



# Camden

London Borough of Camden

**ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23**

## **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL on RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)**

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## **Section 1 Introduction**

LB Camden SACRE continues to fulfil its statutory duties in what has been another challenging year for schools. Hybrid meetings have allowed there to be good attendance at meetings. This has ensured that the SACRE remains reflective of the local community and has representatives from the major religions and worldviews. I am pleased to report that we now have teacher representatives sitting on the SACRE. This is so important as it allows members to get a real sense of what is happening in the schools when it comes to the teaching of Religious Education and the delivery of Collective Worship and how best SACRE can support.

The self-evaluation toolkit continues to ensure the work of SACRE remains focused and key priorities identified. This year SACRE formed a working party to write advice for schools on collective worship. This was made available to schools in the summer term. Members of SACRE have continued to engage with schools seeking a determination, exempting them from offering a broadly Christian daily act of worship. SACRE were happy to renew a determination and were pleased with how the school had engaged in dialogue with its members.

SACRE has continued to develop the support it offers to schools around the teaching of RE. Primary and secondary RE networks have continued to flourish. We have seen an increase in numbers attending which is a clear indication that teachers are finding the sessions informative and useful. The meetings have provided RE leaders with quality training and the opportunity to share good practice and learn from each other. SACRE is extremely grateful to our consultant for providing the teachers with such high-quality input.

The Camden Agreed Syllabus was last published in 2018. An Agreed Syllabus conference was established to begin the process of reviewing the current syllabus and explore a range of options moving forward in 2022-23. SACRE want to ensure that they listen to the voice of the teacher and are able to offer an agreed syllabus that is rigorous and provides pupils and students with an ambitious and engaging curriculum. This work will continue into 2023 – 24. SACRE are fully aware that the GCSE and A level results are mixed. The results at GCSE are sitting just around the national mark and at A level A\* - B are below national. SACRE will need to explore further with schools how best they can support schools to increase the outcomes for students.

May I take this opportunity to thank all SACRE members for their commitment and willingness to sit on this advisory body. A special thank you goes to our consultant adviser who has stepped into the role mid-year and ensured that the body has remained focused and forward thinking. Claire's wisdom and guidance has been very much appreciated. As a body we are committed to working with schools to ensure that the RE provision is excellent and that high quality Collective Worship is offered, so that all our pupils and students can achieve and encounter something of the spiritual, social, moral and cultural aspects of life.

### **Mary Thorne (Group B) – SACRE chair**

## **Section 1 Overview**

Since 1988, it has been a requirement that every local education authority (LA) has a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

Though legislation sets out both the structure and the remit of a local SACRE - principally, overseeing religious education (RE) and collective worship (CW) - in practice every SACRE has developed its own particular style and character.

Camden SACRE, which began its work in 1989, has certainly developed its own particular style and character as this report will testify.

Some of the notable features of SACRE's work during 2022-2023 are included in this report, namely its support to schools and its involvement with our strategic vision of SACRE advising the LA around Religious Education (RE) and Collective worship (CW). Both sides of this work has involved SACRE working with different religion and worldview leaders and teachers across all key stages.

It is a legislative requirement that each SACRE produces an annual report of its work and that this is sent to the Department for Education (DfE), NASACRE, to local schools and to other interested parties. Camden LA makes this report available publically through their website.

SACRE met three times across the academic year 2022-23. This has ensured that SACRE has continued to be active and discharge its responsibilities fully.

November 2022	Hybrid meeting
February 2023	Hybrid meeting
May 2023	Hybrid meeting

(SACRE) is required, in accordance with Section 391(6) of the Education Act 1996, to publish an annual report on its activities. This report summarises its activities during the academic year 2021-22. Its current terms of reference, as laid down by the Education Reform Act 1998, are: “to advise the authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in county schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus as the authority may refer to the council or as the council may see fit.”

In particular, the SACRE is charged with the following responsibilities:

- It can require the authority to review the Agreed Syllabus on Religious Education.
- It may determine, on application by the headteacher that the requirement for Collective Worship in community schools to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character shall not apply to the Collective Worship provided for some or all of its pupils in a particular school.
- With the authority, to review the support offered for RE teaching, the methods of teaching employed, and teachers’ in-service professional development.

In addition, the SACRE has a direct role in the consideration and disposal of complaints related to the RE curriculum or Collective Worship. The SACRE will be asked to advise where complaints relate to Religious Education given in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus or to Collective Worship in county – now called community - schools.

Details of the work of the LB Camden SACRE can be found here:

<https://democracy.camden.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=173>

Agendas, minutes and associated papers can be found via this link:

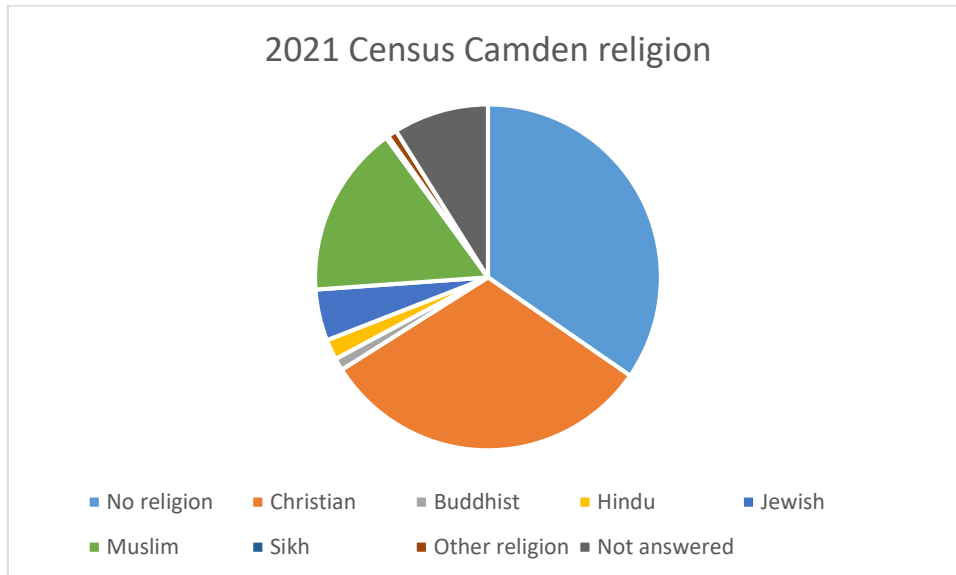
<https://democracy.camden.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=173>

