

Date: Monday 19 May 2025 | Venue: Stratford Town Hall, London

The 2025 NASACRE Annual Conference was held at the elegant Stratford Town Hall and brought together SACRE representatives from across the country for a powerful day of reflection, dialogue, and action. With the theme “SACREs Taking a Stand”, the event explored how SACREs can engage positively with controversial issues in today’s diverse society.

The day began with a warm welcome, networking, and refreshments, followed by an inspiring recorded message from Lord Khan of Burnley, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State. A response from NASACRE provided important context and direction for local SACREs. Dr Joyce Miller’s keynote presentation on identity, community, and commonality was a highlight, sparking meaningful table discussions on the contribution of religion and worldviews to schools and society.

Delegates were also updated on NASACRE’s transition to CIO status, with formal reports presented by the Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. An interactive digital session engaged attendees in real-time reflection, and a Trustee Panel offered the chance for open dialogue with NASACRE leaders. The announcement of the 2025 Westhill Award winners was a moment of celebration, recognising outstanding contributions to RE practice.

Afternoon tea provided a warm and social close to the day’s programme, celebrating the organisation’s achievements and welcoming new Executive members. Throughout the event, delegates praised the smooth organisation, lovely food, and the fantastic venue, which created a welcoming and professional atmosphere.

The day concluded with a strong sense of unity and shared purpose. Delegates now look forward to follow-up virtual workshops from 2–5 June to continue the conversations and build on the momentum of the conference.

Saquat Ali

NASACRE Treasurer

Good evening, I have just returned from the national NASACRE conference which was held today at Stratford Town Hall with a record-breaking number of SACREs in attendance.

Not only was the successful transition into a Charity organisation both explained and celebrated, but a video from Lord Khan (House of Lords) was also shared. Both were encouraging signs of and for the work towards social cohesion through all our SACREs, as was the announcement of the Westhill/NASACRE grant winners- congratulations to Barnet, Haringey, Sunderland and Camden SACREs.

A thank you was given to long standing members of the NASACRE Exec, and all SACREs were then invited to share a farewell to some and a welcome to some new Executive members from across the UK.

Following a survey, suggestions were made for how NASACRE can now continue to support all 151 SACREs across the UK, including as a national voice for RE with the DfE and beyond.

Dr Joyce Miller also gave a keynote speech, sharing the importance with relevant examples of how RE in schools can and should build on some of the recommendations from the CoRE Report. Whilst it was recognised that lots of work had been done to consider what is understood by "religion" and "worldview" there was also acknowledgement that RE learning could be further enhanced.

This included consideration of why more is needed than just teaching about Islam on its own to combat Islamophobia, and with the suggestion that by including an exploration of spirituality as part of the curriculum, we would enable pupils to more effectively "interculturally navigate" their own identity more inclusively to support appreciation of commonality and therefore more effective social cohesion.

All the slides from the conference will soon be made available to all 123 member SACREs via their website, but some of the key questions raised reflected some of those raised in our London region "In Conversation with NASACRE" events earlier this year, including:

- how inclusive are our SACREs, and how well does our membership and syllabus reflect our communities?
- how reflexive is the language we are using? Are we using terminology that groups people in ways they themselves would appreciate?
- even if a National model for RE is adopted by the government, what more can SACREs do to support effective social cohesion?

Stacey
London RE Hubs Lead