Haringey Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)
Minutes of the meeting of 13 November 2025 at 5:00pm
Held online via Zoom

MEMBERSHIP

Group A: Christian denominations other than Church of England, and principal religions represented in Great Britain

James Chiriyankandath (JC), **Chair**	Unitarian
Stephen Agilinko (SA)*	Baptist Churches
Norman Bacrac (NB)	Humanist
Panos Fellas (PF)	Humanist
Hasret Bozdogan (HB)	Alevi Cultural Centre
Ali Osoy (AO)*	Alevi Cultural Centre
Dr S Kajansivakumaran (SK)*	Chair of Shakthivel Hindu Association
Bibi Khan (BK)*	Islamic Community
James Lane (JL)*	Roman Catholic Church
Tonye Philemon (TP)	The Peace Alliance and Pentecostal Churches
Judith Prinsley (JP)	Board of Deputies of British Jews

Group B: Church of England

Eddie Griffiths (EG)	Lay Church of England member
Helen Spiby-Vann (HSV)	London Diocesan Board of Schools

Group C: Teachers' Associations, including representation from Academy Schools

Glenford Johnson (GJ), **Vice-Chair**	Teacher, Hornsey School for Girls
Hanaa Mohabeer (HM)	Teacher, Hornsey School for Girls

Group D: Local Authority, including elected councillors

Ibrahim Ali (IA)*	Councillor
Cathy Brennan (CB)*	Councillor
Makbule Gunes (MG)*	Councillor
Fay Jackson (FJ)	HEP Advisor
Anna Lawton (AL)*	Councillor
Alessandra Rossetti (AR)	Councillor

Co-opted non-voting members

Jan McGuire (JMcG)	Independent RE Advisor to Haringey SACRE

Also in attendance

Adam Slate (AS)	Observer
Dr Celia Jenkins (CJ)	Emeritus Fellow, School of Social Sciences, University of Westminster
Helen Style	Observer
James Barton*	Observer
Ruth Marx	National RE Adviser, AREIAC Vice-Chair
Tim Wright*	Observer
Dr Umit Cetin (UC)	Senior Lecturer in Sociology, University of Westminster
Christine Hatt (CH)	HEP Clerk

** Asterisk denotes absence. For the meeting to be quorate, at least one member from each of Groups A, B, C and D must be present.*

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 JC welcomed everyone to this second Haringey SACRE meeting of the 2025-26 academic year and introduced himself as Chair of the group.

1.2 JC led the group in a moment of silent contemplation.

1.3 Apologies had been received from AL, MG and SA. AO, BK, CB, IA, JB, JL, SK and TW were also absent.

1.4 JC noted that the meeting was quorate, as at least one representative of each of the four groups (A, B, C and D – see list on page 1) was present.

1.5 Introductions were made for the benefit of AS, who was attending as an observer. He will represent Unitarians at SACRE meetings when JC cannot be present.

1.6 Minutes of the Last Meeting (11 September 2025)
The minutes of the last meeting (11 September 2025) had been circulated to all Haringey SACRE members in advance. They were **approved** unanimously.

1.7 Matters Arising
The Matters Arising were discussed as follows:

NEW ACTIONS FROM 11 SEPTEMBER 2025

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
1.6	Create and circulate a survey asking SACRE members about their preferred meeting arrangements. **13.11.25:** This had been done and FJ, JC and JMcG had reviewed the responses. As views were varied, JC said meeting arrangements should stay as they were. All members agreed with this suggestion. **CLOSED.**	CH
5.1	Include a question in the survey about members' willingness to participate in a range of other SACRE-related tasks. **13.11.25:** This had been done. FJ and JMcG to meet to review responses. FJ will contact members who expressed an interest in joining the syllabus working group or participating in other ways. CH noted that some members had not put their names on the survey, so could not be contacted. JC asked all those who had completed the survey to email CH so that she could fill in the gaps. **CARRIED FORWARD.**	CH

