

# Agenda

## Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE)

Date: **Friday 13 March 2020**

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Time: **2.00 pm**

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Place: **Committee Room 1, Shire Hall, St Peter's Square,  
Hereford HR1 2HX**

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Notes: Please note the time, date and venue of the meeting.

For any further information please contact:

**Matthew Evans, Democratic Services Officer**

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Email: [simon.cann@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:simon.cann@herefordshire.gov.uk)

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# Agenda for the meeting of the Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE)

## Membership

### Group A

**Mr Burbidge**

**Canon Nugent**

Mrs Carolyn Ault

Mrs L Barker

Pat Burbidge

Ben Caldicott

Venerable Tsuiltrim Tenzin

Choesang

Stewart Debenham

Mark Harrington

Jonathan Nicholas

Anna Nugent

Tracy Westlake

**Roman Catholic representative**

**Free Church representative**

Bahai faith

Secondary School Teachers

Roman Catholic Representative

Primary teacher representative

Buddhist

Church of England

Church of England

County Ecumenical Officer, Herefordshire

Co-optee teacher representative

## Agenda

	<b>Pages</b>
<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> To receive apologies for absence.	
<b>2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)</b> To receive details any details of Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
<b>3. MINUTES</b> To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2019.	7 - 8
<b>4. RECOMMENDATION OF THE AGREED SYLLABUS</b> To recommend to the local authority an agreed Religious Education syllabus for Herefordshire.	9 - 16



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**SHIRE HALL, ST PETER'S SQUARE, HEREFORD, HR1 2HX.**

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**Minutes of the meeting of Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE) held at Committee Room 1, Shire Hall, St Peter's Square, Hereford HR1 2HX on Friday 29 November 2019 at 2.00 pm**

**Present:** Carolyn Ault, Lou Barker, Pat Burbidge, Ben Caldicott, Venerable Tsultrim Tenzin Choesang, Stewart Debenham, Mark Harrington, Councillor Liz Harvey, Councillor Jennie Hewitt, Jonathan Nicholas, Anna Nugent, Councillor John Stone and Tracey Westlake

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON**

Councillor John Stone opened the meeting as the outgoing Chairperson of the agreed syllabus conference and explained that the meeting of the agreed syllabus conference had been moved to 2.00 p.m. The meeting of SACRE would now follow the meeting of the agreed syllabus conference.

Councillor John Stone proposed Lama Choesang as Chairperson of the agreed syllabus conference which was seconded by Councillor Jennie Hewitt. The appointment of Lama Choesang was agreed unanimously by the agreed syllabus conference for the remainder of the current council term, until May 2023.

**RESOLVED: That Lama Choesang is appointed the Chairperson of the agreed syllabus conference until May 2023.**

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies received from members of the agreed syllabus conference. Kate Maygothling provided her apologies for the meeting.

**3. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)**

There were no named substitutes.

**4. MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting on 15 March 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

**RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting on 15 March 2019 are agreed as a correct record.**

**5. GUIDANCE FOR THE AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE**

The agreed syllabus conference considered a report by the RE consultant to select a syllabus option to progress for production. Stephen Pett, RE consultant introduced the report and explained that at the previous meeting the agreed syllabus conference had agreed that a bespoke syllabus would not be pursued due to the cost implications. The two remaining

options for the new syllabus consisted of the renewal of the current syllabus with supplements or the introduction of another 'off the shelf' syllabus, currently used in Gloucestershire, which provided a systematic approach to the teaching of RE and sought to examine religions in detail. The RE consultant provided a summary of the consultation conducted with teachers concerning the two options; there had been a mixed response but the majority of teachers had supported the introduction of the new model.

During the debate, members of the agreed syllabus conference considered the following points:

- The syllabus contained in option B complemented the approach at GCS;
- Option B was compatible with the Ofsted framework;
- The syllabus should contain local details regarding religions and places of worship in Herefordshire;
- There was scope in option B for the discussion of non-religious world views including humanism;
- Understanding Christianity was compatible with option B.

Lou Barker proposed that option B be progress to production which was seconded by Councillor John Stone and agreed unanimously by the agreed syllabus conference.

**RESOLVED: That syllabus option B is approved for progression to production.**

The meeting ended at 2.35 pm

**Chairperson**





<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE)</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>Friday 13 March 2020</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Recommendation of the agreed syllabus</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Director of Children and Families</b>

## Classification

Open

## Decision type

This is not an executive decision

## Wards affected

(All Wards);

## Purpose

In accordance with Section 35 of the Education Act 1996 the council is obliged to establish an Agreed Syllabus Conference to produce and recommend to the council an agreed Religious Education Syllabus for Herefordshire.