### **Background to the Borough**

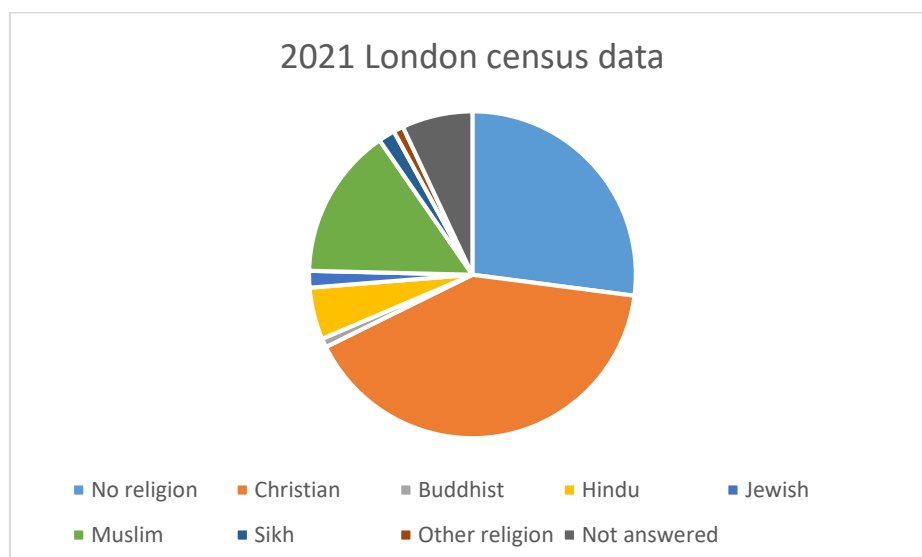
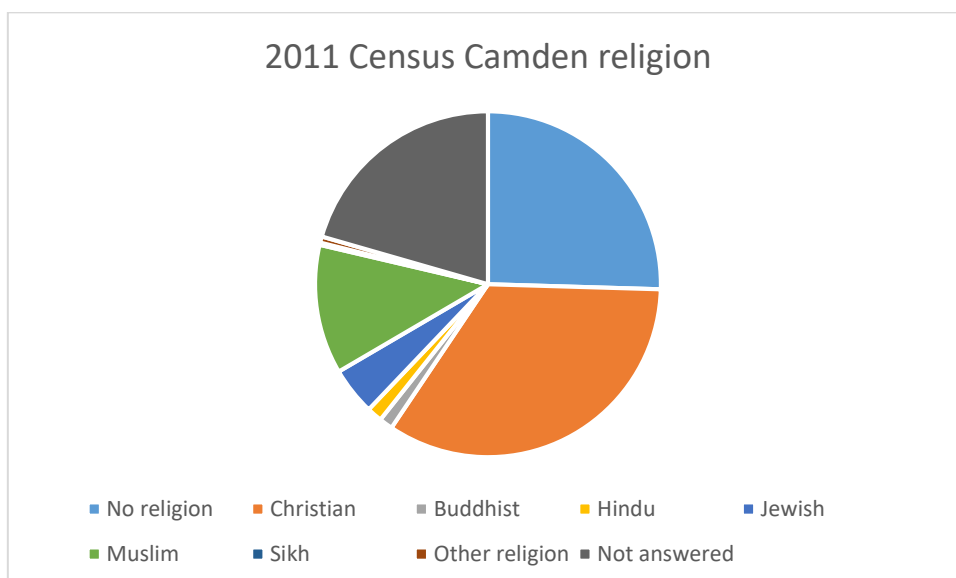
In the 2021 Census, figures clearly indicate that Camden is a multi-faith Borough; after Christian people (31%) the largest religious group in the Borough is made up of Muslim people (16%), then Jewish people (5%), Hindu people (2%), Buddhist people at (1%), Sikh people (0.2%) and other religions (0.8%). 35% of Borough state they have no religion, a figure that has grown by 10% compared to ten years ago.