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 5 JUNE 2025

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
4.11	Try again to get more responses to the syllabus survey. **11.09.25:** FJ said the survey would be sent out again next week or the week after. She would keep members informed. **CARRIED FORWARD.** **13.11.25:** This action was not discussed. **CARRIED FORWARD.**	FJ

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 27 MARCH 2025

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
7.2	Compare attendance at past in-person and online SACRE meetings. **05.06.25:** There was no time for this. **CARRIED FORWARD. 11.09.25:** FJ said that, historically, attendance via Zoom was better. However, members tend to be more engaged and proactive if they meet face to face, so there was a good argument for having three, or even all four, of Haringey SACRE's meetings in person every year. AL asked if it would be possible to put this suggestion to members in a direct way. All the members present stated their preference, but it was decided a short survey should be sent to every member so that all could express their view and members present today had more time to consider. **ACTION:** CH. **CARRIED FORWARD. 13.11.25:** This had been done (see 11.09.25 actions, 1.6). **CLOSED.**	**FJ/CH**

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 14 NOVEMBER 2024

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
2.3	Follow up Freedom of Information request with LBH. **27.03.25:** HSV was not present at today's meeting so could not provide an update. **CARRIED FORWARD. 05.06.25:** There was no time for this. **CARRIED FORWARD. 11.09.25:** This matter was not discussed. **CARRIED FORWARD. 13.11.25:** HSV reminded the meeting about the work she had done to get information from LBH about Haringey SACRE funding. She had first emailed them in 2024. She had also asked the DfE to confirm they were sending LBH the funding, which they did. LBH had not so far been able to say how much it received or exactly how the money was spent. They did explain that they give the funds to Haringey Education Partnership (HEP) to manage. HSV has now asked LBH to provide details of SACRE funds it received, allocated and spent in one year. She has not yet received a reply. FJ, HEP Advisor to Haringey SACRE, said she did not know how much LBH received but HEP had been managing this money for about 7 years. It was sent direct to HEP by LBH. She worked with HEP's CEO to administer the distribution. Some of the money provides part of JMcG's salary. Any that remains is set aside for work such as the Agreed Syllabus Conference. JC asked if HEP could provide figures. FJ said yes. JC asked her to bring them to the 26.03.26 meeting. AR said she would also try to find out more. **CARRIED FORWARD.**	**HSV/FJ/AR**

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 6 JUNE AND 12 SEPTEMBER 2024

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
	N/A	

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 16 NOVEMBER 2023

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
	Ask LBH to put a HEP/SACRE link on its website. **21.03.24: CARRIED FORWARD. 06.06.24:** CB said she would pick this matter	

	up with LBH. FJ to email her the details. **CARRIED FORWARD. 12.09.24** It had still not been possible to arrange this. IA said he would pick up this action and report back at the 14 November SACRE meeting. **CARRIED FORWARD. 14.11.24:** Ongoing - see agenda item 6.1. **CARRIED FORWARD. 27.03.25:** IA said that he had now been able to speak to the right person. He had learned there was a new digital team and they would put an appropriate link on the website 'imminently'. IA will chase them on Tuesday (01.04.25). FJ said she had also spoken to LBH about this. There was already a link on the site, but it was out of date. The old information should be removed when the new link was inserted. IA said that was the plan. He would copy FJ and the other SACRE councillors into his email. **CARRIED FORWARD. 05.06.25:** IA was not at today's meeting to give an update. **CARRIED FORWARD. 11.09.25:** FJ said the situation had not changed. There was a SACRE link on the council website, but it was out of date. IA was dealing with the matter but was not present today to give an update. **CARRIED FORWARD. 13.11.25:** FJ said the issue had been completely resolved. She would send the necessary information to CH to include in the minutes. **CLOSED.**	
6.2		**FJ/IA**

2. SACRE INVOLVEMENT LOCALLY

2.1 JC asked if members had any local news relevant to SACRE they would like to share.

Manchester synagogue attack
JP said that quite a few people had reached out to her in the wake of the Manchester synagogue attack in October. She wanted to thank them for this.

