 2023 which was planned to school pupils from the different faith communities of Wolverhampton and those with non-religious beliefs, to study issues from different religious perspectives about fairness, justice for all, tolerance and respect.

The Chair commended the work undertaken and it was felt that the event was good value for money in terms of CPD.

Resolved:

That the Westhill Project Update be received.

7 **Ofsted Findings During the Last Quarter**

Laura Jude, Representative for City of Wolverhampton Council reported that nine inspection reports had been published with 89% of schools rated as Good or Outstanding which included positive comments about schools in Wolverhampton:

- Celebration of festivals
- Parental involvement
- Respect and diversity

Resolved:

That the Ofsted Findings During the Last Quarter be received.

8 **Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) and Inspection 48 Findings During the Last Quarter**

Laura Jude, Representative for City of Wolverhampton Council reported on the SIAMS inspections that had taken place between March and May 2023. Pendeford St Paul's had received a Good rating overall with 'Requires Improvement for RE, however assurances were offered that support was in place. It was queried whether a nominated representative from the Diocese could attend to present the SIAMS report. Laura Jude offered to investigate this.

In answer to a query around the syllabus it was noted that Catholic schools used their own and it was uncommon for SACREs to take reports from the Catholic Diocese.

Resolved:

That Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council reach out to the Lichfield Diocese for a representative to present the SIAMS report, subject to ratification by consultation with SACRE Board members not present.

9 **Dates of further meetings**

- 19 Oct 2023
- 7 Feb 2024
- 6 June 2024 (tbc)

10 **Any other business**

Councillor Chris Burden, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council raised the point that positive Ofsted inspections were often publicised to celebrate schools' successes and suggested that perhaps positive SIAMS and Section 48 inspections could be publicised in the same way. It was agreed for Laura Jude to raise this with Paul Brown, Communications Manager and report back to SACRE.

Resolved:

That Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council liaise with Paul Brown, Communications Manager to explore publicising positive SIAMS and Section 48 inspection reports in the same way Ofsted reports are publicised (subject to ratification by consultation with SACRE Board members not present).

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City of Wolverhampton SACRE Minutes - 19 October 2023

Attendance

Members of the City of Wolverhampton SACRE

Cllr Jacqui Coogan	Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council
Laura Jude	Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council
Alison Smith	Representative of the Church of England
Rebecca Wood	Representative of the United Reformed Church

In Attendance

Danielle Fannell	Prospective Member of Wolverhampton SACRE
Angela Hill	RE Today
Shelley Humphries	Democratic Services Officer
Tracey Welsh	Prospective Member of Wolverhampton SACRE
Natalie Wilson-Jones	Prospective Member of Wolverhampton SACRE

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

1 **Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was opened by Shelley Humphries, Democratic Services Officer as the first item on the agenda was to elect a Chair and Vice Chair for 2023 – 2024. It was noted that the meeting was inquorate and agreed by those present to proceed on an informal basis with any agreed actions being ratified in consultation with members not present.

Resolved:

That the meeting proceed on an informal basis with any agreed actions being ratified in consultation with members not present.

2 **Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

There were no nominations or expressions of interest, therefore it was agreed to defer the item to the next quorate meeting. Those present had no objections to the meeting Clerk being in the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Resolved:

1. That the meeting proceed with Shelley Humphries, Democratic Services Officer in the Chair.
2. That the election of Chair and Vice Chair be deferred to the next quorate meeting of City of Wolverhampton SACRE.

3 **Voting of New Members**

Following nominations and introductions from prospective members in attendance, it was agreed that the following be appointed as members of City of Wolverhampton SACRE, subject to being ratified in consultation with members not present:

1. Tracey Welsh – Representative of NEU
2. Natalie Wilson-Jones - Representative of NEU
3. Kirsty Holyhead - Representative of NASUWT (not present)
4. Danielle Fannell - Representative of NEU
5. Louisa Craig - Panel TBC (not present)

Prospective members expressed their passion for the subject of RE and their ambition to raise the profile for the subject through City of Wolverhampton SACRE.

