

# PORTSMOUTH SACRE ALLOWANCES POLICY AND PROCEDURE



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## Aims

Portsmouth SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) has decided to pay reasonable allowances from the SACRE's delegated budget from Portsmouth City Council to cover any costs that SACRE members incur through carrying out their duties.

This policy sets out the terms on which such allowances will be paid.

By adopting this policy, we will ensure that no member of the community is prevented from becoming a member of the Portsmouth SACRE on the grounds of cost.

## Background

### 2.1 Duty to establish a SACRE

Since the Education Reform Act of 1988, all Local Education Authorities (LAs) have been required by law to constitute a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) within their local area.<sup>1</sup>

### 2.2 What does a SACRE do?

SACRE is a unique body; it is set up by the LA but is independent of it, with the role to give advice to that LA. The law states that Religious Education must be taught in all maintained schools<sup>2</sup> and a SACRE's role is to advise what needs to be done to improve religious education (RE) and collective worship for schools in its area. The main purpose of the annual report is to hold the LA to account, by informing the Secretary of State and key partners what advice SACRE gave the LA during the year and how the LA responded to that advice. This includes advice on Religious Education and Collective Worship in those schools for which the LA has responsibility.

### 2.3 Composition of SACRE

There are four groups or committees, as below:

A: The Christian denominations and other religious denominations, reflecting the principal religious traditions of the area.

B: The Church of England

C: Teacher and head teacher associations

D: The Local Authority

The Local Authority has determined that the SACRE should comprise of:

<sup>1</sup> Education Act 1996 Section 390:1

<sup>2</sup> School and Standards Framework Act 1998 Section 69

- Representatives of Christian denominations and other religious groups reflecting the principal religious traditions of the area
- Four representatives of the Church of England.
- Six representatives of teachers' associations.
- Four representatives of the local authority, at least two of whom should be elected members.

Other members may be co-opted from time to time as appropriate for all or part meetings. Formally Co-opted members may also claim allowances to cover expenditure necessary to enable them to perform their duties on behalf of the SACRE.

### Guidance

This policy has been written in line with Portsmouth City Council's policy for Travel and Subsistence.

- **Public transport** - claims can be made for reasonable public transport fares for travel undertaken as part of the role of the SACRE member
- **Parking** - claims can be made for parking fees incurred while undertaking duties which form part of the role of the SACRE member
- **Mileage** - Mileage will be paid (~~usually at the rate of 45p per mile~~ - see section below on Submitting a claim for other rates) for travel undertaken as part of the role of the SACRE member. Mileage claims must be supported by VAT fuel receipts.

This guidance relates to approved circumstances in which a SACRE member may claim expenses and the nature of expenditure that may be claimed. Portsmouth City Council (PCC) reserves the right to refuse an incomplete claim or defer until resolution. Claims must be submitted using the Portsmouth Link Volunteer Expenses Claim Form, available from the Clerk to SACRE.

### Overview

Members of the SACRE may claim allowances to cover expenditure necessary to enable them to perform their duties. This does **not** include an attendance allowance, or payment to cover loss of earnings.

Members of the SACRE may only claim for:

- Travel and subsistence costs
- Childcare
- Care for elderly or dependent relatives
- Extra costs incurred because they have a special need

**Non-teaching members of the SACRE** may claim allowances by completing a claim form and submitting it to the Clerk to the Portsmouth SACRE.

**Teaching members of SACRE** should complete any claims via their school/college and then liaise with Clerk to the Portsmouth SACRE.

Allowances will only be paid on the provision of a receipt and will be limited to the amount shown on the receipt. All travel claims must be submitted within 3 months of the journey occurring, in accordance with PCC Financial Regulations.

Members of SACRE should always consider car-sharing for travel to meetings where possible.

Reimbursable costs should be agreed in principle by the Chair of the SACRE **before** they are incurred. If the SACRE member intends to seek reimbursement for attendance at SACRE meetings (3 per annum), they may seek prior approval from the Chair of the SACRE for all three meetings. This approval should be sought in advance of the first meeting of each academic year (namely the Autumn term).

Approval for all other claims (eg. attendance at NASACRE's annual AGM and Conference) must be agreed by the Chair of SACRE in advance. Claims will be paid in arrears on a case-by-case basis.

Travelling expenses incurred by a member of SACRE in the performance of their official duties will be reimbursed after authorisation by the named Portsmouth City Council Local Authority Link Officer.

The Portsmouth Link Officer may authorise payments up to £50. Claims over £50 must be authorised by PCC's Director of Finance or Deputy Head of Finance.

### **Submitting a claim**

To process expenses claims, the claimant will need to provide the following details:

- Name
- Address of payee
- Bank
- Account name
- Account number
- Sort Code

These details should be submitted with each claim form to the Clerk of SACRE who will liaise with the Business Manager for PCC Children, Families and Education.

It is important to submit the claim promptly for payment into your bank account one month in arrears. Late claims will be paid up to a maximum of three months in arrears, but anything beyond this period will not be paid.

- All mileage should be rounded up or down to the nearest mile – for example, if you travel between 2.1-2.4 miles that should be recorded as 2 miles, and travel between 2.5-2.9 miles should be recorded as 3 miles.
- Copies of petrol/diesel VAT receipts must be submitted with your business mileage claims, to enable the Council to reclaim the VAT. These should be dated no more than three months prior to the journey and total at least 50% of the amount of mileage to be reimbursed. If submitting a claim by email, an electronic copy of a VAT receipt will be accepted.
- Mileage **rates will be paid at the prevailing rate at the time of the claim. In November 2024, these are:**

Bicycle – 20p per mile  
Motorcycle – 24p per mile  
Car Petrol, diesel, Hybrid or LPG – 45p per mile  
Car Electric 20p per mile  
Car All other fuel types: 14p per mile).

To determine the mileage incurred, note the actual mileage travelled from the vehicle's odometer. All return trip journeys must be claimed as one journey rather than a separate journey for each leg of the round trip.

Travel expenses where a SACRE member uses their own vehicle must not exceed the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) approved mileage rates (detailed above).

Claims may be submitted on paper by post or by email to:

The SACRE Clerk  
c/o Democratic Services  
Portsmouth City Council  
Floor 3, Core 2-3  
Civic Offices  
Guildhall Square  
Portsmouth PO1 2AL

[democratic@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)

The Chair of SACRE (or the Clerk, where appropriate) may initially investigate claims that appear excessive or inconsistent. All claims will be subject to an independent audit.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed when the SACRE Constitution is reviewed by SACRE. Any amendments will be presented at a meeting of the full SACRE.

Agreed: 6 November 2024