To recommend to the local authority an agreed Religious Education syllabus for Herefordshire.

## Recommendation(s)

That:

- (a) That the Model B syllabus is recommended to the local authority.

## Alternative options

1. There are three potential RE syllabus options open to the agreed syllabus conference to recommend to the local authority, as below:
  - a) The renewal of the licence with RE Today, which includes a supplement to insert into the 2015-2020 syllabus.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Matthew Evans, Tel: 01432 383690, email: Matthew.Evans@herefordshire.gov.uk

- b) Purchasing the licence for the use of RE Today's more recent Syllabus Model B the commissioning of a bespoke new syllabus from RE Today.
- c) The commissioning of a bespoke new syllabus from RE Today.

## Key considerations

- 2. At the meeting of SACRE held on 9 November 2018, it was noted that an agreed syllabus conference (ASC) would commence in March 2019 to review the religious education syllabus currently being used by Herefordshire schools. It is a requirement that the syllabus is reviewed, at least, every five years. The existing syllabus was last reviewed and approved in March 2015.
- 3. The meeting on 15 March 2019 of the ASC agreed the timetable for the progression of the new syllabus which would culminate in the recommendation of a syllabus to the local authority in spring 2020. A preference was expressed for options a and b (as outlined above under alternative options) and it was requested that consultation was conducted with teachers on the options.
- 4. At the meeting of the ASC on 29 November 2019 the outcome of the consultation conducted with teachers was presented to the meeting and it was agreed that option b should be progressed for production and presented to the current meeting for formal recommendation to the local authority.
- 5. The syllabus option selected for progression by the ASC will be made available at the meeting on 13 March 2020. The draft introduction to the Herefordshire agreed syllabus 2020-2025 is attached as appendix 2. At this meeting the ASC will be asked to recommend formally the model b syllabus to the local authority.

## Community impact

- 6. The provision of religious education and collective worship seeks to increase understanding and tolerance of all religions in all local communities. A stated aim in Herefordshire Council's corporate plan is to ensure that there is access to excellent education and learning opportunities at all levels, including early years/schools, Further Education, Higher Education and adult learning.

## Equality duty

- 7. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services., The provision of religious education seeks to contribute positively to the specific duty by increasing the understanding and tolerance of all religions in local communities.

## **Resource implications**

9. New funding arrangements following the abolition of the Education Services Grant in April 2017, require SACRE is funded from the Central Services Block of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) at £6,130 every year. Around £4,000 is spent annually on a contract with RE Today contract which provides for a current annual surplus of approx £2,130 which is accumulated each year to fund the syllabus review every four years. Currently the rolled over funds total £2,128 from 2018/19 and it is a similar amount that will be rolled forward from the current financial year to provide sufficient funding to meet the cost of the syllabus review in 2020/21, estimated at £4,185. Future underspends will be rolled forward similarly although the precise amount cannot be guaranteed as it will depend on the actual costs each year. If the syllabus review is every four or five years then the current funding arrangements will provide sufficient budget to meet the costs of both the annual service contract with RE Today and the syllabus review. This also provides for future inflation and a cost increase on the renewal of the SACRE contract which is currently provided by RE today.

## **Legal implications**

10. In accordance with Section 35, Schedule 31 of the Education Act 1996 the council is obliged to establish an Agreed Syllabus Conference to produce and recommend to the council an agreed education syllabus for Herefordshire.
11. In 2010 the Department for Education produced a document: 'Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010'. An extract from the 2010 guidance is attached at appendix 1.

## **Risk management**

12. During the production of this report there has been an assessment of the likely risk management implications. It is not considered that risk of any significance arises from the drafting or content of this report.

## **Consultees**

13. Consultation concerning those options proposed above has been conducted with teachers at schools across Herefordshire.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Extract from department for children, Schools and Families Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory Guidance 2009.

Appendix 2 – Draft introduction to the Herefordshire agreed syllabus 2020-2025

## **Background papers**

None identified

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

**LA – Local Authority**

**RE – Religious Education**

**SACRE – Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education**

**Extract from: Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory Guidance 2010**

## **The role and responsibility of an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)**

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 – as indicated earlier, this process should take account of the illustrative primary programme of learning and secondary programme of study but is in no way bound by them
- with any sub-committee it may appoint,<sup>20</sup> meet in public, subject to exceptions in relation to confidentiality<sup>21</sup>
- 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 unanimous<sup>22</sup>
- 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 committees<sup>23</sup> (see 'LA role', p.10).
- 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.

### **The agreed syllabus**

The locally agreed syllabus is a statutory syllabus of RE prepared under Schedule 31 to the Education Act 1996 and adopted by the LA under that schedule. It must be followed in maintained schools without a designated denomination.