Resolved:

That City of Wolverhampton SACRE agree to appoint as members subject to being ratified in consultation with members not present:

1. Tracey Welsh – Representative of NEU
2. Natalie Wilson-Jones - Representative of NEU
3. Kirsty Holyhead - Representative of NASUWT
4. Danielle Fannell - Representative of NEU
5. Louisa Craig – Representative of the Roman Catholic Church

4 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Jaswinder Singh Chaggar.

Apologies were also received from Alison Hinds, Louisa Craig and Kirsty Holyhead.

5 **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

6 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of 15 June 2023 be approved subject to ratification at the next quorate meeting.

7 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

8 **City of Wolverhampton SACRE Annual Report 2022 - 2023**

Laura Jude, Representative for City of Wolverhampton Council presented the City of Wolverhampton SACRE Annual Report and Action Plan 2022 – 2023 which provided an overview of the work undertaken by City of Wolverhampton SACRE over the last academic year. This also included the Action Plan which outlined the ambitions for the year ahead.

Key priorities and areas of focus for 2023 - 2024 included SACRE membership; Continued professional development for members; Expanded and strengthened offer of support to schools and Completion of the extended Westhill-funded project.

Thanks were extended to all City of Wolverhampton SACRE members and schools.

Resolved:

1. That the City of Wolverhampton SACRE Annual Report 2022 – 2023 be endorsed, subject to ratification at the next quorate meeting.
2. That the priorities set out in the SACRE Action Plan for academic year 2023 – 2024 be approved, subject to ratification at the next quorate meeting.

9 **Report from Religious Education (RE) Today**

Angela Hill, RE Today representative presented the Report from Religious Education (RE) Today and highlighted key areas of interest.

It was noted that there was not currently a humanist representative on SACRE although the Humanist society had been approached previously and a representative had not been available. It was agreed to revisit this to see if circumstances had changed.

Resolved:

That the Humanist Society be approached to nominate a City of Wolverhampton SACRE representative.

10 **Local Authority Updates**

Laura Jude, Representative for City of Wolverhampton Council delivered the Local Authority Updates presentation which provided information updates on projects previously discussed at SACRE.

10a **Ofsted Findings During the Last Quarter**

Laura Jude, Representative for City of Wolverhampton Council reported on the outcomes of Ofsted inspections since the last meeting. Generally, 11 inspections had taken place in Wolverhampton schools with 10 achieving a 'Good' outcome and one remaining adequate.

In respect of RE specifically, it was reported that inspectors had been pleased with the learning about faith and religions through pupil-led work and the depth of understanding around British values.

Resolved:

That Ofsted Findings During the Last Quarter be received.

10b **Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) and Inspection 48 Findings During the Last Quarter**

There had been no visits made since the last meeting of City of Wolverhampton SACRE.

11 **Dates of further meetings**

- 7 Feb 2024
- 6 June 2024 (tbc)

12

Any other business

Laura Jude, Representative for City of Wolverhampton Council reported that in response to a request from the secondary teachers' network, there were plans to provide all teachers with RE subject specific support to enable all teachers to confidently deliver the subject in schools. Conversations were ongoing with RE Today to develop and tailor a series of webinars to align with the Wolverhampton Locally Agreed Syllabus and Scheme of Work, although final proposals and funding were in draft form.

Members expressed a keen interest in the proposals and agreed it was necessary to bolster the RE offer in schools. It was agreed in principle to pursue the proposals as the next meeting of SACRE was not scheduled until February 2023 which may put pupils in that cohort at a disadvantage. Councillor Jacqui Coogan also offered to advocate at cabinet member briefings.

Resolved:

That it be agreed in principle to progress the proposal to develop the RE Support Offer, subject to ratification of full proposals at the next quorate meeting.

National SACRE Updates for Wolverhampton SACRE from RE Today Spring 2024

Religious Education in the HMCI Annual report

The **Ofsted Annual Report** published at the end of November 2023 presents the organisation's findings for the areas they inspect including schools. NATRE is pleased to see the recognition of the challenges faced by teachers of RE and the impact on children.