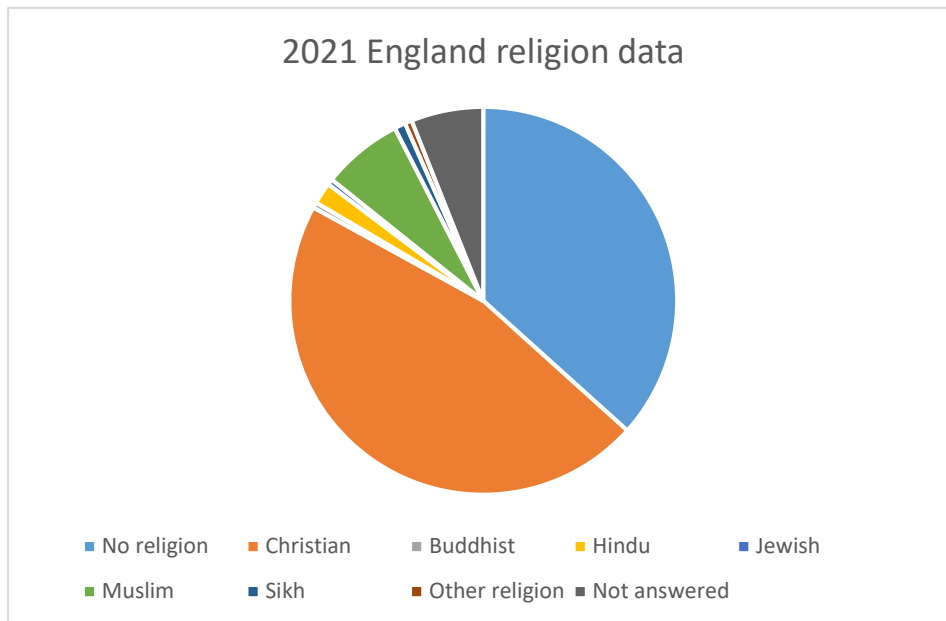
#### **2021 Camden religion data**

No religion	72776	35.00%
Christian	65980	31%
Buddhist	2410	1%
Hindu	3991	2%
Jewish	10079	5.00%
Muslim	33830	16%
Sikh	487	0.20%
Other religion	1842	0.80%
Not answered	18743	9.00%



When comparing Camden with London and England census results, SACRE would like to underline the big shift that has taken place in the borough over the last ten years in terms of the religious nature of the borough and the importance for the LA to ensure all teachers have access to strong subject knowledge around religion and worldviews.





According to the 2022 school census there were 21,225 pupils (Source: School Census, January 2022). This includes pupils attending school-based nurseries and 6th forms in Camden. Children aged between 0 and 19, equating to circa 10% of the population.

There were 128 different languages spoken in Camden primary schools according to the 2022 census, and 152 different languages spoken within secondary schools. The ten most spoken languages in schools were English, Bengali, Arabic, Somali, Albanian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Hebrew and Russian. Understanding and appreciating difference and diversity is an important value to support in schools.

Number of pupils	Language spoken
10,729	English
2,239	Bengali
1,125	Arabic
1,055	Somali
678	Albanian
430	French
397	Spanish
292	Portuguese
171	Hebrew
168	Russian

This diversity is seen within schools and again highlights for SACRE the importance of having well supported staff to be able to help pupils make progress academically as well as learn to live well with difference and diversity.

## Section 2 Standards and quality of provision of Religious Education (RE)

2.1 Within Camden, advice is available to schools around RE through four forms:

- The Camden Agreed Syllabus
- the SACRE consultant
- regular CPD opportunities for RE, and
- SACRE documents being sent electronically into every school.

- 2.2 The SACRE consultant has given advice to the local authority on a number of occasions in 2022/2023. Some of these have fallen into assistance with parental objections to a part of the school curriculum on the basis of religion. 21<sup>st</sup> century. Members of SACRE can play a vital role here as a bridge between the community and schools – often helping parents and carers to understand what a school can or cannot do in terms of religious provision for their child/children.

A larger piece of work for SACRE and the RE consultant was organising the review of Camden’s existing Agreed Syllabus, ensuring that the voice of teachers and schools was heard in any decision SACRE would make going forward.

- 2.3 Monitoring of RE in schools

Camden SACRE with Camden Learning have monitored RE in schools and have developed an action plan around providing further support for teachers in terms of network meetings at primary and secondary as well as monitoring the usefulness of what is presently provided through the agreed syllabus.

- 2.4 Complaints about RE

There have been no formal complaints received about RE from any B&D schools during 2022-23.

- 2.5 Public examinations

#### Summer 2023 GCSE provisional results - all pupils

#### Key Stage 4 - 2023 provisional

GCSE- Religious studies													
	Grade breakdown										RE cohort	Total cohort	% doing GCSE RE
	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U			
A	1	3	3	5	8	3	6	4	1	1	35	168	21%
B		1	1	2	7	2		2		1	16	150	11%
C	19	28	12	17	8	5	10	1	2		102	174	59%
D	1	1	1	4	4	12	11	8	2	1	45	173	26%
E	1	5	1	5	7	2	6				27	197	14%
F		1	3	3	2	3	3				15	178	8%
G	15	18	14	24	15	14	7	5	2		114	116	98%
H		5	10	23	18	17	19	14	8	4	118	134	88%
I											0	127	0%
J	10	16	13	23	18	14	23	25	5		147	152	97%
	47	78	58	106	87	72	85	59	20	7	619	1569	39%
Camden percentages	9-7 = 29%		9-5 = 60		9-4 = 72%		9-1 = 98%						
England (all schools)	9-7 = 30.8%		9-5 = 61.3%		9-4 = 72.1%		9-1 = 97.7%				224461		

#### GCSE provisional entries - boys

GCSE- Religious studies													
	Grade breakdown										RE cohort	Total cohort	% doing GCSE RE

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U			
A		2	1	2	3	3	2	4	1		18	103	17%
B		1	1	1	5			1		1	10	85	12%
C				1	1	6	2	4		1	15	95	16%
D	1	2		2	2	2	4	1			14	97	14%
E		1	3	3	1	3	1				12	131	9%
F		3	6	11	8	6	12	8	6	3	63	73	86%
G											0	127	0%
H											0	11	0%
I											0	13	0%
Camden	1	9	11	20	20	20	21	18	7	5	132	735	18%
percentages	9-7 = 15.7%		9-5 = 45.7%		9-4 = 60.75%		9-1 = 95%						
England (all schools)	9-7 = 23.8%		9-5 = 54%		9-4 = 66%		9-1 = 97%				103496		

