



**PORTSMOUTH  
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)  
CONSTITUTION**

Constituted under the Education Act 1996, this body shall be the Portsmouth Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). Throughout this Constitution it shall be known as 'the SACRE', 'the Authority' shall refer to Portsmouth City Council and 'the Act' shall refer to the Education Act 1996.

**1. FUNCTIONS**

The SACRE shall:

- 1.1 Advise the Authority upon such matters connected with religious education and collective worship in city schools and the religious education (RE) to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus as the Authority may refer to the SACRE, and as the SACRE may consider appropriate.
- 1.2 Advise the Authority regarding its statutory duty to review its agreed syllabus every five years and to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference.
- 1.3 Determine any application from the headteacher of a maintained school following consultation with the governing body, for an amendment to the requirement that collective worship should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.
- 1.4 Publish an annual report. In addition to making the report available for public inspection, a copy shall be sent to the Secretary of State for Education as well as to key partners and organisations, as the SACRE considers appropriate. For example, NASACRE, HMI/ Ofsted, the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education, the Director of Children's Services and elected member representatives on the SACRE.

**2. MEMBERSHIP**

- 2.1 With the exception of co-opted members (see 2.4 below), all SACRE members appointed by the Authority should have a body/ be a member of the RE Council to which they are accountable, and which nominates them.
- 2.2 The SACRE shall comprise four groups of members constituted by the Authority as specified below<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the Education Act 1996, Section 390



**Group A** - Representatives of such Christian Denominations (other than the Church of England), other religions and world views which appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in Portsmouth. These are determined as a result of consultation and include representatives from the following:

The Assemblies of God  
The Baptist Union  
The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches  
The Methodist Church  
The Religious Society of Friends  
The Roman Catholic Church  
The Salvation Army  
The United Reformed Church

Other Religions represented include:

Baha'i  
Buddhist  
Hindu  
Jewish  
Muslim  
Sikhi

Other Bodies: Humanist

**Group B** - Four representatives of the Church of England nominated by the Diocese/ Diocesan Board of Education for the area including local clergy, teachers, governors and members of local Anglican congregations.

**Group C** - Six representatives of the key stages of education (including EYFS, primary, secondary, special schools and alternative provision) who come from a range of local head teacher groups, networks of RE teachers or teaching unions in the authority including teachers from academies and which have chosen to adopt the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

**Group D** - Four representatives of the Authority, at least two of whom shall be elected members of the Authority.

2.3 Named substitute members can be nominated and appointed to attend SACRE meetings in accordance with Section 3 below. The substitute member shall have the same voting rights at a meeting as the representative member in whose place they are attending.

2.4 Co-opted persons may be appointed by SACRE.



- 2.5 The specific responsibilities of members of the SACRE are as set out in this Constitution and the Education Reform Act 1988.
- 2.6 All members, substitute members and co-opted members must work within the SACRE's Code of Conduct.

### 3. PRE-APPOINTMENT AND MEMBERSHIP SUB-GROUP

- 3.1 The Clerk, working on behalf of the Authority will approach sponsoring bodies for nominations of new members when a vacancy arises, or a membership lapses due to non-attendance.
- 3.2 Before appointing the Authority shall take all reasonable steps to assure themselves that the nominees are a representative of the religion, denomination, or associations in question.
- 3.3 To help decide membership requests that are not straightforward replacements by established member organisations, the SACRE has the power to appoint members to a sub-group/working party to consider such matters (including membership and pre-appointment issues) as and when it sees fit. The sub-group can then make recommendations to the full SACRE. The terms of reference and membership of such sub-groups will be set by the SACRE as and when required.

The sub-group would ordinarily be an advisory body, not a decision making body so that the final decision is still made in accordance with the Act's required voting/ quorum provisions.