Ofsted found the following issues in many schools:

- schools failing to meet the statutory requirement to teach RE to all pupils in all year groups;
- pupils not being taught enough substance to prepare them to engage in a complex, multi-religious and multi-secular society,
- non-examination provision typically not being of high quality;
- schools not teaching topics in the RE curriculum deeply enough for pupils to develop a substantial understanding of the subject matter;

Ofsted recommends a coordinated effort by stakeholders to improve the quality of RE in schools including:

- the provision of high-quality professional development
- curriculum publishers identifying clearly what pupils will learn and when
- the government proving clear expectations about RE provision in schools
- non-statutory guidance for RE needing to be updated and include clear information for schools about the breadth and depth of the syllabus they are expected to teach

These findings add further weight to the call from NATRE and others for a National Plan for RE and for government support for the National Content Standard published by the RE Council last month.

See Appendix A below for extracts relating to RE – quoted in full

Appendix A

Extracts from the report relating to RE are quoted in full below:

From the Curriculum Section of the report as follows.

However, some subjects still do not receive the attention they deserve:

- in many secondary schools, pupils do not benefit from a broad and ambitious music curriculum. In physical education (PE), pupils typically experience a broad range of activities. However, schools do not always ensure that these contribute enough to developing pupils' knowledge and skills.
- in too many primary and secondary schools, the religious education (RE) that pupils receive is of a poor quality and not fit for purpose, leaving pupils ill-equipped for some of the complexities of contemporary society.

Religious education

RE in schools is generally of poor quality. Although it is a statutory subject, schools often consider RE as an afterthought. As a subject on the curriculum, it is under-valued. RE is a complex subject, and the lack of clarity and support from government makes schools' job harder.

Some schools steer through these challenges well, but most do not. We found that:

- many schools do not meet the statutory requirement to teach RE at all stages

- pupils are rarely taught enough substance to prepare them to engage in a complex, multi-religious and multi-secular society (where religion and non-religion play different parts in different people's lives)
- too often, schools do not teach topics in the RE curriculum deeply enough for pupils to develop a substantial understanding of the subject matter
- non-examined RE is typically not high quality.

All pupils should develop a broad and secure knowledge of the complexity of religious and non-religious traditions. It will take coordinated effort by stakeholders to improve the quality of RE in schools:

- schools need high-quality professional development to teach RE well
- curriculum publishers need to identify clearly what pupils will learn and when, building on knowledge over time, so that pupils develop a deep knowledge of the chosen religious and non-religious traditions
- the government should provide clear expectations about RE provision in schools. Schools should follow these. Current non-statutory guidance for RE should be updated and include clear information for schools about the breadth and depth of the syllabus they are expected to teach

We are expecting the OFSTED subject report for RE from which the HMCI comments were based on to be released in the next few weeks and this will then be discussed at SACRE.

House of Lords short debate on the Quality of RE in schools

Lord Harries of Pentregarth has tabled a short debate on the Quality of Religious Education in schools on Thursday 18th January. The RE policy unit (NATRE, Religious Education Council, RE Today) have provided a briefing for a number of interested peers.

Feedback on this debate will be given in the SACRE meeting

National Content Standard for Religious Education

NATRE is pleased that the RE Council of England and Wales has launched its **National Content Standard** for Religious Education in England. We have previously reported on the postcode lottery of RE provision in England, evidenced in the Ofsted **Research Review**, NATRE **primary** and **secondary** surveys, and **analysis of the DfE's own data**. However, until now, there has been no national benchmark to cite when we are asked, "What exactly does high-quality RE look like?"

NATRE Chair, Katie Freeman said,

"It is genuinely encouraging to see so much agreement around the need for a National Content Standard that applies to all types of school in England. I hope that those who choose to work with this benchmark will find it useful to evaluate their own RE curriculum. If this standard achieves widespread support across the sector, that will give us the greatest chance of achieving our vision of securing high-quality teaching and learning in RE/Religion and Worldviews for all pupils in all schools."

You can read the National Content Standard **here** and a blog about it by Deborah Weston **here**.

There will be a presentation on this in our SACRE meeting.

NATRE Secondary survey on RE: Results

This is an analysis of the data gathered from a questionnaire on impact of political policies on Religious Education in England, RME in Scotland and RVE in Wales. It relates particularly to the level of provision in different types of school, the experience of teachers in relation to initial teacher training and continuing

professional development and the type of examination and non-examination courses offered at key stages 4 and 5. Through publicising this survey, NATRE hopes it can be used widely seeks to make the case for more attention to be paid to the level of provision and quality of our subject in all schools and, in England for there to be a National Plan for RE as recommended by the Commission on RE in 2018.

