

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

25 NOVEMBER 2020

2.00 – 4.00PM VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS



MEMBERSHIP

Cllr Roy Galley

Cllr Richard Stogdon

Cllr Colin Belsey

Cllr Philip Daniel

Cllr Trevor Webb

Carrie Beech (LA)

Claire Ramalli (Adviser)

Julie Stevens (Clerk)

Mr Peter White

Mrs Rosemary Roberts

Dr Brenda Vance

Dr Norman Williamson

Mrs Sarah Feist

Mrs Pamela Hartog

Ms Mandy Watson

Ms Elizabeth Coleman

Dr Tariq Rajbee

Mr Barry Blakelock

Mrs Laura Cooper

Mrs Claire Rivers

Mr Tim Telford

Mr Alistair Robertson (Observer)

AGENDA

Item

1. Declarations of any conflicts of interest

Welcome & Introductions – Cllr Galley

- Roles of CB/CR/CR

2. Planning to Review the East Sussex Agreed Syllabus

- Introduction paper – Carrie Beech
- Chris Hooper & Stephen Pett, presentation from RE Today

3. Feedback from Network meetings & CPD

- Secondary – Claire Ramalli
- Primary – Claire Rivers

4. Feedback from Schools Working Group – Barry Blakelock

5. Update on Social Media profile – Tim Telford

6. Development Plan – Carrie Beech/Cllr Galley

7. Budget update – Carrie Beech

8. Any other business

- Lilian Weatherley – Cllr Galley
- National update: RE Council & NASACRE – Cllr Galley

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Carrie Beech (LA)	Mrs Pamela Hartog	Mr Alistair Robertson (Observer)
Claire Ramalli (Adviser)	Ms Mandy Watson	
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A G E N D A

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SACRE Paper with options for revising the Agreed Syllabus

The legal requirements:

- SACRE must review its RE Agreed Syllabus every five years
- An Agreed Syllabus Conference is to be set up to conduct the review

An agreed syllabus must *'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.'*

Education Act (1996 Section 375 (3))/School Standards and Framework Act (1998, Schedule 19, para.5).

Introduction:

One of the most important functions of SACRE is to produce the local Agreed Syllabus as part of raising standards in RE. This needs to relate to the developments in education and the educational change agenda, such as, the new Ofsted inspection framework 2019, British values, National Commission for RE report 2018, RE and world views, RSE (Relationship and Sex Education) statutory requirements etc. It needs to be relevant and engaging for all pupils and promote greater participation, supporting high quality teaching and learning.

The current East Sussex Agreed Syllabus 'Continuing the Journey' was published for implementation from September 2017. This was an update on the previous Agreed Syllabus 'A Journey of Discovery' and was not a substantial re-writing at the time. The process for reviewing the Agreed Syllabus is to set up an Agreed Syllabus Conference to undertake the work and agree the new Agreed Syllabus for East Sussex. The timeline requires that the new Agreed Syllabus be in place ready for implementation from September 2022.

The purpose of this paper is to prompt our thinking, as the East Sussex SACRE, around the Agreed Syllabus and explore the options and agree the process for reviewing our current syllabus. We are all committed to ensuring that the quality of RE teaching improves across the county and that we have the right tools and expertise to support schools in their endeavours. We have an opportunity at this time to invest in the process with schools so that we have an up to date, inclusive and accessible Agreed Syllabus that supports children and young people to know and understand belief, faith, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the 21st Century.

Timeline:

The timeline for reviewing the Agreed Syllabus would be to be able to publish a new syllabus in January 2022 ready for implementation from September 2022. This means that the work needed to undertake the review and work with schools to arrive at the new syllabus needs to be happening over the coming year so that it can be approved by the Agreed Syllabus Conference which could be held in December 2021 ready for a January 2022 launch.

Feedback on current Agreed Syllabus:

In the autumn term network meetings for primary and secondary that took place in October feedback was requested in broad terms on the current syllabus, what works and what could be improved.

Broadly speaking RE leaders and teachers said:

- It is unclear to follow for new and inexperienced teachers
- Lacked 'meatiness' and structure
- Not easy to link in to Understanding Christianity that our Diocesan schools use
- The glossary of terms is useful
- One person liked the assessment element, others commented that assessment guidance needed improving
- The current Agreed Syllabus limits schools in terms of what they can do and what they can teach and is not interesting enough to engage children and young people.
- One of the strengths for primary was having a bank of resources to use and adapt as part of the curriculum, particularly around world religions
- Agreed syllabus feels too content based and not looking at the skill development and spiritual awareness
- Feedback from the secondary RE Hub:
- Some secondary schools are following the current syllabus whilst others are not. A number of schools are academies so are not required to follow the locally agreed syllabi.
- Request for humanism to be included at KS3
- An option for the six major world religions to be taught at KS3
- The current syllabus is outdated and not an easily useable document

This is only the initial feedback and it would be helpful to set up some further focus groups with schools to get some more detailed feedback on thoughts around both the current Agreed Syllabus and any ideas and thoughts to inform the new Agreed Syllabus.