### 4. DURATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 Members (or named substitutes) of the SACRE shall be appointed for four years.
- 4.2 Any member of the SACRE may at any time resign from office.
- 4.3 A member of the SACRE appointed by the Authority may be removed from membership by the Authority at any time if in the opinion of the Authority the person ceases to be representative of either the denomination or association to which the member was appointed. Subject to the conditions of this section of the constitution, members of the SACRE having served the full term are eligible for re-appointment.
- 4.4 Co-opted members to have a specified period of office, to be no longer than the standard 4 year term of office (which can be linked to the duration of a particular event or project).



## 5. REMOVAL OF MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1 An individual representative member may be removed from membership by the Authority if in the opinion of the Authority they cease to be representative of the denomination or associations which they were appointed to represent on the SACRE.
- 5.2 Members who fail to attend two consecutive meetings without a satisfactory explanation will be notified that their membership will be reviewed by the SACRE and their nominating body will be informed if they also miss the next meeting.
- 5.3 An individual may also cease to hold membership if the SACRE determines on reasonable grounds that they are not adhering to the code of conduct.

## 6. CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

- 6.1 The Chair, being a member of Group A, B, C or D shall be elected by the members of SACRE in accordance with the voting procedure stated in **Section 8** for a period of two years or until the person elected ceases to be a member of the SACRE, whichever is the sooner. It would be expected that the person taking up the role understood the work of SACRE and should have been a SACRE member for at least one year.
- 6.2 The Vice-Chair, being a member of Group A, B, C or D, shall be elected by the members of SACRE in accordance with the voting procedure stated in **Section 8** for a period of two years or until the person elected ceases to be a member of the SACRE, whichever is the sooner. **The Vice-Chair should not be appointed from the same representative group as the Chair.**
- 6.3 Persons continuing to be members of the SACRE are eligible for re-appointment to the position of Chair or Vice-Chair.
- 6.4 In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair at any meeting the SACRE can elect one of its members to act as the Chair for that meeting.

## 7. CONVENING MEETINGS OF SACRE

- 7.1 Every member (including every named substitute) of the SACRE shall be provided with written notice for the meeting and a link to the agenda and reports on the Authority's website not less than 5 clear days before the date of the meeting.



- 7.2 For a meeting to be quorate there shall be at least one representative present from each of the four groups A, B, C and D. If a quorum is not present, the meeting can be held but no decisions can be made, and a further meeting would have to be convened as soon as is reasonably practicable if necessary. Meetings will be quorate whether virtual, hybrid or face to face.
- 7.3 There will be at least three meetings each academic year. The dates of the main meetings will be put forward at the second meeting of the academic year and circulated by the Clerk to all members.
- 7.4 Professional Advisers are invited to attend SACRE meetings. Advising Officers provide information and professional expertise on professional issues and any new government guidance or policy documents but are not members of the SACRE and cannot vote.
- 7.6 All SACRE meetings must be held in public; anyone may attend the meeting to observe the proceedings.
- 7.7 Subject to the Religious Education (Meetings of Local Conferences and Councils) Regulations 1994, the press and public may be excluded from a meeting during an item of business whenever it is likely that, if they were present, confidential information would be disclosed.
- 7.8 SACRE meetings may be held as virtual, hybrid or face to face meetings. When held face to face, the venue for SACRE meetings will be the offices of the Authority or a suitable community setting, for example, a school or place of worship as per the guidelines for SACRE meetings.

## 8. VOTING

- 8.1 On any question to be decided by the SACRE only the representative groups on the SACRE shall be entitled to vote, and each representative group A, B, C and D shall be entitled to one vote. No other persons shall be entitled to vote.
- 8.2 In the event of a 2:2 vote, there will be no casting vote and the resolution put before the SACRE will not be carried and the status quo be maintained until such time as a majority decision is reached.

## 9. COMPLAINTS

Complaints are to be raised with reference to the LA's complaint procedure.



## 10. CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

- 10.1 The SACRE may alter this constitution at any time but will consult the Authority before doing so.
- 10.2 The SACRE shall review its constitution **every four years**. The SACRE may make such recommendations for amending the constitution, as it deems appropriate.

Revised **June 2024**

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