This tenth survey was conducted during the summer term of 2023 via a number of teacher networks supported by the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE), and RE Today Services. The survey was publicised via social media networks and via the electronic networks of other RE organisations including AREIAC, AULRE, and NASACRE. Replies were received from 241 teachers in different parts of the United Kingdom. Respondents did not all respond to every question. Responses that are significantly different, according to school type of the respondent, have also been discussed.

[Access the full report](#)

NATRE Secondary Survey 2023

Advanced British Standard Consultation

The DfE are currently consulting on the Advanced British Standard, a potential new qualification framework for 16-19 year olds.

NATRE have pointed that current plans have not included the statutory position of RE for those studying 16-19 within a school setting.

Parliamentary question on RE: Supporting and funding RE

Yet another example of where what **Ofsted describes** as “the lack of clarity and support from the government makes schools’ job harder” in relation to delivering high-quality RE. Minister of State for Education; Damian Hinds, MP (Pictured to the right) **answered this written question** from Jim Shannon MP as follows:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department plans to take steps to fund network hubs for Religious Education; and if she will make a statement.

Damian Hinds MP, Minister of State for Education responded

“Religious education (RE) is an essential part of a school’s curriculum and remains a compulsory subject in all state-funded schools, including academies, to all pupils up to the age of 18. RE develops an individual’s knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society, as well as serving to inform their own values and behaviour.

Although the Department has not been involved in the establishment of the RE Hubs project, the Department welcomes its work to support teachers and practitioners. The Department currently has no plans to provide funding for the project. The Department does, however, provide support for RE in other ways.”

The answer then goes on to cite spending on the new bursary which was finally reinstated this year but is still very small in comparison to other shortage subjects such as geography and languages including Latin, the Oak National Academy materials which will eventually be rolled out to all subjects and the eight-week funded subject knowledge enhancement courses for potential trainee teachers of RE – again offered to many other subjects.

DfE’s annual report and accounts set out government policy:

“Our main levers to support schools are our Curriculum Hub programmes (music, computing, languages, English and mathematics), the Behaviour Hubs programme and our model curricula guidance ... (page 72)

Music hubs will receive £79m a year until at least 2025 and there seems to be money available for other subject support too. For example, Schools Week **reported** on 1st December 2023 that the £320 million PE and sports premium for primary schools will be extended for at least another year from September.

So NATRE's question is, if "Religious education (RE) is an essential part of a school's curriculum and remains a compulsory subject in all state funded schools" and in relation to the RE Hubs project, "the Department welcomes its work to support teachers and practitioners", why does the government not back up these fine words with action by funding the subject on a par with other subjects in the curriculum – including of course **RE Hubs**?

A question for any prospective parliamentary candidates; How will you support high quality RE for all pupils in all schools in RE?

Training, networking, and other support

RE Today Primary curriculum and NATRE Membership- direct support for teaching

RE Today in partnership with NATRE have created a primary curriculum made up of learning pathways for each half term, lesson by lesson PowerPoints, retrieval questions, knowledge organisers and much more. The materials are compatible with the Wolverhampton Agreed syllabus.

Schools will receive this if they become NATRE school enhanced members which is an annual subscription currently priced at £270 per school.

www.natre.org.uk/primary/retoday-primary-re-curriculum/

NATRE is the largest membership organisation which promotes, defends and supports RE teachers and RE teaching. It does this through producing high-quality resources and CPD, lobbying government, being involved in conversations with the DfE and Ofsted, LAs and SACREs, telling teachers' stories and experiences and being a voice for all teachers.



Membership packages for students, ECTs, teachers, schools, RE professionals and RE enthusiasts!

Details: www.natre.org.uk/membership

NASACRE Training for SACRE members

Wednesday 26th June 6.30-8.30 So you have joined your local SACRE

Description: A rerun of the September session, to help new SACRE members to understand their role, how SACRE works, its statutory responsibilities and how members make their contribution to SACRE's work.

Free

Other training and resources available on the NASACRE site:

[Welcome to NASACRE - NASACRE](#)