



# Welcome to SACRE

Information and  
Code of Conduct

**SACRE Brent**  
valuing diversity  
believing in values





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Information and  
Code of Conduct

# Welcome

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Welcome to SACRE Information and Code of Conduct  
[www.brent.gov.uk/sacre](http://www.brent.gov.uk/sacre)

First published March 2006

## **Brent SACRE**

Gwenneth Rickus Building

Brentfield Road, London, NW10 8HE

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Extracts:

## **The non-statutory national framework for Religious Education**

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The cover shows a detail from “Where are we all going?” by Ginette Ashkenazy, member of the Brent Artists’ Register.

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## Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Brent Council set up the first SACRE in the early 1980s in accordance with the Education Act 1944. There have been several amendments to the original 1944 Education Act which was repealed by the Education Act 1996. This now sets out how the present SACRE should be constituted and what are its functions.

SACRE advises Brent Council and works with schools on matters related to religious education (RE) and collective worship.

SACRE is non-religious and non-political.

Education is the principal concern of SACRE.

Its members represent religious and non-religious communities and representatives who are teachers, school governors, councillors and others.

valuing diversity  
and believing  
in values

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# We would like to hear from you

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## **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

You may not have come across the term SACRE before. The acronym is clever but it might also be misleading for SACRE is not a religious organisation.

Take a look at this handbook and let us know what you think. We hope that new members will find the guidelines informative. It may also help others to decide whether they wish to join or otherwise contribute to the work of SACRE. It is part of the role of SACRE to keep itself informed as widely as possible on all matters which influence the education of children in Brent.

If you are a member of a faith group not represented on SACRE you might become a member or a co-opted member or simply provide some advice to the council.

**SACRE@brent.gov.uk**  
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# Foreword

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An important part of diversity in Brent is the spectrum of our beliefs and religious traditions. This booklet is very timely, coming at a point when global relations between different groups are often tense and sometimes violent. In Brent, we are proud of our predominantly positive relations. Nonetheless, we must continue our efforts to understand each other and appreciate our similarities as well as respect our right to be different.

Only with social cohesion relying as it does on mutual understanding and respect can we pursue effectively the key educational issue for us all – making sure that all pupils fulfil their potential.

Brent SACRE plays an important role in promoting mutual understanding and respect. It is a challenge to all of us to resist stereotyping and generalising about any tradition of beliefs or religion. SACRE is playing its part to help our children and young people to be safe and feel confident to explore and follow their own beliefs and traditions while engaging with those of others.

This booklet will help the public, as well as prospective and existing members, to understand the SACRE and the way it works. It will give an insight into the commitment of SACRE members and their code of conduct.

I would like to thank all the members for their contributions to SACRE: it is only through their efforts that SACRE can be a vital and challenging body. I would like to thank the Chair, Josh Kutchinsky, particularly, for his determination and commitment in initiating and seeing this booklet through to completion. I want to acknowledge the support of Beth Stockley, our RE and citizenship consultant, Manjulah Shah and the Brent Diversity Team, and many others. Finally I would just like to note our appreciation for the encouragement of Graham Langtree in his post as RE consultant for QCA



Michael Lyon, Brent Councillor  
Lead Member for Children and Families



# Welcome to SACRE

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This booklet is intended for new, long-standing and prospective SACRE members. However, anyone concerned with children's education in Brent will find it of interest.

It provides for the first time a Code of Conduct for SACRE members. There is also background information outlining what a SACRE is, explaining its legal basis and giving more specific information about Brent SACRE.

We live in challenging times. It is important that our SACRE continues to appraise the actual state of things honestly and to consider how we can make them better. We bring to this endeavour, among other factors, the richness and diversity of our individual and community beliefs and backgrounds. I am sure that together we can continue and expand our contribution to the provision of a worthwhile education for all the children of Brent.

This booklet has been approved by the present membership of SACRE and is a work in progress. An online version of this booklet is available from [www.brent.gov.uk/sacre](http://www.brent.gov.uk/sacre) We hope that over time this guide will be reviewed and modified in the light of changes in Brent and in the spirit of seeking continual improvement.



Josh Kutchinsky  
Chair, Brent SACRE  
[hampstead@humanists.net](mailto:hampstead@humanists.net)



# The SACRE Story

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## SACREs and ASCs

SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs) date from the 1944 Education Act. This Act involved a historic compromise between the Anglican and non-conformist churches but in which the Roman Catholic church was also accommodated. For the first time, religious instruction (now known as religious education) and a daily act of worship became legally required for all pupils in state schools (subject to parents' right to withdraw their children). Of course, RI and worship had existed in schools before the Act. The first Agreed Syllabuses for RI were published in the 1920s. However, the 1944 Act now required that they should be non-denominational.