### GCSE provisional entries - Girls

#### GCSE- Religious studies

	Grade breakdown										RE cohort	Total cohort	% doing GCSE RE
	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U			
A	1	1	2	3	5		4			1	17	65	26%
B													
C				1	2	2		1			6	65	9%
D	19	28	12	17	8	5	10	1	2		102	174	59%
E	1	1	1	3	3	6	9	4	2		30	78	38%
F		3	1	3	5		2				14	101	14%
G					1		2				3	47	6%
H	15	18	14	24	15	14	7	5	2		114	116	98%
I		2	4	12	10	11	7	7	2	1	56	62	90%
J	10	16	13	23	18	14	23	25	5		147	152	97%
Total	46	69	47	86	67	52	64	43	13	2	489	866	56%
Camden	9-7 = 32%		9-5 = 63%		9-4 = 73%		9-1 = 97%						
percentages	9-7 = 36.8%		9-5 = 67.5%		9-4 = 77.3%		9-1 = 98.3%				120965		
England (all schools)	9-7 = 36.8%		9-5 = 67.5%		9-4 = 77.3%		9-1 = 98.3%						

Looking to national standards, our Camden results sit just below or on the national average at GCSE as a borough. Boys do less well than girls in the results. This is something SACRE will consider in their 2024 meetings and give advice the LA on potential support that could be offered to Camden schools to see these results change and improve.

### Summer 2023 A'Level Religious Studies results

#### A Level - Religious studies and Theology



	*	A	B	C	D	E	U	RE cohort	Total cohort	% doing A Level RE / Philosophy
A	-	1	2	5	2	1	2	13	132	10%
B	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	109	0%
C	-	2	7	8	-	1	-	18	157	11%
D	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	3	81	4%
E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	123	0%
F	-	1	-	5	2	-	-	8	130	6%
G	3	11	8	5	1	-	-	28	210	13%
H	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	4	51	8%
I	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	86	2%
J	-	3	1	1	-	-	-	5	107	5%
Grand Total Camden	1	10	13	21	3	2	1	51	1186	4%
percentages England (all schools)	A*-A = 21%		A*-B = 46%		A*-C = 85.5%		A*-E = 95%			
	A*-A = 25.6%		A*-B = 55.2%		A*-C = 78.7%		A*-E = 97.5%		14,683	

**Girls**

	Religious Studies							Theology / Logic							RE cohort	Grand Total	% doing A Level RE / Philosophy
	*	A	B	C	D	E	U	*	A	B	C	D	E	U			
A								1	1	3	2	1	1	9	72	13%	
B														0	45	0%	
C			2	5	8		1							16	136	12%	
D						1	1							2	36	6%	
E														0	48	0%	
F			1		4									5	68	7%	
G		1	4	3	3			2	4	3	1	1		22	144	15%	
H				2										2	35	6%	
I					2									2	29	7%	
J			2	1	1									4	93	4%	
Total Camden		1	9	11	18	1	2	2	5	4	4	3	1	1	62	706	9%
percentages England (all schools)	A*-A = 30%		A*-B = 54%		A*-C = 88%		A*-E = 96%										
	A*-A = 26%		A*-B = 56%		A*-C = 80%		A*-E = 98%										

**Boys**

	Religious Studies							Theology / Logic							RE cohort	Grand Total	% doing A Level RE / Philosophy
	*	A	B	C	D	E	U	*	A	B	C	D	E	U			
A									1	2				1	4	60	7%
B															0	64	0%

C		2								2	21	10%
D					1					1	45	2%
E										0	75	0%
F		1	2							3	62	5%
G						3	2	1		6	66	9%
H		2								2	16	13%
I										0	57	0%
J	1									1	14	7%
Total	1	2	3	2	1	3	3	3	1	19	480	4%
Camden percentages		A*-A = 48%				A*-B = 79%		A*-C = 90%		A*-E = 100%		
England (all schools)		A*-A = 25%		A*-B = 53%		A*-C = 77%		A*-E = 93%		4446		

Looking to national standards, our Camden results are mixed. The A\*-C result sits 7% higher than the national average, but on the higher grades we on A\*-A's 4% lower and on A\*-B's 9% lower. sit just below the national average at 'A' Level as a borough. SACRE will need in investigate this data with schools to understand further how support can be offered going forward for the LA to action to ensure pupils are getting the best results possible. Boys grades at A\*-A are significantly higher than the national average, which is good to see.

## 2.6 Camden Agreed Syllabus

The Camden Agreed Syllabus was last published in 2018 and 22-23 saw SACRE establish an Agreed Syllabus conference and start the process of reviewing its present syllabus to make an informed decision about what to provide for schools going forward. Camden Learning with the SACRE consultant created a survey for schools to fill in and feedback their thoughts in summer term 23. The results of this told SACRE and the LA that:

- Teachers liked the use of concepts within the agreed syllabus;
- Teachers like the use of themes, which made it easier in primary to make links with other curriculum subjects as well as between different religions and worldviews;
- Teachers were clear that EYFS materials were limited and wanted more support;
- Teachers would like lesson plans and resources from which to be able to teach the subject with greater confidence;
- At Key Stage 3 teachers felt the syllabus was vague and did not provide clear example of what a scheme of work should look like, examples of challenge and assessment; and
- At Key Stage 4 & 5 there was very little advice on what should be covered and teachers would like further support and examples.

These results have led SACRE and the LA to think about provision going forward.

