

**WEST BERKSHIRE
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2025
VENUE: THATCHAM BAPTIST CHURCH**

Present:

Group A – Other Faiths Members

Mobasshir Mushtaq (Muslim), Rabbi Zvi Solomons (Jewish) and Revd David Taylor (Thatcham Baptist Church)

Group B – Church of England Members

Revd Angela Brennan (St Mary's Church) and Mary Stagg (Church of England)

Group C – Teaching Association Members

Amanda Bedding (NEU) and Chris Ward (NEU)

Group D – WBC Councillors

Councillor Jeremy Cottam, Councillor Paul Dick, Councillor Billy Drummond and Councillor Clive Taylor

Also Present: Rose Carberry, Bill Moore, Thomas Radbourne

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Robin Launder (Humanism)

Absent: Roseanna Obsiye

1 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for the 2025/26 Academic Year - Thomas Radbourne

Amanda Bedding was elected as Chair for the 2025/26 Academic Year.

Paul Dick was elected as Vice-Chair for the 2025/26 Academic Year.

Members expressed their gratitude to David Taylor for his contributions as the previous Chair of SACRE.

2 Minutes - Thomas Radbourne

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2025 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Actions (Not covered elsewhere)

Members agreed that the SACRE Constitution and the Code of Conduct would be discussed at the next SACRE meeting.

4 Annual Report 2024/25 - Amanda Bedding

Amanda Bedding introduced the Annual Report and provided a summary of key actions undertaken during the 2024/25 academic year:

- David Taylor had been elected as Chair, and Amanda Bedding had been elected as Vice-Chair.

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- The Locally Agreed Syllabus had been produced. It was hoped that this would be approved at the autumn 2025 SACRE meeting and adopted across West Berkshire from September 2026.
- SACRE had continued to monitor collective worship and engage with local religion and worldview communities to provide appropriate speakers for schools.
- West Berkshire SACRE had worked closely with the other SACREs in the Pan-Berkshire Hub.
- David Taylor and other SACRE members had supported a number of schools by organising and chairing panel discussions with faith and worldview representatives.
- David Rees had resigned as Professional Advisor in March 2025. The Professional Advisor for Slough had attended West Berkshire SACRE meetings to provide interim support.

Members expressed their gratitude to Rose Carberry for her contributions to SACRE.

Members voted to approve the Annual Report 2024/25 and agreed that it should be forwarded to the Secretary of State.

Action: The Clerk to send the SACRE member list to Bill Moore.

Action: A new primary school headteacher to be appointed to SACRE.

5 **Agreed Syllabus Conference - David Taylor**

The Chair convened the Agreed Syllabus Conference and handed over to David Taylor who introduced the updated West Berkshire Locally Agreed Syllabus.

David Taylor highlighted the amendments to the Syllabus that had been agreed at the previous meeting:

- Update of all references from 'faith' to 'faith/belief'
- Include all source material and resources for Judaism which had included in the Pan-Berkshire Syllabus, in the new West Berkshire Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Members noted that there were a number of spelling and formatting errors in the document, however, as none of the required corrections required any substantive content amendments, they agreed to include any amendments if the Syllabus was passed.

It was noted by members that similar changes had been made to the Syllabus in other SACREs in Berkshire.

Rose Carberry stated that the document would be reviewed, and any required corrections would be amended once the Syllabus had been agreed by the Agreed Syllabus Conference.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference approved the West Berkshire Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

Action: The proposed amendments made by members to spelling and formatting of the Syllabus to be amended.

Action: The proposed amendments to be forwarded to Bill Moore.

Action: The list of allocated schools for each member of SACRE to be communicated to members.

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The Chair believed that there should be training events for Primary and Secondary Schools to promote the new Syllabus. Members noted that teachers were anxious about resources, and it was agreed that additional visits could be agreed from 6 months from September.

Action: Once the finalised Syllabus was ready, training events for primary and secondary schools to promote the syllabus would be arranged, starting in 6 months' time.

Action: David Taylor to share all relevant SACRE documentation with Amanda Bedding.

Bill Moore noted that it would be important to distinguish between maintained schools and Voluntary-Aided schools and cautioned against visits to schools without members having a shared protocol. Schools were pressured environments, and a visit from SACRE could be interpreted as an inspection. A shared protocol would protect and reassure members and schools.

Members agreed that a guide for what they should do and focus on in schools would be beneficial, with the potential for a script to guide language and focus.