The sensitive task of drawing up local RI syllabuses was given to committees, Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs), appointed by LEAs (Local Education Authorities) on which various religious denominations, local politicians, and teachers were represented. In England the Church of England was required to form an extra group with its own vote. The act gave LEAs the permissive power to set up SACREs to advise them on RI and daily worship. In fact, only about ten SACREs were set up until the Education Reform Act of 1988 which compelled LEAs to appoint them to oversee what was now called Religious Education.

SACREs are standing bodies, whereas ASCs are set up each time the syllabus needs revising. In Brent, as in many other authorities, the ASC is often composed of the same representatives as SACRE.

It has only been since the 1988 Education Act that LEAs have been obliged to review their locally agreed syllabuses for religious education at least every 5 years. SACRE can request a revision earlier if it deems it necessary.

The latest Brent Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education was launched in September 2002. It is entitled *Living with Beliefs* and has been designed to be an inclusive and educationally sound syllabus which has been widely and warmly welcomed.

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## **Collective worship**

The Education Act requires SACRE to advise on matters relating to religious worship in schools and lays down a requirement that all schools hold a daily act of collective worship and that this should be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.”

Soon after the 1988 Act Brent SACRE was made aware that schools were having problems complying with the law and meeting the needs of their pupils coming as they do from a wide variety of faith backgrounds including many without any religious affiliation. Some other SACREs presented with a similar problem responded by recognising somewhat unusual and abstruse interpretations of words such as worship or Christian. Brent SACRE considered it important to remind schools of their legal entitlement under the act to request an exemption from these particular requirements. Brent SACRE working with schools drew up its own Recommended Approach to Collective Worship – see page 26. Brent SACRE provided schools with information about their legal obligations and how to go about requesting an exemption known in the Education Act as a “Determination” and explained the legal requirements regarding consultation with governors and parents and how to present the request.

It may well be that the time is approaching to take another look at the Brent Recommended Approach but the existing document has certainly been welcomed by schools as a means to meet the requirements of the Education Act in a way that matches the needs and sensibilities of all their intake. Almost all the schools subject to the collective worship provisions of the Education Act in Brent now apply for and obtain a Determination.

# SACRE

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## What is SACRE and what does it do?

Brent Council set up the first SACRE in the early 1980s in accordance with the Education Act 1944. There have been several amendments to the original 1944 Education Act. The 1944 Act was repealed by the Education Act 1996 which now sets out how the present SACRE should be constituted and what are its functions.

SACRE advises Brent and works with schools on matters related to religious education (RE) and collective worship

Sacre is non-religious and non-political.

## Education is the principal concern of SACRE

### As required by the Education Act 1996

The work of SACRE includes:

- considering questions and providing advice to the Local Education Authority relating to religious education in schools, and in particular, offering advice on teacher training and reviewing and providing advice on teaching methods and materials;
- considering questions and providing advice to the Local Education Authority relating to religious worship in schools;
- calling when considered necessary for a revision of the Agreed syllabus
- at least every 5 years the *agreed syllabus for religious education* has to be reviewed and a special committee (usually consisting of all the members of SACRE ) and called the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) is set up by Brent Council (The current syllabus dates from October 2002);
- publishing an annual report of its work;
- responding to requests from head teachers to hold *collective worship* that is not of a broadly Christian character (known as "Determinations").

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## As thought appropriate by SACRE

- providing training for SACRE members;
- discussing and reviewing inspection reports on *religious education* and *collective worship*;
- assisting schools to participate in commemorative events (e.g. Holocaust Memorial Day, Islamic Awareness Week, etc.);
- advising on and reviewing the provision for the development of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education (SMSC);
- engaging in activities to keep SACRE informed about matters of concern in the provision of *religious education*, *collective worship* and SMSC by means of Public Meetings, Lectures, Question & Answer sessions, Conferences, Debates etc;
- developing and maintaining Internet-based resources to include a SACRE website, email or on-line discussion groups and forums and other methods of improving communications and reference material storage and retrieval;
- providing reference material and information to the members of SACRE and other interested parties increasingly by means of the Internet;
- maintaining a list of speakers for *religious education* and *collective worship*;
- consulting and involving school children and their families.

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## Who are the members of SACRE?