Camden Learning along with the LA have provided through the SACRE consultant a termly primary network meeting and attendance of the SACRE consultant at the secondary RE meeting. Teachers have said about these meetings: *"The RE network meetings are always informative and provide practical materials and ideas to take away and use."*

## 2.7 Attainment in RE

Ofsted reports have mentioned in 22-23 the following around RE and CW:

**Fleet Primary School October 2022:** Leaders create lots of high-quality opportunities for pupils' wider personal development. Pupils enjoy talking and writing about outings and visits to museums, theatres and places of worship. **Leaders also make sure that pupils are taught about important concepts, such as**

**democracy, respect and tolerance. When pupils are taught religious education, leaders organise visitors to come to the school. to speak to pupils about their beliefs. Leaders also arrange visits to local places of worship, including churches, synagogues, mosques and the local Buddhist centre. This helps pupils to build up detailed understanding of holy books, festivals and places of worship.**

**Parliament Hill School April 2023:** All pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 study citizenship, and pupils in Years 10 and 11 study either GCSE religious studies or citizenship. During these sessions, pupils learn about a wide range of topics, including human rights, international relations and managing risk. Pupils' personal development is also enhanced through the tutor programme, assemblies and enrichment days that take place each year.

**Our Lady's Roman Catholic School April 2023:** Teachers help pupils to learn about important topics such as equality, anti-bullying and British values, including through activity weeks. Pupils benefit from a carefully planned programme to support their personal development. It is well designed to ensure that pupils have the knowledge and skills to become successful members of modern-day Britain. Staff provide pupils with a wide range of enrichment activities. They plan very carefully visits which are seamlessly integrated to the school's curriculum. This includes visits to local museums and landmarks. Pupils' understanding of equality issues is profound and detailed, reflecting the values of the school community.

**Camden School for Girls June 2022:** Pupils said that they feel valued and show that they value others. They enjoy school and appreciate the diversity of their school community and its heritage. Pupils are proud of their involvement in school life. **Pupils enjoy theology lessons where they explore different world religions and challenge their own beliefs.**

**Brecknock Primary School March 2023:** They also learn about respecting people's rights and their responsibilities, and they are taught about different faiths and beliefs, such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

**Regent High School March 2023:** Pupils behave well and are proud to come here. They value the diversity of the school community and are welcoming to both visitors and new pupils.

### **Section 3 Standards and quality of provision for Collective worship (CW)**

- 3.1 Within Camden advice is available to schools around CW through the SACRE consultant. In 22-23 SACRE developed and published advice to schools around collective worship. Further details can be found in appendix 3.
- 3.2 The SACRE consultant has given advice to schools on a number of occasions in 2022-23. Some of these have fallen into assistance with parental objections to a part of collective worship. The meetings have provided schools and parents/carers with an opportunity to understand the legislation around collective worship.
- 3.3 Compliance with the statutory requirement  
  
In the year 22-23 SACRE formed a working group to write advice for schools on collective worship in Camden. The working group was made of the SACRE chair and SACRE members. The advice was passed and adopted in the February 2023 SACRE meeting and after that sent into schools by the LA and Camden Learning.
- 3.4 Determinations: There was one determination processed by SACRE in 22-23. This school was re-applying as their determination had run out. SACRE were pleased to renew this determination and were pleased with how the school had an inclusive, reflective programme of collective worship for all pupils that teachers and parents/carers were fully supportive of.
- 3.5 Complaints about collective worship: there were no complaints received by the LA or SACRE about collective worship in 2022-23.

#### Section 4 SACRE links with other bodies

Nationally: Camden SACRE is a part of NASACRE and the LA consultant is a member of AREIAC, NATRE and the NASACRE executive. SACRE members attended the NASACRE conference in May 2023 in London and its monthly webinar programme throughout the academic year. From these individual members gained a lot of ideas to bring back to what we could do as a SACRE in Camden.

#### Section 5 SACRE's own arrangements

SACRE has been quorate for all of its meeting in the year September 2022-August 2023.

#### Chart of SACRE attendance 2022-2023

Name	Group representation	15.10.22	7.2.23	9.5.23
Ann Boater (Quaker)	Other faiths group	Apologies	Y	Y
Lynndy Levin (Jewish)	Other faiths group	Y	Apologies	Y
Sophie Fegan (Roman Catholic)	Other faiths group	Apologies	Apologies	Y
Krishna Pujara (Hindu)	Other faiths group	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
Abdul Quadir (Muslim)	Other faiths group	Y	Y	Apologies
Sally Hay (Humanist)	Other faiths group	Y	V	Apologies
Felicity Djerehe	C of E group	Y	Apologies	Apologies
Stephanie Ellner	C of E group	Y	Y	Y
Mary Thorne	C of E group	Y	Y	Y
Rev Sally Jones	C of E group	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
Rev Damien Mason	C of E group	Y	Apologies	Apologies
Rev Natasha Beckles	C of E group	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
Paul Kayser	Teacher group	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
Sarah Richardson	Teacher group	Y	Y	Y
Judy Dixey (LD)	LA group	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
Izzy Lenga (Labour)	LA group	Y	Y	Apologies
Sylvia McNamara (Labour)	LA group	Y	Y	Apologies
Jenny Mulholland (Labour)	LA group	Y	Y	Y
Julian Fulbrook (Labour)	LA group	Y	Y	Y
Jenny Headlam-Wells (Labour)	LA group	Apologies	Y	Apologies
Nazma Rahman (Labour)	LA group	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
Lesley Prior	Professional Advisor	Y	Unwell	Unwell
Owen Rees	Camden Learning rep	Y	Y	Y
Vinothan Sangarapillai	SACRE clerk	Y	Y	Y
Claire Clinton	Professional advisor	N?A	Apologies	Y

## **SACRE costs**

During the year 2022-2023 three LA officers supported SACRE professionally and administratively:

- Lesley Prior and Claire Clinton as the Professional RE advisor;
- Owen Rees from Camden Learning, and
- Vinothan Sangarapillai as Clerk to SACRE.

