

Appendix 1

Note on the Constitution and Terms of Reference of Staffordshire SACRE

1. While the broad parameters of a SACRE's constitution are set out in statute, the local authority in question has the responsibility to put flesh on the framework of statutory parameters by specifying, after consultation and due consideration, which groups and organisations should be invited to appoint representatives to their SACRE, and how many representatives each group or organisation may appoint.
2. A SACRE's constitution is not static or fixed in stone; at the discretion of the County Council, additional groups may be identified who could be invited to appoint representatives. It is also possible for SACRE to allow groups to appoint representatives who may attend SACRE meetings as observers or co-optees, but who will not be able to participate in formal voting as substantive members of one of the four constituent stakeholder groups.
3. Members of Staffordshire SACRE are required to subscribe to a formal Code of Conduct which governs all the SACRE's activities. The Code of Conduct is designed to elicit mutual respect and inclusiveness, to forestall any possibly disruptive action, and to emphasise that SACRE members are there to collaborate in promoting good religious education in Staffordshire schools, rather than to be advocates for a particular cause or faith.
4. Meetings are deemed to be quorate if at least three of the four constituent groups are quorate. A constituent group is deemed to be quorate if at least one of its members is present. Quoracy levels have been set deliberately at this low level; in practice constituent groups habitually have more than one member present, and SACRE itself has never been inquorate. County Councillors on Staffordshire SACRE conspicuously support SACRE by their regular attendance.

5. The groups with members appointed respectively by the County Council, the Church of England, and teacher organisations have a clear and cohesive character. The fourth group, with members appointed by other denominations and religious bodies, is very diverse by comparison. There is significant support and participation from several free church representatives, and from Muslim and Baha'i representatives. It has been difficult to attract sustained participation from other religious groups. The Hebrew Congregation (Synagogue) in Newcastle-under-Lyme no longer has the capacity to be represented on our SACRE. A place for a representative of Humanists UK has not been filled for several years.