We are representatives of different faith communities. We are teachers and elected local councillors. We are representatives of teacher associations and school governors. Some representatives may be appointees of organisations for whom they carry out paid work. Others are unpaid volunteers. Currently there is no scheme for meeting members' expenses within the SACRE budget. The fairness of this and whether some expenses should be met is presently under review.

## Public meetings

The main meetings of SACRE are public and open to all. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 all SACRE documents are required to be available for public scrutiny.

If you live in Brent whether or not you have children at school and would like to know more about *religious education*, school assemblies, *collective worship* and the *Brent Recommended Approach* just ask and we will be happy to provide you with more information.

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## **Harmony and understanding**

There is a wonderful mix of people in Brent and on SACRE. We are proud of our diversity and the children of Brent benefit from our work.

We are mindful of setting a good example of harmony. The harmony we seek is not just a matter of establishing common ground but more importantly about acknowledging everyone's right to hold and manifest (within the law) their own beliefs and opinions. Rights are granted under British Common Law and in international agreements and conventions i.e. UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the European Convention on Human Rights.

We promote the expectation that everyone will be treated politely and with respect and that the local authority and schools should make all reasonable efforts to understand and give due consideration to the beliefs and opinions of all students and their families.

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## Important to note

- Children are obliged\* to attend both *collective worship* and *religious education*  
(note: these are two distinct and separate matters for which SACRE has responsibility)
- *religious education* and *collective worship* must not promote any one religion or belief system over another
- The aim of *religious education* is to learn about and from spiritual insights, beliefs and religious practices and to explore fundamental questions of human life. It is not the aim of religious education to persuade pupils to be religious  
(from Living with Beliefs – Brent Agreed Syllabus for RE)
- Religious education is part of the core curriculum in schools and is an academic subject. It should contribute along with all national curriculum subjects in helping to provide for the Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural development of children

**\*Parents have the right in law to withdraw their children from *collective worship* or *religious education*. On request parents receive help and advice from their school and the local authority. SACRE can also advise. *Collective worship* and *religious education* are intended to be suitable for all children. It is important for all concerned to realise that when parents conclude that they wish to withdraw their children, actually deciding to go ahead and single out their children to be different from others, is a difficult step to take.**

# Code of conduct

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## All representatives

### should:

- attend the meetings of SACRE and take part in the deliberations and work of SACRE
- participate in and review the work of SACRE for the benefit of the whole community
- actively challenge and resist stereotyping
- assume at all times that other members of SACRE are honourable and concerned with the best interests of SACRE
- state views and opinions honestly and, where appropriate, forcefully but at all times politely
- respect the rights of other members to disagree with your point of view

# Code of conduct

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## Faith group representatives

### should:

- ensure that they are adequately qualified to represent their faith community
- be able to explain how they intend to inform and consult with their faith community
- feel a sense of responsibility not only to the children coming from their own faith but also to all the children of Brent
- provide expertise, or assist in providing access to such expertise, in matters of fact, tradition, theology and practice relating to their own faith for the benefit of the whole school population
- represent to SACRE the interests and concerns of their own faith community
- endeavour to represent fairly the views and interests of the widest possible range of faith positions within their community (this is particularly relevant if they are the sole representative on SACRE for their faith.)
- follow the guidelines for visits to schools (see next page)
- recognise that stating a belief or religious tenet is not the same as advancing an argument for or against any proposal, although it may well be an overriding consideration
- inform members of their faith community of the work of SACRE

# Code of conduct

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## For school visits faith group representatives

### should:

- only visit a school as a SACRE faith group representative when invited
- inform the Clerk of SACRE of any invitation received and visits made
- make absolutely clear that you are speaking from the perspective of the particular religion or belief system that you are representing
- ensure that you do not say or do anything, which could be viewed as denigrating any other religion or ethical belief system
- at all times behave honourably in relation to your fellow SACRE members

## Teacher and teacher association representatives

### should:

- provide information and expertise in relation to teaching and the school environment
- if appropriate provide information and expertise in relation to the teaching of religious education and the carrying out of *collective worship* in schools
- represent the interests and concerns of teachers, pupils and schools
- consult with teaching colleagues and students
- keep colleagues informed about the work of SACRE
- ensure that the welfare and education of all the children in Brent is the primary focus of SACRE

# Code of conduct

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## Council representatives

### should:

- represent the wider public interest
- provide information and expertise to SACRE in their capacity as an elected member of Brent Council
- inform SACRE of concerns or issues known to Brent Council relating to education and in particular the provision for SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development), teaching of *religious education* and the carrying out of *collective worship* in schools
- support the work of SACRE by representing its interests in Brent Council
- endeavour to ensure that SACRE is adequately funded and supported
- ensure that legal requirements for the conduct of SACRE are observed in particular in relation to the suitability and qualifications required to be a member of SACRE

# Background to SACRE

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## Religious education

“Religious education must be taught to all registered pupils in maintained schools, including those in the sixth form, except to those withdrawn by their parents.