Options:

Option 1:

- *Tweak the current Agreed Syllabus but basically keep it very much as it is from within our own resources.*

Comments: Early indications are that the current ES Agreed Syllabus is in need of significant updating. We know a number of academies choose not to use it and primary schools often find it cumbersome to work with. As it was already an updated version of the 2012 Agreed Syllabus it is probably time to do a more comprehensive update.

Option 2:

- *Review and rewrite the syllabus in detail in East Sussex from within our own resources or with the support of an external organisation or additional capacity.*

Comments: To do this would be a huge undertaking and would require significant resource both financial and in terms of time and expertise. The principle of a more major rewrite is probably right but the mechanism for doing this needs careful consideration and planning for the best way in which to do this work.

Option 3:

- *Commission an external provider, for example, RE Today the national charitable organisation that supports the teaching of RE and works with SACREs nationally to work with us and adopt one of their already developed syllabi. Possibly Adopt the RE Today Syllabus or A or the RE Today Syllabus B.*

Comments: RE Today is working with around 30 SACREs nationally and most of them have engaged with the syllabi that RE Today provides.

- The Model A syllabus is based on the older frameworks and provides the minimum to meet the SACRE requirements and although it provides a clear rationale an overall plan and assessment it is not as up to date as it could be and is a more thematic approach to teaching RE.
- The Model B syllabus is more up to date and provides an approach based on individual religions. It links to Understanding Christianity which our Diocesan schools all use and has the scope to include non-religious world views.
- Detailed units of work for primary and secondary schools are available, at an additional cost, to support the implementation of the syllabus along with clear assessment guidance. Normally a 5year license is bought on a per school basis which can largely be recouped from schools. Additional ongoing support is available from RE Today including CPD and resources and reduced cost membership for schools to NATRE.

Option 4:

- *Work with a local SE consortium of SACREs led by Hampshire to adopt the 'Living Different' syllabus that they are in the process of revising currently for implementation from September 2021. (The consortium is made up of SACREs from Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, Southampton, Chelsea and Kensington, Camden, Hammersmith and Fulham, Westminster.)*

Comments: The syllabus has a practical approach to teaching RE and is based on academic research involving key leaders in the world of religious education.

- It takes an enquiry-based approach and looks not only at the knowledge but how to develop skills and promote the engagement in the curriculum. This supports particularly the non-specialist teachers of RE so that they have both the content to be taught and how best to deliver it.
- They offer further support and training for both primary and secondary teachers, much of that is online currently and would need to know if this would continue to make is accessible for East Sussex should we chose to work with them.
- An ongoing licensing cost and charges for training and additional resources would apply in the same way as working with RE Today.

- The syllabus looks at expectations at the end of KSs and a strand that runs through is the question about why that belief or concept is important and this tracks through to the KS4 exam requirements, thereby giving a coherence to the total syllabus across all KSs.

Recommendations:

1. Consider the options for revising the ES Agreed Syllabus and broadly agree a way forward
2. Set up school focus groups linked to the Agreed Syllabus Conference to inform the decisions and the review process and engage more schools, academies and teachers in the process
3. Set out a more detailed timeline for developing and approving the new Agreed Syllabus

Claire Ramalli – Adviser to SACRE and SLE

Carrie Beech – SLES Representative and school improvement consultant

16 November 2020

SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020 – 2021

1 Monitor standards and provision of RE in East Sussex schools							
	Action points	Lead	Timescale	Success criteria	R	A	G
1.1	<p>Develop a simple questionnaire (survey monkey or email) to use in school visits and network meetings to inform the judgement of provision in East Sussex and planning for support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate all contact details for RE leads in all schools • Schools Group to revise the questionnaire 	RE lead / Clerk	Throughout the year linked to network meetings and visits	<p>Schools are compliant in meeting statutory requirements for the teaching of RE.</p> <p>SACRE has an improved understanding of the provision for RE teaching in schools.</p>			
1.2	<p>Establish an accountability framework that allows for a review of outcomes as part of the process.</p> <p>Due to Covid19 there will be no local and national comparisons for student outcomes from last academic year.</p>	RE advisor / Clerk	February 2021	<p>Increasing numbers of entries for GCSE RE short and full courses in more schools.</p> <p>% achieving grades 4+ and 5+ are at least in line with national average for the year.</p>			
1.3	<p>School visits planned to share good practice and take feedback from schools to inform the work of SACRE.</p> <p>Widen the number of SACRE members who undertake school visits. This can include virtual visits and schools focus group opportunities.</p>	RE lead / SACRE members	March 2021	<p>Programme of visits/online meeting opportunities planned and agreed at SACRE board.</p> <p>Visit reports evaluated to identify support needs and actions for schools and SACRE</p>			
1.4	Links to NASACRE and to SE SACRE Group to share and learn from practice in other authorities – RG on NASACRE and can feedback, CR and CB engaging with SE SACRE Group.	Chair of SACRE	Ongoing	<p>Chair and SACRE Adviser reports back to SACRE 3 times a year.</p> <p>Learning identified and used to inform practice in East Sussex.</p>			

