

Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs)

1. Every local authority must constitute a SACRE. They must take reasonable steps to assure themselves that potential members are representative of the religious interest they claim to be. The members appointed to it must be representatives of:
 - a) The Church of England
 - b) All religious traditions prevailing in the area (broadly reflecting their strength)
 - c) Teachers' associations, and
 - d) The local authority

Members of SACRE can also co-opt members on terms which they set .

2. A SACRE's functions are to advise on
 - a) Religious worship in community schools and foundation schools without a religious character, and
 - b) The religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed or other syllabus including, in particular, methods of teaching, choice of materials and provision of training for teachers
3. On any question to be decided by a SACRE only the groups (as set out at 1 above) may vote, each having a single vote. Groups can, by majority, require an agreed syllabus to be reviewed, and a conference on the matter to be convened, except for the local authority group, which does not have this power. Other than this each SACRE is master of its own procedure.
4. SACREs must publish annual reports* about the exercise of their functions and any actions taken by the groups as above, and send a copy to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

These powers and duties are set out in the Education Act 1996, sections 390 to 392. The DCSF (as it then was) also published non statutory guidance on religious education in English schools in January 2010 which gives further guidance on the role and responsibility of SACREs.

*

Thank you for your email of 7 March about annual SACRE reports.

While local authorities have a duty to produce an annual SACRE report and to ensure that it is publicly available there is no requirement for them to send it to the Department for Education. Until very recently local authorities were required to send their annual SACRE report to the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA). However, now that QCDA has been formally disbanded no such

obligation exists.

I hope this is helpful and clarifies the situation.

As part of our commitment to improving the service we provide to our customers, we are interested in hearing your views and would welcome your comments via our website at www.education.gov.uk/pcusurvey

Yours sincerely

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