This requirement does not apply to nursery classes in maintained schools.

Religious education is a component of the basic curriculum, to be taught alongside the National Curriculum in all maintained schools. In all maintained schools, other than voluntary aided schools with a religious character, it must be taught according to a locally agreed syllabus.

Each LEA must convene an ASC to produce a syllabus. Once adopted by the LEA, the programme of study of the agreed syllabus sets out what pupils should be taught. The attainment levels set out the expected standards of pupils' performance at different ages. The Education Act 1996 states that an agreed syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. Each LEA must have a SACRE. The SACRE may require a review of the agreed syllabus at any time. This is in addition to the requirement on LEAs to convene a conference to reconsider the agreed syllabus every five years.”

(From the non-statutory national framework for RE, 2005.)

**Note: The statutory requirement for religious education does not extend to nursery classes in maintained schools and is not, therefore, a legal requirement for much of the education experience of children throughout the key stage.**

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## Collective worship

In 1944, at a time of considerable political and social upheaval, the government introduced an Education Act setting out for the first time the universal provision of education for all children between the ages of five and fourteen. It was decided that these new state schools would be obliged to provide some form of daily worship as had been the custom in most schools up till then. Debate in Parliament made it clear that many considered it important to ensure some form of spiritual provision for schools. Precisely what this spiritual provision would be remained ill defined but was thought to be commonly and widely understood and supported. Of course, it was also recognised that any form of worship would have to be acceptable to all Christian denominations and even if possible to those from other religions. Unable to conceive of a way of meeting possible objections it was thought best to enshrine the right for parents to withdraw their children from worship (as was also the case for religious education).

The notion of collective worship as contrasted to corporate confessional worship was, at that time, easier to understand although yet again not easy to define. There was (and still is) an established Church with Anglican Christianity being the state religion. Many national and local events combine state and church involvement and are intended to be acceptable to all sections of the public. Since 1944 British society has seen a considerable decline in active participation in confessional worship as measured by church attendance and at the same time many people have come to Britain from abroad bringing with them an adherence to different faith traditions. There has also been a considerable growth in the number of people who declare themselves as following no religion. In 1988 a new education bill was enacted (and subsequently a 1996 Act). The most significant feature of the 1988 Act was the establishment of a National Curriculum. In looking again at RE and Collective Worship (note: RE is not part of the national curriculum where there is no parental right of withdrawal but is part of what is known as the core curriculum) some parliamentarians expressed their concern for a moral decline which was thought by them to have accelerated since the 1960s.

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Collective Worship was seen as important partly as a means of supporting what were seen as core Christian values and of halting or reversing the perceived moral decline. In this respect the act demanded that: "collective worship shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character". Shortly afterwards Professor John Hull, Editor of British Journal of Religious Education wrote of the new act that it was:

"Undoubtedly the most obscure and complicated piece of legislation in the history of this country. ...It is possible that collective worship under the 1988 Act will be unworkable."

In 1994 the Department of Education published advice on RE and Collective Worship in Circular 1/94 This advice went considerably further than the Act in advising that collective worship: "should be concerned with reverence or veneration paid to a divine being or power: it should contain some elements which relate specifically to the traditions of Christian belief and which accord a special status to Jesus Christ.". Some welcomed this advice, but many others found that this 'clarification' made what had been "unworkable" into something that was now untenable. From the Bishop of Rippon to NASACRE (National Association of SACREs) and OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) many questioned both its wisdom and practicality.

The debate continues...

# The law and other documents

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## Constitution and functions of SACREs

(extract from the Education Act 1996)

### 1996 Chapter 56 – *continued*

#### *Constitution of standing advisory councils on religious education*

Constitution of advisory councils. **390.** –

(1) A local education authority shall constitute a standing advisory council on religious education for the purposes mentioned in section 391(1).

(2) The council shall consist of:

(a) such groups of persons appointed by the authority as representative members (“representative groups”) as are required by subsection (4), and

(b) a person appointed as a member by the governing bodies of the grant-maintained schools within the area of the authority in relation to which section 379 or 380 applies.