Carol services
HSV said there would be many local carol services as Christmas approached. She encouraged members to attend, whether at her church or elsewhere.

3. SACRE AND HARINGEY EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP (HEP)/ LONDON BOROUGH OF HARINGEY (LBH)

3.1 FJ brought the meeting up to date on HEP and LBH business.

3.2 FJ had hoped to have both borough and national 2025 RE examination results data by today. However, the colleague who collects this data had recently been absent from work, so the information was not yet available. She expected to be able to share it with SACRE members at their next meeting (26 March 2026). If anyone particularly wanted to see it sooner, they should let her know and she would email it out to them when it was ready.

3.3 JMcG would update the meeting about progress on the Westhill 'Living Voices' Project.

4. NATIONAL AND LOCAL UPDATE: RE STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 JMcG had shared her presentation with SACRE members in advance and now talked through the main points.

4.2 *Curriculum and Assessment Review*
The government had published its Curriculum and Assessment Review on 5 November. It recommended that RE be made part of the National Curriculum (currently it is part of the

statutory basic curriculum). The next steps, divided into two stages, are outlined in JMcG's presentation. There should be more clarity by March 2026. Vanessa Ogden, ex-Headteacher and now CEO of Mulberry Schools Trust, will help take the process forward. Members should be aware that incorporating RE into the National Curriculum may affect the role of SACREs, as they may no longer be managing the RE syllabus.

Another key RE question that the review addressed was whether the subject should continue to be compulsory for 6th form students. It has been so since 1944.

The review considered RE subject content, too, and whether short-term changes were needed while the broader questions were considered. Dr Ogden will try to find consensus.

JMcG said that there was little significant change for now, as the law had not changed. Haringey SACRE is therefore legally obliged to continue with its Agreed Syllabus Conference work, as detailed in her presentation. The syllabus wording will be updated, and other adjustments made to ensure that it aligns with the National Statement of Entitlement prepared by the Religious Education Council (REC).

JMcG noted that Haringey teachers had asked for more planning documents, so she was working on these. She was also collaborating with Ealing, as agreed, to provide more definitions of RE-related vocabulary in order to increase knowledge and understanding.

The Awareness Mystery Value website was being updated, and any broken links were being replaced. JMcG thanked HSV for her contribution to this work, especially on supplying better links to Christian sites.

4.3 *New Ofsted framework*

JMcG reminded members that Ofsted had produced a new inspection framework in September, to come into effect this month (November). There was little change in relation to RE teaching, but the importance of high-quality teaching and good sequencing was underlined, as well as the need to allocate sufficient time for the subject.

JMcG added that a recent Ofsted inspection at a primary school in Barnet had looked at RE teaching in particular. This was something for all Haringey teachers to note.

4.4 *NASACRE*

As there is change in the offing, many local SACREs are engaging more with the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE) for support. NASACRE runs a programme of webinars and other events for SACRE members and the next is on 4 December. Further details will be provided as they arrive.

4.5 *Contacting MPs*

JMcG again urged members to write to their local MPs if they had particular points to make about RE teaching. Ideas for letter content are provided on page 13 of her presentation, and the details of the four local MPs are in the 11 September 2025 minutes.

4.6 *THEOS letter*

JMcG reminded members that, as discussed in the last meeting, the THEOS think tank had sent an open letter to the press about the significant reduction in the number of places where RE and theology can be studied beyond secondary level. The response has been disappointing and there was no mention of the issue in the Curriculum Review. As a

result, concern continues about where the next generation of RE teachers will come from. The bursary that trainee RE teachers could apply for has also been removed.

4.7 *Inter-faith Week*
JMcG reminded members that the 2025 Inter-faith Week was now running (9 to 16 November). Anyone participating should please report back at the 26 March meeting.

