

3 June 2020		ITEM: 7
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education		
Supplementary Guidance on Progression within the Agreed Syllabus		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key	
Report of: Deborah Weston, Associate Adviser for Religious Education		
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Learning Inclusion and Skills		
Accountable Director: Shelia Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services		
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Executive Summary

In order to discharge its legal duties, SACRE monitors provision for Religious Education in its local area where RE is delivered in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus. Thurrock introduced a new Agreed Syllabus in 2016 and has conducted regular monitoring exercises to establish how effective the new syllabus has been in meeting its aim to raise standards of RE. The publication, by Ofsted of a revised inspection framework with a renewed focus on curriculum planning and design, has encouraged many schools to conduct a review of their curricula. Some of these have asked SACRE for guidance on progression within the Agreed Syllabus. RE Today have published guidance which, if approved by SACRE, can be distributed to schools as a supplement to the Agreed Syllabus.

1. Recommendation(s) that SACRE:

- **Consider the following:**
 - **the document, “‘Building progressions through your RE Agreed Syllabus’**
 - **directing the RE Adviser to write an article for the bulletin to commend the document to schools**
 - **request that the web-team, upload the document to the password protected areas of the website**
 - **resources known to them from a faith perspective that could be added to the resources section of the website.**

2. Introduction and Background

According to the DfE Guidance, [Religious Education in English schools](#)

A SACRE must:

- advise the LA on RE given in accordance with the agreed syllabus, and on matters related to its functions, whether in response to a referral from the LA or as it sees fit

A SACRE should:

- provide advice and support on the effective teaching of RE in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus; provide advice to the LA and its schools on methods of teaching, the choice of teaching material and the provision of teacher training

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 The publication of the revised inspection framework marks a significant change in the focus of the inspection of schools. Some schools have found these changes to be straight-forward and others more challenging.

3.2 Here are a selection of comments from Ofsted reports that highlight some of the opportunities and challenges:

“Although curriculum planning builds on previous learning, the quality is not consistent. Planning in geography, music and RE does not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their learning to secure knowledge. Leaders need to make sure that all subject plans provide the opportunity for pupils to apply and deepen their knowledge. “ - primary

“Across the subjects, planning is not effective enough. Leaders have not thought through the main things they want pupils to know and remember. They have not planned learning in a logical order. Consequently, pupils do not build on what they already know. This limits their progress. “ – primary

“The curriculum is well organised in English, mathematics, science, history and geography. Thorough planning in these subjects helps teachers to build on pupils’ prior knowledge and prepare them for their next steps in learning. “ – primary

“The curriculum is well planned in physical education (PE), science, mathematics, religious education (RE) and computing. The curriculum planning for these subjects shows exactly what pupils should learn each term and in each year. Teachers use the planning to make sure pupils learn what they need to and develop their learning from one year to the next. “ - primary

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 One of the responsibilities of a SACRE is to monitor provision for RE to be given in accordance with its Agreed Syllabus. Having monitored that curriculum, understood the changes to inspection and the challenges faced by schools, SACRE is in a position to provide guidance that will offer support.

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

- 5.1 Not applicable

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

- 6.1 The Local Authority reviews its Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education on a regular basis;
- Publishes an Annual Report of its work;
 - Offers guidance on resources and methods of teaching and in consultation with Thurrock Schools;
 - Monitors the quality of provision for RE and Collective Acts of Worship in Thurrock.

This exercise falls under the second element of this programme.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Strategic Lead Finance, Corporate Finance

There are no financial implications to this report since the actions will be conducted by the Associate RE Adviser as part of her work

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**
Deputy Head of Law

The legal duties on the advisory council are set out in s391 of the Education Act 1996. The main one is to advise the local authority on such matters connected with the religious worship in community schools or in foundation schools which do not have a religious character and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed or other syllabus as the authority may refer to the council or as the council may see fit.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Community Development Officer

The aim of sharing this guidance with schools is to support them to raise standards in Religious Education. Higher standards in the teaching of RE will help schools to fulfil their statutory duty to promote community cohesion and to encourage better respect and tolerance for those with different religions and beliefs.

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

- Not applicable

8. **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Building Progression through your RE Agreed Syllabus (Exempt)

Report Author:

Deborah Weston OBE
Associate Adviser for RE