Action: Bill Moore to produce a protocol for members visiting schools to promote the Agreed Syllabus. The protocol would then be agreed by members of SACRE.

6 Membership - Thomas Radbourne

The Clerk gave an update on the SACRE Membership and highlighted the following points:

- The role of Professional Advisor stood vacant. Bill Moore from Slough SACRE was currently advising the SACRE.
- Rose Carberry would be stepping down as Principal Advisor to SACRE
- Melanie Higgs had stepped down as a member of Group C, and Helen Crolla would join as a member of Group B.

Members agreed that Bill Moore should continue as the Professional Advisor until at least the end of the 2025/26 Academic Year

7 Relationship with other Berkshire SACREs - Bill Moore

Bill Moore introduced the item and noted the following items:

- It was encouraging that 4 of 6 SACREs in Berkshire would confirm the same syllabus.
- The Professional Advisors for West Berkshire, Slough, Bracknell, and Wokingham had resigned. It was suggested that the Chair of West Berkshire SACRE could work with the Chairs of the other Berkshire SACREs in order to plan a way forward.

Action: Amanda Bedding to arrange a meeting with the other Berkshire SACRE Chairs, Professional advisors, and Local Authority Advisors to discuss the Agreed Syllabus Conference and plan a way forward. This meeting would take place before the next SACRE meeting on 10 March 2026.

Rose Carberry was supportive of a meeting between Chairs and advisors of SACRE and noted that her replacement would not be in post until late November 2025.

Bill Moore felt that the Pan-Berkshire Syllabus was a significant reason for maintaining the Pan-Berkshire Hub and was uncertain how it would be maintained if there was no Pan-Berkshire Syllabus.

Members noted that the Pan Berkshire Hub did not have sufficient representation for minority religions, which had caused significant issues during the passing of the Syllabus in Berkshire. Bill Moore felt that it should be on the table for discussion at the meeting.

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Bill Moore noted that previously the Oxford Diocese held all the funding for the Pan-Berkshire Hub, as Local Authorities were unable to. This would have to be discussed by the SACREs in Berkshire. He was uncertain if any SACREs would have a representative from the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education in order to facilitate discussions.

Members noted that the Pan-Berkshire Hub had been convened by the Diocese, and held funding supplied by each SACRE for projects such as the Agreed Syllabus.

Action: Bill Moore to research the funding for the Pan-Berkshire Hub, and contact Anne Andrews, former Diocesan Adviser, regarding the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education.

Action: Amanda Bedding and Bill Moore to liaise regarding contact details for the meeting with other SACRE Chairs and Advisors.

8 **2026 Meeting Dates and Venues - Thomas Radbourne**

The following meetings dates were proposed and accepted by the SACRE:

- 10 March 2026
- 7 July 2026
- 3 November 2026

9 **Equality & Diversity – Chair**

No items were discussed under Equality and Diversity

10 **Any Other Business**

Bill Moore raised a number of items under Any Other Business, and highlighted the following:

- Interfaith Week would take place from 9 to 16 November 2025, and it would coincide with Anti-Bullying Week. He recommended sending information regarding it to all schools.
- Holocaust Memorial Day: Bridging Generations. There were some ideas for schools to adopt.
- Oak Academy Materials on RE.
- NASACRE Training

Bill Moore recommended that advice should be sent out to schools, highlighting that the Oak Academy materials, while useful, were not the Agreed Syllabus. Members felt that discussing the Oak Academy materials could be useful at the next meeting. Bill Moore believed that detailed advice could be sent out over time, but that initial advice regarding how the Oak Academy materials could be used, and what schools must statutorily use, would be useful.

Bill Moore recommended that SACRE sign up to the additional Webinar Training sessions provided by NASACRE for members.

Action: Oak Academy materials statement to be formulated by Bill Moore and sent out to all schools on Thursday 23 October 2025. <https://www.thenational.academy/curriculum>

Action: Rose Carberry to share contact information with Amanda Bedding and the Clerk, in case additional information needed to be sent out to schools via Education.

Action: All Interfaith Week information to be sent to all SACRE members, and to all schools. <https://www.ifw4schools.co.uk/>

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Action: Information regarding Holocaust Memorial Day to be sent to all SACRE members, and to all schools. <https://hmd.org.uk/what-is-holocaust-memorial-day/hmd-theme-2026/>

Action: SACRE to sign up to additional webinar training sessions provided by NASACRE. Bev Batty will be the point person for this.

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