4.8 *RE Hubs*
JMcG again reminded the meeting about the RE Hubs website. Through this site, any member can book training that will enable them to become a voluntary, approved speaker about their faith in schools. Talks can be given in person or online.

4.9 *Dangoor Award*
Haringey SACRE received a 'recognized project' award from the Dangoor scheme.

4.10 *Westhill 'Living Voices' Project*
JMcG showed the meeting the timeline for the Westhill Project work and informed them that she was on track. The first £7,000 of funding for the project had arrived in October.

Planning for interviews with members of the Alevi community was ongoing. The project working party, CJ, FJ, HB, JMcG, RM and UC, had looked at the six areas of enquiry in the AMV curriculum, as shown on page 21 of the presentation, and agreed the focus for this project would be area D, Identity, Diversity and Belonging. The group had also put together a provisional list of interview questions for SACRE members to review today.

JMcG again introduced RM, who would be guiding the interview and videoing process. RM explained that the aim was to produce materials about Alevism that could be used from Reception to Year 9, both in lessons and more widely.

RM asked members to look at the interview questions they had been sent and consider both their content and whether any rephrasing was needed for primary-age participants. She underlined also that anyone could be interviewed for the project. As members knew, it was focusing on the Alevi community, but the process was not exclusively for them.

HB said she had already emailed JMcG about the questions. Primary school children would find them very difficult, so they needed to be simplified. She had already identified some Alevi children who were willing to participate and obtained the permissions needed.

UC agreed with HB. The questions would be challenging for Alevi children. Learning about Alevism in RE would be new for them and might feel rather threatening. Being asked 'What are the answers to life's big questions?' for example, would be too much.

RM asked UC whether he thought Alevi adults would be able to respond to the questions. UC said yes, but interviewers would need to bear in mind the background of discrimination, hostility and even massacres that Alevis had endured.

RM said she would have a meeting with JMcG to review the questions and check back with the working party. It might be possible to start the adult interviews now.

JP said she and HB were part of the Haringey Multi-faith Forum and had attended its youth group launch the previous evening. It would be good to get some of its members involved in the project. BK, a Haringey SACRE member, was Chair of the Forum.

HB asked if Alevis had to answer the interview questions. RM said the idea was to have answers from members of the Alevi community in the videos alongside answers from people of other faiths. JMcG added that it was very important to meet the Westhill funding criteria, but of course it was important to capture the views of non-Alevi children as well.

FJ said that HEP might be able to help provide members of other faiths to participate. HSV said she could probably find some Christian children for interview as well.

JP said she agreed with HB that some of the existing interview questions needed to be broken down to make them easier to understand. JMcG said the headline questions at the top of each section might seem hard, but they were broken down into 'sub-questions' underneath, and these were easier. UC agreed that the 'sub-questions' looked better.

JMcG said the working party would look at the questions again and reframe as necessary.

ACTION: Westhill Project working party to meet to review interview questions.

CJ said it was important to hear Alevis' own views before the questions were finalised.

HB said she needed a date for the interviews so that she could arrange for people to attend. RM asked whether Alevi children could be interviewed via Zoom. HB said she would need to be there with them and to know how the interviews would be organised.

RM said she planned to do one-to-one interviews with adults and older children over Zoom. HB said that would be fine.

RM asked if any adult at today's meeting would like to be interviewed for the project. CJ, HSV, PF and UC all put their names forward.

RM explained that she hoped to complete the adult interviews before Christmas. She would send participants the dates as soon as possible. She would probably interview children on 15 January, but this was to be confirmed.

JMcG asked RM to prepare one interview as soon as possible so that it could be shared as an example of what to expect. She also thanked the whole working party for its input.

ACTION: RM to prepare a sample Westhill Project interview to share.

4.11 *Agreed Syllabus Conference*
JMcG said that, as page 23 of today's presentation showed, she was on track with the syllabus work and continuing to collaborate with Ealing, as agreed.