### *Finance*

The sum of £10,080 was made available through the LA to support the work of SACRE during the year. The sum covered the cost of employing an RE consultant, the cost of clerking SACRE, membership of NASACRE and attending conferences and refreshments. (These figures break down as: £3365 for the clerk to SACRE; NASACRE membership £105; RE Advisor consultant £3000; NASACRE conference attendance and travel £110; NASACRE webinar programme £50; Camden Learning management £3450).

# Appendix 1

## Camden SACRE members – May 2023

The current members of Camden SACRE are:

### Panel A (Christian and other religious denominations)

Ann Boater (Quaker)  
Lynndy Levin (Jewish)  
Sophie Fegan (Roman Catholic)  
Krishna Pujara (Hindu)  
Abdul Quadir (Muslim)  
Sally Hay (Humanist)

### Panel B (Church of England)

Felicity Djerehe  
Stephanie Ellner  
Mary Thorne  
Rev Sally Jones  
Rev Damien Mason  
Rev Natasha Beckles

### Panel C (Teachers)

Paul Kayser  
Sarah Richardson

### Panel D (Local Authority)

Judy Dixey (LD)  
Izzy Lenga (Labour)  
Sylvia McNamara (Labour)  
Jenny Mulholland (Labour)  
Julian Fulbrook (Labour)  
Jenny Headlam-Wells (Labour)  
Nazma Rahman (Labour)

## Appendix 2

# Guidance on Collective Worship for non-denominational schools in the London Borough of Camden

## Section 1: Guiding statement

### Some key terms:

**Worship:** to take time to pay respects and give recognition to that which is of value. This is an Anglo Saxon word with the same root as the word 'worth'. The word was Commonly used in religious and other settings.

In the 1944 Education Act the distinction was made between Corporate Worship which may happen in a specific setting of a religious denomination and Collective Worship which was to happen in schools.

**Corporate worship:** worship experienced by people who belong to the same faith or share the same belief.

**Collective worship:** a moment of reflection or stillness experienced by a group of people who have different beliefs and commitments.

**Assembly:** an assembly is when a group of people gather together. An assembly is a gathering of all or part of the school. This can be for any purpose, this in itself is not required by law. Pupils may not be withdrawn from assembly and teachers and other staff can be required to attend it.

### What is meant by 'worship'?

The use of the word 'worship' can cause confusion because it is now most used in the context of a religious place of worship. The Act of Collective Worship in schools is forbidden from being from a particular denominational standpoint but it provides the opportunity for pupils to voluntarily and privately reflect on what is important to them.

The law requires collective worship to be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" (1996 Education Reform Act). We consider these requirements in Section 5: Legal Requirements (p. 3) and Appendix 1 (p. 4).

## Why Collective Worship?

In a speech to high school students the late American writer David Foster Wallace remarked, "There is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship." That may be money, beauty, power or intellect. Wallace was not a religious person. But for him, living well was learning to worship the right things and shaping your character according to good values.

So Collective Worship is the opportunity in the day for your school to focus on what is most important. It's a time to celebrate your common life, to reflect on the values that you want to shape your school and to form the character of the staff and pupils within it.

## Religious diversity

This Christian character does not and should not preclude the incorporation of other faith traditions or humanistic wisdom within the Collective Worship. It is not the "Corporate Worship" of the Church but an inclusive experience that "collects" the whole school together and imposes no beliefs or devotional practices on anyone.

Where the Headteacher, governors and parents of a school consider that they do not want to be tied to the “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character” clause in the law then there is the facility for the Headteacher to apply to SACRE for a Determination. (See appendix 3). If granted this does not lift the legal requirement for a daily act of worship and requires some sensitive reflection on the character of worship that may need to engage with interfaith resources and the broader values that underpin the school.

## **Section 2: What is the core purpose of Collective Worship?**

Collective worship is an integral part of the school life which supports the school’s vision statement or aims. It provides the opportunity for pupils to reflect on the spiritual and moral aspects of their day. It must comply with the requirements of the 1996 Education Reform Act (based on the 1988 Education act)

Collective worship reinforces the sense of the school community by giving pupils the opportunity to share things of worth with each other, within a reflective space.

### **Meaningful collective worship enables pupils to reflect on:**

- what it means to be alive.
- questions of meaning, purpose and value.
- the best that human beings can be – inspirational, exemplars (people of faith or not) who have demonstrated through their actions, lives and qualities. Examples will come from religious and non-religious sources.
- personal beliefs and values.

Be aware of the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the school by working within Equal Opportunities policies.

### **An act of collective worship should ....**

- respect the integrity and dignity of pupils and staff.
- be appropriate to the needs and interests of the pupils.
- be clearly distinguished from the everyday activity of the school.
- be inclusive so that everyone can both contribute to it and gain from it and participate in it if this is appropriate.

## **Section 3: What are the aims of Collective Worship?**

- To offer the time and opportunity for reverence, reflection, contemplation and if appropriate, prayer.
- To offer opportunities for awe and wonder.
- To offer opportunities for pupils to connect with each other and the world in which they live.
- To provide a context for a consideration of moral, ethical, social and cultural issues.
- To help pupils to develop thoughtful and extended responses to key questions eg climate change.
- To promote the spiritual growth and development of pupils.
- To foster a sense of community within the school and beyond it.
- To enable pupils to explore a variety of forms of worship - those with a religious commitment should have their experience broadened and deepened and those without should learn to appreciate what it may mean to others.
- To illuminate, celebrate and commemorate what has meaning, value and purpose for individuals, the school and the wider community.
- To celebrate difference and diversity.