(3) The council may also include co-opted members (that is, persons co-opted as members of the council by members of the council who have not themselves been so co-opted).

(4) The representative groups required by this subsection are-

(a) a group of persons to represent such Christian denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions as, in the opinion of the authority, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area;

(b) except in the case of an area in Wales, a group of persons to represent the Church of England;

(c) a group of persons to represent such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought to be represented, having regard to the circumstances of the area; and

(d) a group of persons to represent the authority.

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(5) Where a representative group is required by subsection (4)(b), the representative group required by subsection (4)(a) shall not include persons appointed to represent the Church of England.

(6) The number of representative members appointed to any representative group under subsection (4)(a) to represent each denomination or religion required to be represented shall, so far as consistent with the efficient discharge of the group's functions, reflect broadly the proportionate strength of that denomination or religion in the area.

(7) A person appointed to represent relevant grant-maintained schools in accordance with subsection (3) may be removed from membership of the council if in the opinion of the local education authority he ceases to be acceptable as such to the governing bodies of the majority of such schools.

(8) On any question to be decided by the council only the representative groups on the council shall be entitled to vote, and each representative group shall have a single vote.

#### Functions of advisory councils. **391.** –

(1) The purposes referred to in section 390(1) are:

- (a) to advise the local education authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in county schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus as the authority may refer to the council or as the council may see fit, and
- (b) to carry out the functions conferred on them by section 394.

(2) The matters referred to in subsection (1)(a) include, in particular, methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers.

(3) The representative groups on the council required by section 390(4), other than the group consisting of persons appointed to represent the authority, may at any time require a review of any agreed syllabus for the time being adopted by the authority.

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(4) Each representative group concerned shall have a single vote on the question of whether to require such a review.

(5) Paragraph 3 of Schedule 31 has effect to require the authority, on receiving written notification of any such requirement, to cause a conference constituted in accordance with that Schedule to be convened for the purpose of reconsidering any agreed syllabus to which the requirement relates.

(6) The council shall in each year publish a report as to the exercise of their functions and any action taken by representative groups on the council under subsection (3) during the last preceding year.

(7) The council's report shall in particular:

(a) specify any matters in respect of which the council have given advice to the authority,

(b) broadly describe the nature of the advice given, and

(c) where any such matter was not referred to the council by the authority, give the council's reasons for offering advice on that matter.

8) The council shall send to the head teacher of any grant-maintained school to which section 379 applies and which is in the area of the authority a copy of advice which they give to the authority upon matters connected with religious worship.

(9) The council shall send a copy of advice which they give to the authority on the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus to the head teacher of any grant-maintained school which is in the area of the authority and which-

(a) is required, by virtue of section 379 or 381, to provide religious education in accordance with an agreed syllabus, or

(b) was a controlled school immediately before it became grant-maintained.

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(10) The council shall send a copy of each report published by them under subsection (6):

(a) in the case of a council for an area in England, to the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, and

(b) in the case of a council for an area in Wales, to the Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales.

Advisory councils: supplementary provisions. **392.** –

(1) In this section “the council” means the standing advisory council on religious education constituted by a local education authority under section 390.

(2) Before appointing a person to represent any religion, denomination or associations as a member of the council, the authority shall take all reasonable steps to assure themselves that he is representative of the religion, denomination or associations in question.

(3) A member of the council who was appointed by the authority may be removed from membership by the authority if, in their opinion, he ceases to be representative of the religion, denomination or associations which he was appointed to represent or (as the case may be) he ceases to be representative of the authority.

(4) A member of the council required by section 390(2)(b) may at any time be removed from membership by the governing body or (as the case may be) by the governing bodies of the grant-maintained school or schools concerned.

(5) A person co-opted as a member of the council shall hold office on such terms as may be determined by the members co-opting him.

(6) A member of the council may at any time resign his office.

(7) Subject to section 390(7), the council and, in relation to any question falling to be decided by members of the council of any particular category, the members of that category, may regulate their own proceedings.

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## **SACREs can make a Determination that the requirement for Christian Collective Worship need not apply.**

(extract from the Education Act 1996)

Determinations by standing advisory councils **394.** –

(1) The council constituted by a local education authority under section 390 shall, on an application made by the head teacher of:

(a) any county school maintained by the authority, or

(b) any grant-maintained school which is in the authority's area and in relation to which section 379 applies, consider whether it is appropriate for the requirement imposed by section 386(2) to apply in the case of the school or in the case of any class or description of pupils at the school.

