

17 February 2016		ITEM: 5
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Agreed Syllabus Conference		
A New Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2017/2022		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key	
Report of: Deborah Weston: Associate Adviser for Religious Education		
Accountable Head of Service: – Strategic Lead, School Improvement, Learning and Skills		
Accountable Director: - Director of Children’s Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

At the last meeting of Thurrock SACRE, it was resolved that an Agreed Syllabus Conference would be convened on the next scheduled date for SACRE; Wednesday, 17th February 2016. At this meeting the conference would consider a proposal to adopt the RE Today model syllabus for recommendation to Thurrock Council.

1. Recommendation(s) that SACRE:

That SACRE:

1.1 Convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference

That the Agreed Syllabus Conference:

1.2 Vote on the proposal to adopt the RE Today Model Syllabus

2. Introduction and Background

Every LA is required to establish and support an occasional body called an agreed syllabus conference (ASC)

An ASC must:

- produce and recommend to the LA an agreed syllabus for RE which is educationally sound and meets legal requirements

- with any sub-committee it may appoint,¹ meet in public, subject to exceptions in relation to confidentiality²
- unanimously recommend a syllabus for adoption by the LA (each committee having a single vote) - there are provisions for the Secretary of State to become involved where an ASC is not unanimous³
- include on any sub-committee at least one member of each of its constituent committees.

An ASC may specify what must be taught through the locally agreed syllabus. In recommending a syllabus the ASC may not specify the amount of curriculum time that must be allocated to RE by schools, but they may provide an estimate of how much time their syllabus would require, to help schools to plan their timetable.

Membership of an ASC

An ASC is required to be made up of four committees⁴

- Committee A – Christian denominations and such other religions and religious denominations as, in the opinion of the LA, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area;
- Committee B - the Church of England
- Committee C - teacher associations
- Committee D - the LA.

There is no legal provision for an ASC to include co-opted members, but it can seek the advice it considers appropriate from those it considers appropriate, to inform the development of effective RE provision in its area.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

SACRE made a request at the last meeting that the adviser consult with teachers over the proposal to adopt the RE Today Agreed Syllabus. Four responses were received to this consultation. These are reported in Appendix 1

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Having considered a number of different options for the new Agreed Syllabus, the consensus, supported by a sample of teachers and a governor, is that the RE Today model syllabus is the best option for Thurrock

¹ Schedule 31(6), Education Act 1996

² Regulation 3, S1 1994/1304

³ Schedule 31(10), Education Act 1996

⁴ Section 390(2) Education Act 1996; Schedule 31, para 4, Education Act 1996

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 Not applicable

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 Not applicable

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Shaj Sivadasan**
Financial Implications

The schools are responsible for meeting any costs associated with implementing changes to the curriculum, and these will have to be met from their existing Individual Schools Budgets.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**
Education Lawyer

This report asks SACRE to convene the conference as required by law. Details of the statutory framework are referenced as foot notes.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
**Community Development & Equalities
Manager**

The implications of this report are that raising standards in religious education in Thurrock will help students to gain more understanding of the religion or belief of people in the local and national community and therefore improve community cohesion.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

- Not applicable

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Not applicable

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 - Responses to consultation on Model Syllabus proposal

Report Author:

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