## Section 4: What make Collective Worship a distinctive part of the school day?

**Collective worship should build a sense of shared ethos and values. It can provide a distinctive and different part of the school day in the following ways:**

- Create a calm and reflective atmosphere which is different to ordinary learning experiences.
- Enjoy silence and quiet time.
- Employ dance, movement and music where suitable; use candles, darkness, artefacts, etc to communicate a particular atmosphere.
- Avoid any sense that there is a 'right answer' to a question; collective worship is a time for curiosity and exploration.
- Create a sense of invitation rather than compulsion; pupils can think about something *if they wish*.
- Introduce pupils to a wide range of cultural, religious and linguistic forms, traditions and people for the sake of enjoyment of human diversity.
- Offer different responses to a theme from a variety of voices, especially ideas you wouldn't normally bring to class.
- Pupils' own beliefs, values, commitments and responses are very much the heart of the collective worship experience; this is not always true of ordinary learning activities.
- Don't avoid challenging, difficult or sad questions; they might not be solved but they are part of life.
- Invite local charities or activism groups (religious or otherwise) to show values in action.
- Celebrate the various successes of the school community, including attributes not measured by performance data like kindness, determination and courage.
- Invite a variety of speakers to show pupils the widest range possible of ways there are to be human!

## Section 5: What are the legal requirements for Collective Worship?

The Education Act of 1996 (based on 1988 Education Act) requires that collective worship in community and foundation schools should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character without being distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. This dimension is considered in Appendix 1 and 2 (p. 4 and 5)

Schools are advised to keep records of the content of collective worship, indicating elements of a broadly Christian character. Collective worship across in community and foundation schools is the broad responsibility of the local authority, with the Head of each school bearing specific responsibility. Also, to note:

- All registered pupils should take part in a daily act of collective worship. This includes children who are five years of age and sixth formers.
- The timing and organisation is flexible.
- Schools may apply to SACRE to change their Determination (religious character) for Collective Worship.
- Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship and need only write to the Headteacher to request this. They are not obliged to give a reason.
- Students in the 6<sup>th</sup> form can withdraw themselves.
- The school must comply with requests to withdraw; however, it is good practice for the Headteacher to invite the parent/carer in to discuss the issue.
- The school does not have to provide an alternative activity for withdrawn pupils but does have to ensure their safety. If appropriate, a parent can keep a child outside school during collective worship.
- A parent has a right to alternative worship on the school site, at another school or at another site at no cost to the school or local authority, which must be at the beginning or end of a school day and must not interfere with the pupil's curriculum entitlement.
- Teachers have the right not to take part in Collective Worship.
- Pupils must not feel pressured or compelled to take part in collective worship.

## Appendix 1: A broadly Christian character

The requirement to offer collective worship of a broadly Christian character will dismay and confuse some schools. This might seem highly inappropriate, even inadvisable, in some school settings.

Until a change in the law, how should schools respond? The following themes could provide opportunities to look at broadly Christian values, with lots of opportunities for wider religious and ethical exploration:

Authority	Forgiveness	Imagination	Renewal
Caring	Freedom	Joy	Respect
Celebration	Friendship	Justice	Reverence
Charity	Gratitude	Kindness to others	Sacred Art
Community	Goodness	Love	Sacred Music
Compassion	Goodwill	Neighbourliness	Sacred Writings
Creation	Grace	Relationships	Selflessness
Equality	Harmony	Peace	Service
Endurance	Holiness	Perseverance	Thankfulness
Family	Hope	Praise	Trust
Faith	Humility	Prayer	Wisdom
Fellowship		Remembrance	

### Useful websites to support Collective worship and reflection:

[www.assemblytube.com](http://www.assemblytube.com) is packed with clips and ideas to support assemblies at primary and secondary schools

<https://www.assemblies.org.uk/> Resources to assist collective worship for world religions and none.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/primary-school-assemblies-collective-worship-ks1-ks2/zmsnm39> Useful, varied and current audio resources.

<https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Prayer> Catholic ideas and resources with global themes.

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/schools> Christian Aid:

<https://www.fischy.com/> 'Songs for good times and tough times.'

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/> Good material for Holocaust Memorial Day .

<https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/> Very good reference for current affairs.

<https://www.picture-news.co.uk/> Picture News pulls on real life situation and up to date current affairs presented in an age-appropriate way.

[Assemblies for All](#) Humanist UK's website for FREE access to hundreds of high quality, inclusive assemblies for both primary and secondary schools.

Collective Worship and school assemblies: your rights: <https://humanists.uk/><https://prayerspacesinschools.com/> Variety of resources to help children to pray, reflect and be still in a creative and unthreatening way.

<https://www.imaginer.co.uk/roots-fruits/> a resource to support Christian worship and spiritual and moral development in schools.

Margaret Cooling: Wisdom of Worship - resource book

Margaret Cooling: Cracking assemblies – resource book

## Appendix 2: Prayer

The contents and method of collective worship are not specified, including the use of prayer. Pupils will have different understanding and experience of the word “Prayer”, both positive and negative. How should teachers understand the inclusion (or omission) of prayer in collective worship? Consider the following:

- There should be no expectation that pupils will pray. Words introducing prayer-like, such as ‘quiet reflection’ or ‘thinking about’, should be couched as an invitation rather than an instruction.
- Any invitation to pray is made for the benefit of those pupils to whom it is appropriate, if it is made at all
- The use of silence can allow space for prayer or reflection, on pupils’ decision.
- It might be occasionally beneficial to explain the difference between the words ‘prayer’ and ‘personal reflection’, to ensure pupils feel able to act in a manner best suited to them.

## **Appendix 3: Camden Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

### **Collective Worship: Applying for a determination**

#### **Advice to Headteachers**

##### **1. Background**

1.1 A determination from SACRE lifts the requirement of the Education Reform Act 1996 that Collective Worship should be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character".

1.2 The 1996 Act allows for applications to be made to the local SACRE "to consider whether it is appropriate for the requirement for Christian collective worship to apply in the case of that school, or in the case of any class or description of pupils at that school".