(2) In determining whether it is appropriate for that requirement to apply as mentioned in subsection (1), the council shall have regard to any circumstances relating to the family backgrounds of the pupils at the school, or of the pupils of the particular class or description in question, which are relevant for determining the character of the collective worship appropriate in their case.

(3) The council shall give the head teacher written notification of their decision on the application.

(4) Where the council determine that it is not appropriate for the requirement to apply as mentioned in subsection (1), the determination shall take effect for the purposes of section 387 on such date as may be specified in the notification of the council's decision under subsection (3).

(5) Before making an application under subsection (1), the head teacher of a school shall consult the governing body.

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## **CONSTITUTION OF BRENT SACRE**

### **Brent Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

(last amended September 1999)

#### **Constitution**

##### **1. Terms of reference**

These are largely set out in Sections 11 and 12 of the 1988 Education Reform Act, amended by Sections 15 and 16 of the 1993 Education Act as follows:

- (i) to advise the Authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in county schools and the religious education given in county schools in accordance with an agreed syllabus as the Authority may refer to the council or as the council may seem fit;
- (ii) in particular to advise on methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers;
- (iii) to initiate a review of the Brent Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education at any time;
- (iv) to consider, on receipt of an application made by a head teacher of a county school, after consultation with the governing body, whether it is appropriate for the requirement for Christian collective worship to apply in the case of that school, or in the case of any class or description of pupils at that school;
- (v) to design a procedure for proper consideration of applications arising from (iv) above;
- (vi) to publish an annual report which, amongst other things:
  - 1. specifies any matters in respect of which SACRE has given advice to the authority;
  - 2. broadly describes the nature of the advice given;
  - 3. and where any such matter was not referred to the council by the authority, give the council's reasons for offering advice on that matter.

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## 2. Membership

2.1 All members of SACRE are appointed by the Authority which must take steps to ensure that they are properly representative of the group in question.

2.2 Any faith community wishing to take part in SACRE's work must make a written application to the Chief Education Officer. In this application the group must establish:

- (i) their ability to define themselves as a faith community
- (ii) why they have a legitimate interest in the work of SACRE as outlined in this constitution; and
- (iii) how their interests are not currently being adequately represented.

2.3 SACRE encourages new groups to apply.

2.4 Section 11 (4) of the 1988 Education Reform Act, amended by Sections 15 and 16 of the 1993 Education Act, requires that representatives serving on SACRE be members of one of four representative groups. These are defined as follows:

- (a) Christian denominations and other religions and religious denominations, the number of whose representatives shall, so far as is consistent with the efficient discharge of the group's functions, reflect broadly the proportionate strength of that denomination or religion in the area;
- (b) the Church of England;
- (c) such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought, having regard to the circumstances of the area, to be represented;
- (d) The local education authority.

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2.5 SACRE may co-opt non-voting members for a period of two years. Co-opted members may not propose further co-options.

2.6 The authority may, under section 13 (2) of the Act, remove a member from SACRE, if in the opinion of the authority that person ceases to be representative of the denomination or association which s/he was appointed to represent.

2.7 Should a member of SACRE not attend three consecutive meetings, the Chief Education Officer will write to that member informing them that their membership will lapse if they are unable to attend the next meeting.

2.8 The membership structure of SACRE will be reviewed after every full local government election.

### **3. Voting**

3.1 Section 11 (6) Of the 1988 Education Reform Act states

“on any question to be decided by the council only the representative groups on the council shall be entitled to vote, and each such group shall have a single vote”.

3.2 It may be, from time to time, that SACRE wishes to ascertain the general feeling of its members on a particular issue and that Section 11 (6) of the Act would be inappropriate in that case. The chair of SACRE, after consulting the servicing officer, could rule that an open vote would be appropriate in such cases.

3.3 On formal votes it may be necessary for the four representative groups to meet separately to determine how their collective vote will be cast. To facilitate such a vote each representative group should elect a chair. Decisions made within a group as to how their vote should be cast do not require unanimity.

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#### **4. Election of chair and vice-chair.**

4.1 It is open to the Authority to appoint the chair of SACRE but it is the current view that SACRE should appoint its own chair subject to the following:

- (a) that a chair be elected annually at the last meeting of the summer term;
- (b) that the new chair takes up office from the end of that meeting; and
- (c) that a chair be elected by nomination and secret ballot of all voting members present at the relevant meeting, each member having one vote.