<sup>20</sup> Schedule 31(6), Education Act 1996 <sup>21</sup> Regulation 3, S1 1994/1304 <sup>22</sup> Schedule 31(10), Education Act 1996, <sup>23</sup> Section 390(2) Education Act 1996; Schedule 31, para 4, Education Act 1996

Once adopted by the LA, the agreed syllabus sets out what pupils should be taught and can include the expected standards of pupils' performance at different stages.

Every locally agreed syllabus must reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.<sup>24</sup>

The law does not define what the principal religions represented in Great Britain are. ASCs can decide which are the principal religions represented in Great Britain, other than Christianity, to be included in their agreed syllabus.

Agreed syllabuses in any community school and any foundation, voluntary-aided or voluntary-controlled school without a religious character cannot require RE to be provided by means of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of a particular religious denomination.<sup>25</sup>

This prohibition does not extend to the study of catechisms and formularies.

<sup>24</sup> Section 375, Education Act 1996 <sup>25</sup> Para 3 of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998

## Forewords

To follow: from Chair of SACRE and representative from Herefordshire Council (Cabinet Member) or Chief Executive/Director of Children and Families.

## Introduction

The 2020 Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus has been created for Herefordshire SACRE and approved by Herefordshire County Council. It provides a syllabus for Religious Education (RE) for Herefordshire schools. Since 1944, all schools have been required to teach RE to all pupils on roll (except those withdrawn by their parents, see p. 9). RE remains part of the basic curriculum for all pupils.

This syllabus explains the value and purposes of RE for all pupils and specifies for teachers what shall be taught in each age group. It provides a coherent framework for setting high standards of learning in RE and enabling pupils to reach their potential in the subject. It builds on the good practice established in the previous Herefordshire syllabus. These elements will be familiar to teachers:

### Continuity:

- **Religions and worldviews:** The 2020 syllabus maintains the required study of religions and non-religious worldviews in each key stage, as in the 2015 syllabus. Teachers are still free to teach RE flexibly, through weekly timetabled lessons, RE days or RE weeks, for example, or a combination of different models.
- **RE and personal development:** The 2020 syllabus retains its emphasis on RE contributing to the personal development of pupils. RE is not simply about gaining knowledge and understanding about religious and non-religious worldviews. It also helps pupils to develop their own understanding of the world and how to live, in the light of their learning, developing understanding, skills and attitudes. It makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as important opportunities for exploring British values.
- **Open, enquiring RE:** The 2020 syllabus continues to offer open, enquiring, exploratory RE, suitable for pupils who have a religious faith of their own as well as for those who have no religious background – the latter form a substantial proportion of pupils in many of our classrooms, often the majority (note the local census statistics on p. 146).
- **Planning process:** The planning process that was integral to the 2015 syllabus has been retained. It encourages and empowers teachers to develop their own excellent RE lessons, taking them through the steps of using the syllabus to underpin their planning (long-, medium- and short-term) and creative classroom practice. It supports careful sequencing of lessons for pupils to retain their knowledge and understanding.

### New emphasis:

- **Coherent understanding:** There is an increased emphasis on helping pupils to develop a coherent understanding of several religions, by studying one religion at a time (systematic study) before bringing together and comparing different traditions (thematic study). The thematic study allows pupils to draw together their learning each year, as well as offering opportunities for retrieval and recall (see sample long-term plans p. 147).
- **Core concepts:** Clarity about identifiable core concepts of religions and beliefs helps teachers and pupils to understand how beliefs and practices connect, so that pupils are able to build effectively on prior learning as they progress through the school (see key question overview pp. 16–17 and concept outlines on pp. 137–145). The syllabus forms a 'spiral curriculum, whereby pupils encounter and engage with the core concepts on a number of occasions, embedding their learning.
- **Teaching and learning approach:** There is a clear teaching and learning approach at the heart of the 2020 syllabus, whereby all units enable pupils to 'make sense' of the religions and non-religious

worldviews studied, '**understand the impact**' of these beliefs in people's lives, and to '**make connections**' in their own learning and their wider experience of the world (see p. 13—14).

- **Assessment:** Flexible assessment opportunities are given, based on end-of-phase outcomes, linked to the teaching and learning approach. Each unit has specific outcomes that help pupils to achieve the end-of-phase outcomes (see pp. 18—19).
- **Understanding Christianity:** The 2016 resource from RE Today is being used in many schools in Herefordshire. This syllabus incorporates the *Understanding Christianity* approach, as well as a number of units, so that schools who are using that resource can be confident that they are meeting the requirements of the agreed syllabus with regard to the teaching of Christianity.

Draft