1.5	Review a cross section of school websites to ensure that the RE curriculum is available and to identify any questions or concerns that SACRE might have. These may be passed to the Schools Group to follow up or for SACRE visits.	SACRE members, Chairman, RE Lead, Clerk	September 20 to March 2021	Improved standards of RE and pupil progress in East Sussex schools. All schools meeting statutory requirements.			
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2	Support the quality of RE teaching and learning in all schools						
	Action points	Lead	Timescale	Success criteria	R	A	G
2.1	Support the work of the Schools Group to work with schools to help improve the quality of teaching and learning in RE. Schools Group to report back on progress to SACRE.	Barry Blakelock	ongoing	Effective school to school support established. Increased number of SLEs for RE. Examples of improved quality of teaching and learning.			
2.2	Support the delivery of professional development for schools and governing bodies: a. Network meetings for RE subject leaders in primary and secondary schools b. Professional development programme planned according to identified support needs c. Primary Conference for RE Subject leaders planned d. Secondary conference as part of network group	Claire Ramalli for Secondary Claire Rivers Primary RE lead, Chair, LA representative and Clerk Claire Rivers and ESTSN Claire Ramalli	3 times a year Annual programme Term 2 Term 3	60% of schools engage in the network meetings. 30% of schools attend the annual conferences. 100% of evaluations from CPD events are good and better. Take up for CPD increases.			

	e. Training to be offered to governing bodies	CB/Governor Services	Term 5	Governing Boards are aware of statutory position of RE and are able to challenge their schools where they have concerns			
2.3	Further develop resources to support high quality teaching and learning in RE. This will be through signposting national resources and websites and sharing good practice.	RE lead and Schools Group	Ongoing	Examples of good practice and a range of resource materials shared with schools and feedback reported to SACRE. Profile of RE teaching and resources raised through social media platforms.			

3	Support the provision of collective worship and SMSC						
	Action points	Lead	Timescale	Success criteria	R	A	G
3.1	Monitor provision of collective worship through questionnaires and school visits	RE lead / SACRE members	Ongoing	All East Sussex schools meeting statutory requirements for Collective Worship.			
3.2	Develop a local policy for determination in relation to acts of collective worship. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review examples of other SACRE Determination policies Develop and consult on an ES policy Publish the ES Determination Policy on the website 	CRA and CB	June 21	Determination policy published and understood by schools.			

4 Improve effectiveness of role of SACRE							
	Action points	Lead	Timescale	Success criteria	R	A	G
4.1	Training and induction in place for SACRE members and annually reviewed.	SACRE support	Annually	All SACRE members fully aware of their roles and responsibilities			
4.2	Improve SACRE members' knowledge and understanding of the education context and the strengths and challenges facing East Sussex schools in relation to RE and collective worship.	RE lead, Chair of SACRE, LA Representative and Clerk	Annually	All SACRE members aware of the wider school context and specific performance in RE, Collective Worship and pupils' SMSC			
4.3	Increase the profile of SACRE in the community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend governor forums Photos of SACRE members on website Regular newsletters Pupil conference promoted by SACRE 	All SACRE members	Ongoing	All East Sussex schools and local and wider community aware of the role of SACRE			
4.4	Succession planning for SACRE – review membership and ensure full representation across all groups. Bring other members on board as identified to increase the expertise and support for the work of SACRE.	All SACRE members	Ongoing	SACRE skill set continues to develop and future members supported to engage with SACRE			
4.7	Annual report to Scrutiny Committee	RE lead / LA Representative, clerk and Chair of SACRE	March 2021	ESCC fully aware of effectiveness of RE teaching and learning and responsibilities of SACRE			

5 Review East Sussex local agreed syllabus for RE							
	Action points	Lead	Timescale	Success criteria	R	A	G
5.1	<p>Review of Local Agreed Syllabus in the light of national developments and feedback from schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SACRE to decide on the process for reviewing the syllabus Working group to look at the Agreed Syllabus and gain feedback from schools Agreed Syllabus Conference – to sign off the syllabus 	RE lead, Schools Group and SACRE	<p>November 2020 February 2021 Autumn 2021</p>	<p>Revised Agreed Syllabus published in autumn 2021 is fit for purpose and responds to national developments and guidance.</p>			
5.2	<p>Monitor national developments and changes at a which will impact SACRE’s views of syllabus development. For example, the National Council for RE Report 2018, Theos Think Piece, research and literary reviews, Ofsted inspection framework.</p> <p>National changes to be brought to SACRE meetings for discussion and agreement on actions</p>	RE lead and SACRE		<p>SACRE is aware of changes which are made at a national level.</p> <p>SACRE ensure that schools are fully aware of National initiatives and developments</p> <p>SACRE ensures that funding is in place to support schools with any key national initiatives</p>			

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