4.2 SACRE has adopted the same procedure for the election of the vice chair.

#### **5. Quorum**

5.1 A meeting of SACRE will be deemed quorate if the following two conditions both apply:

- (i) 30% of SACRE voting members are present and
- (ii) each of the four representative groups are represented.

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## **Brent Statement on Collective Worship and the Brent Recommended Approach**

### **Collective Worship in Brent Schools**

#### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The legal basis for collective worship is the Education Reform Act 1996.

1.2 Schools must provide a daily collective act of worship for all pupils. Arrangements in community and foundation schools are the responsibility of the headteacher after consultation with the governing body.

1.3 Collective worship in community and foundation schools “shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character” unless schools have a determination from SACRE that this requirement is inappropriate. (Circular 1/94 para. 69).

1.4 Collective acts of worship in Brent community and foundation schools must take place every day according to one of the following:

(1) Section 386 of the Education Act 1996;

*i.e. worship “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”.*

*Circular 1/94 provides an interpretation of this in paragraphs 61-66*

(2) a determination from SACRE that the school will follow the approach contained in this document;

*i.e. the Brent Recommended Approach*

(3) a determination from SACRE that the school will follow the approach described in its application to SACRE.

*i.e. an approach drawn up by the individual school*

1.5 If a school wishes to adopt an approach which differs from that of its determination, it should apply to SACRE for a new determination.

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## **2. The benefits of collective worship**

2.1 Schools are required to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. This is the work of the school as a whole. However, collective worship has a key role in the pupils' spiritual development, and should also contribute to their moral, cultural and social development.

2.2 SACRE believes that collective worship in Brent will contribute to cohesion, stability and development of shared values in the school if account is taken of the background of pupils in the provision of collective worship.

2.3 Collective worship contributes to the knowledge, awareness and understanding of each individual pupil. It provides a secure framework within which pupils may develop their own spiritual and moral values and commitment. It also contributes to the sense of cohesion, stability and shared values in the school as a whole.

## **Recommended approach**

**The purpose of these recommendations is to provide an alternative approach for schools which are applying for a determination.**

## **3. Organisation**

3.1 Collective worship, subject to the right of withdrawal, is intended to be appropriate for and to include all pupils attending a school.

3.2 The timing and organisation of daily collective worship can be flexible. It need not be held at the start of the school day. There may be a single act of worship for all pupils or separate acts for pupils in different age groups or in different school groups.

3.3 Worship on specific occasions may be centred on one particular faith

3.4 Schools should be sensitive to any reluctance on the part of the pupils to take an active part in worship distinctive of a faith other than their own.

3.5 Worship may involve members of local faith communities where appropriate.

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3.6 Collective worship should provide opportunities for times of silence when pupils may pray privately according to their own faith traditions, or when they may reflect or meditate.

#### **4. The aims of collective worship**

4.1 To give public expression to the values and concerns of the school community and the community it serves.

4.2 To celebrate the contributions of individuals or groups to the life of the school.

4.3 To explore common universal human experiences in their diverse forms, such as mystery, wonder, joy and suffering.

4.4 To explore common universal values such as courage, compassion, justice and forgiveness.

4.5 To celebrate important religious festivals and traditions related to universal human experiences and values.

4.6 To encourage respect for others.

4.7 To encourage a sense of purpose and service that is greater than the individual.

4.8 To develop knowledge, concepts and skills contributing to spiritual and cultural development.

4.9 To provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs.

4.10 To deepen pupils' own understanding of their own community or background.

4.11 To enable pupils to make connections between different aspects of the curriculum and different areas of their lives.

4.12 To encourage respectful observation of acts of worship distinctive of faiths other than their own.

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## 5. Features of school collective worship:

- an awareness of a concept of deity
- a sense of reverence, devotion and adoration
- a sense of awe, wonder, mystery
- a sense of transience and constant change
- a sense of pattern, sequence and order
- a sense of inter-dependence with the natural world and with each other
- a sense of uniqueness, self worth and identity
- a sense of oneself and others as feeling, thinking persons
- an awareness that life involves choices, right and wrong, good and evil
- an awareness of the nature of commitment and how this affects a person's attitude to life
- an awareness of paradox and a sense of there being more to situations than meets the eye
- a celebration of meaning, purpose and direction
- an awareness of life's joys and sorrows
- a sense of enquiry, exploration and open-mindedness

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## **6. Meeting the needs of individual parents and faith communities**

6.1 Collective worship should show respect for the values and aspirations which all religious traditions have in common. It should support the personal spiritual development of every pupil at the school and avoid giving offence. SACRE hopes that collective worship in Brent schools will fulfil these aims and that parents will not wish to exercise their right to withdraw their children from collective worship. Such withdrawal could harm the cohesiveness and unity which school worship provides. However, headteachers may not put pressure on parents over this decision.