Her work on the study programme grids could be seen on presentation pages 27 to 30. Grid 1 outlines the knowledge base teachers need to provide for their students. Grid 2 looks in detail at the six areas of enquiry. Grid 3 is designed to help students increase their knowledge of different religions and world views. There was still work to do here, as syllabus coverage of some world views was quite sparse.

JMcG had held a training session for Haringey teachers the previous day and they had loved the new grids. Many teachers are combining the HEP, Jigsaw and other syllabuses to produce an 'organic and creative' study programme for their schools. The grids will allow them to check their teaching is compatible with the legal requirements of the Awareness Mystery Value syllabus. JMcG's work will be to ensure that this is the case.

JMcG had also taken the opportunity to ask teachers how they thought the new syllabus could better reflect the make-up and beliefs of the local population. 2021 census data was now quite out of date, and many students were not religious. She and teachers needed to reflect on the choices they made when writing and teaching the syllabus. Barnet gives teachers flexibility around which world views to teach. Haringey may do the same.

4.12 *Annual Report*
JMcG said her next big project was to write the 2025-26 Annual Report. She needed to collect more data first but hoped to have the first draft ready by January 2026. She would then send it to a few people for review and share the final draft with all Haringey SACRE members before their next meeting (26 March 2026).

4.13 *4 June meeting*
Haringey SACRE's last meeting of the 2025-26 academic year was on 4 June. This was an in-person meeting and could perhaps be held at the Alevi Centre, as last year's was. It might even be possible to launch the 'Living Voices' videos then. RM said that it should at least be possible to give an update and presentation.

JMcG asked if members would like to hold this meeting at another place of worship or community centre. Each year's meeting could perhaps be held somewhere different. JP said the meeting could possibly be held at her synagogue. She needed to check the Jewish calendar first to see if there were any date clashes. However, SACRE members would need to be mindful of the current security issues. She would report back.

ACTION: JP to find out whether it will be possible to hold the 4 June Haringey SACRE meeting at her synagogue.

5. ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MEMBERS

5.1 There were no discussions under this heading.

6. AOB

6.1 JC thanked JMcG for all the work she had put in since the last meeting despite difficult personal circumstances. Members were all very grateful and their thoughts and condolences were with her.

6.2 TW had been expected this evening as a potential new representative for the London Diocesan Board of Schools, replacing Sally Moore. He had previously confirmed his attendance. CH to chase and find out if he can attend the 26 March meeting.

ACTION: CH to contact TW to see if he can attend the next meeting.

6.3 JMcG said she had already mentioned the work that Vanessa Ogden was doing (see 4.2 above) and wanted to explain more about her role. Dr Ogden had been appointed London Regional Director of the DfE Task and Finish Group. It would be her job to oversee engagement and to write a report containing recommendations for the future of RE.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.1 **Thursday 26 March 2026 at 5pm**, online.

The meeting ended at 7.02pm.

SIGNED: **DATE:**

NEW ACTIONS FROM TODAY'S MEETING

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
4.10 (1)	Meet to review interview questions.	**Westhill Project working party**
4.10 (2)	Prepare a sample Westhill Project interview to share.	**RM**
4.13	Find out whether it will be possible to hold the 4 June Haringey SACRE meeting at her synagogue.	**JP**
6.3	Contact TW to see if he can attend the next SACRE meeting.	**CH**

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 11 SEPTEMBER 2025

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
5.1	Include a question in the survey about members' willingness to participate in a range of other SACRE-related tasks. **13.11.25:** This had been done. FJ and JMcG to meet to review responses. FJ will contact members who expressed an interest in joining the syllabus working group or participating in other ways. CH noted that some members had not put their names on the survey, so could not be contacted. JC asked all those who had completed the survey to email CH so that she could fill in the gaps. **CARRIED FORWARD.**	**CH**

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 5 JUNE 2025

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OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 27 MARCH 2025

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
	N/A	

Continued

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 14 NOVEMBER 2024

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
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