1.3 Paragraphs 68-81 of the DFE (Department for Education) Circular 1/94 summarise the position on determinations. If you consider that it is inappropriate for the school to provide collective worship "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character", you can apply to SACRE for a determination. The Act requires consultation with the governing body before an application can be made.

1.4 SACRE recommends that headteachers and governing bodies consider Camden's Collective Worship guidance, before making an application using the proforma provided by SACRE.

##### **2. Procedures for applying for a determination**

2.1 Collect data on the percentage of pupils belonging to different faith communities and include this with your application. Evidence that the family backgrounds of pupils are from a faith other than Christian or from a variety of religious faiths and life stances would be necessary for conclusion in favour of determination to be reached.

2.2 Discuss your proposal to apply for a determination with governors drawing their attention to the relevant sections of Circular 1/94 and the SACRE collective worship policy. Record the views expressed by governors, the voting outcome if a vote was taken, and the date of the meeting. Enclose this information with your application.

2.3 Seek the views of the parent body as to whether or not an application should be made. You are advised to write to parents, informing them of your intention to apply for a determination based on your policy for Collective Worship, and inviting them to respond if they object. A copy of this letter must be enclosed with your application.

2.4 Your application should demonstrate that the 1996 Act is being complied with, that is the school must organise a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.

2.5 If the school intends to adopt the SACRE policy, then the implication is that the determination will apply to the whole school. Your application should explain how all pupils would take part in acts of Collective Worship on a daily basis. Secondary Headteachers should note that the relevant requirements of the Act apply to all 11 to 19 year olds, apart from those sixth form pupils who have chosen to withdraw. Primary Headteachers should note that the requirements do not apply to nursery schools and nursery classes.

2.6 You should demonstrate that the school's approach to collective worship is in concert with the aims of school by providing a copy of the collective worship policy and programme.

2.6 You should apply using the appropriate form and sign the application, attaching all necessary additional papers:

1. Name of School
2. Name of Headteacher
3. Pupils for whom the application applies
4. Reasons for applying, including information on the percentages of different faiths (or none) in the school
5. Details of consultation with governors
6. Details of consultation with parents (include copy of letter or newsletter requesting views of parents) and any consultation with pupils.
7. Proposed organisational arrangements for collective worship
8. Proposed policy for collective worship
9. The statutory statement of the provision of collective worship intended for inclusion in the school's prospective.

### **3. Procedures for granting or rejecting applications**

3.1 SACRE should receive applications at least eight weeks before the meeting at which the application will be considered.

3.2 Initially, the written application will be scrutinised by the Professional Adviser to SACRE.

3.3 The school will be included in the SACRE visit programme prior to the application being heard.

3.4 Headteachers will normally be notified in writing of the date of the SACRE meeting at which the application will be heard. SACRE meetings are held once a term and Headteachers are invited to attend. The headteacher will be notified in writing, normally within two weeks, of the determination made by SACRE. If the determination made is to accept the application, it shall take effect from the date of that SACRE meeting and shall have effect for five years

## **Camden SACRE**

### **Collective worship: Procedure for reviewing a determination**

Schools are granted a Determination by SACRE for a period of 5 years. The following procedure for reviewing a Determination has been agreed by SACRE: -

1. The Clerk to SACRE will write to a school approximately 3 months prior to the date for review, asking if it wishes to renew the Determination.
2. If a school wishes to renew a Determination, it should seek the views of parents through a letter or newsletter.
3. The governing body should formally agree to apply to renew the Determination
4. The appropriate form and supplementary papers should be sent to the Clerk of SACRE.
5. Information should be provided by the school about the representation of different faiths (or none) as well as details of the current arrangements for collective worship.
6. The school will be included in the SACRE visit programme prior to the renewal request being discussed at a meeting.
7. At the next SACRE meeting the form and supplementary papers will be presented and members asked to renew the Determination or not.
8. The school will be informed of the decision and, if successful, the Determination renewed for a further five years.

9. If a school does not respond to the request to renew its Determination, the Clerk will write to the school for clarification.

## **PLANNING A SCHOOL POLICY FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

It is suggested that all community schools should appoint a Collective Worship Co-ordinator to lead a working party and/or the whole school staff in preparing and developing a policy document for Collective Worship

The Framework suggested below may offer some support in drawing up such a policy and could be used by a range of different schools.

### **1. BACKGROUND**

a) The school's current policy

- Is there an existing policy in school?
- What is the current practice in Collective Worship in the school?

b) The legal requirements

- What are the legal requirements for pupils in your school?
- Does your school meet these legal requirements
- What and where are the gaps?

Refer to "*Collective Worship - The Legal Position*", section 4

### **2. THE ROLE AND PURPOSE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN THE SCHOOL**

- The policy should include a rationale describing the contribution made by Collective Worship to the life of the school.

### **3. PLANNING ISSUES**

- Some information should be given to explain the way in which Collective Worship is organised within the school, with reference to groupings, locations, times, leaders etc.
- Example of the proforma used for planning and details of where planning/record sheets are stored in the school.

### **4. THE ROLE OF THE CO-ORDINATOR**

- Name the person responsible for Collective Worship in the school.
- What are her/his responsibilities?

N. B. Refer to her/his job description

## **5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- What issues need to be considered in connection with Collective Worship?

## **6. RESOURCING**

- What resources already exist and where?
- What are the priorities for future resourcing for inclusion in the School Improvement Plan?

## **7. SACRE DETERMINATION**

- Does the school have a Determination? (details should be given)
- Is the school planning to apply for a Determination?

Refer to *Appendix 3*.

**Schools which have completed a policy document for Collective Worship are invited to send a copy to Camden SACRE for reference.**

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