6.2.1 Brent schools should be prepared to provide facilities for individual faith communities to organise worship on the school site should they make a reasonable request to do so. This would be in addition to the daily act of collective worship and should not interfere with the school's curriculum. Such additional collective acts of worship need not be provided every day nor on a regular basis.

## **7. Collective Worship and Religious Education**

7.1 Whilst collective worship can contribute to religious education, the two should be conceived of as being separate. In considering how to exercise their responsibility for collective worship, headteachers should bear in mind this would not normally form part of the responsibilities of teachers holding curriculum responsibilities for religious education.

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## **Excerpts from the Convention on the Rights of the Child**

Complete text can be seen online at [www.unicef.org/crc](http://www.unicef.org/crc)

### **Article 13**

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

### **Article 14**

1. States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

### **Article 15**

1. States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

### **Article 16**

1. No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation.

### **Article 17**

States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health.

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## Article 29

1. State Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

(a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

(b) The development of respect for human rights and the fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations

(c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living; the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

(e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

## Article 31

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

(note: this binding treaty has been ratified by 192 countries (including the UK in December 1991) with the exception of only the United States and Somalia, which have signalled their intention to ratify by formally signing the Convention – information correct as of 26 January 2006)

# SACRE members

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## List of current SACRE members

SACRE would like to include representation from all religious and belief traditions

### Group A

Christian denominations and other religions and religious denominations

Baha'i	Mr Hassan Afnan
Buddhism	Mrs Rupa Monerawela
Free Churches	
Methodist	Revd Madeleine Andrews
Greek Orthodox	Mrs Andri Kyriakidis
Hinduism	
Brent Hindu Samaj	Rev. Pt. Deva Samaroo
Swaminarayan	Dr Navin Swaminarayan
Vivikenanda Centre	Mr Jay Lakhani
Islam	
Sunni	Mrs Humera Khan
Sunni	Mrs Fatma Amer
Jainism	Mr Manhar Mehta
Judaism	
Orthodox	Mrs Marlene Knepler
Reform	Ms Valerie Boyd-Hellner
Rastafarianism	Mr L Lindsay, Ba Beta Kristyan <i>Haile Selassie 1</i>
Roman Catholicism	Mr Dominic West
Sikhism	Mr Rajinder Singh Bajwa

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## **Group B**

### The Church of England

Mr Geoffrey Edwards  
Ms Alice Hudson  
Reverend David Neno  
Reverend Alex Hill  
Reverend Richard Young  
Reverend Angela Hopkins

## **GROUP C**

### Associations representing teachers

#### Nominated by Brent Teachers' Panel

Ms Marlene Downer  
*Braintcroft Primary School*  
Ms Michelle Anderson  
*Oakington Manor Primary School*  
Ms Anne Yep  
*Lyon Park Infants School*  
Ms Sarah Black  
*Kingsbury High School*  
Dr Hassan El Maghrabi\*\*  
*Copland Community School*

#### Nominated by Brent Primary Schools Headteachers Group

Mrs Judith Bijlani  
*Roe Green Infants School*  
Mr Mike Maxwell  
*Lyon Park Junior School*  
Ms Jo Gilbert  
*Manor Special School*

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## **Group D**

The authority

Municipal year May 2005/ May 2006

Cllr Michael Lyon (Labour)

Cllr H Singh (Labour)

Cllr Neil Nerva (Labour)

### **All Councillors (above)**

*The Members' Room,  
Brent Town Hall,  
Forty Lane, Wembley,  
Middlesex, HA9 9HX.*

## **Co-opted members**

Humanism

Mr Josh Kutchinsky\*

Teachers / Islam

Mrs Jamila Fernandes,  
*Headteacher,  
The Avenue School*

## **Servicing officers**

SACRE is serviced by:

Religious education and  
citizenship consultant

Ms Beth Stockley

School Improvement Adviser

Ms Julie Cahill

Clerk to SACRE

Ms Dina Brown

\* Chair of SACRE

\*\* Vice-chair of SACRE



# SACRE Brent



[www.brent.gov.uk/sacre](http://www.brent.gov.uk/sacre)

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