

# A G E N D A

## Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference

Date: **Monday, 20th March, 2006**

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Time: **2.00 p.m.**

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Place: **Council Chamber, Brockington**

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

*For any further information please contact:*

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**County of Herefordshire  
District Council**



# AGENDA

## for the Meeting of the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference

To: Councillor J. Stone (Chairman)

Cllr Mrs. W.U. Attfield, Mrs. C. Ault, Revd. P. Barlow, Mrs. J. Brown, Cllr P.E. Harling, Mrs S McCamley, Mrs A. Mundy, Mr. Z. Pandor, Mr. J. Rendall, Mr M. Rollnick, Mr K Scot and Revd. I. Terry

	Pages
1. <b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> To receive apologies for absence.	
2. <b>NAMES SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)</b> To receive details of any Member nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Conference.	
3. <b>MINUTES</b> To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 28th November, 2005.	1 - 4
4. <b>THE SECOND DRAFT HEREFORDSHIRE AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</b> To consider the second draft of the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, to consider any further amendments in the light of further consultation and to consider formally recommending the revised Agreed Syllabus to the Local Education Authority.  <b>Note: If the Agreed Syllabus Conference is minded to agree the Religious Education Syllabus then all Committees constituting the Agreed Syllabus Conference must UNANIMOUSLY AGREE to recommend the Agreed Syllabus to the Local Education Authority for use in schools for which, or for the class or description of pupils for which, it was prepared.</b>  (Copies of the second draft Agreed Syllabus have been issued to Members of the Conference and are available to the public on request.)	5 - 12
5. <b>ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW AGREED SYLLABUS</b> To receive a report on the Local Education Authority (LEA) proposals for the layout, printing, production, distribution, follow up training and provision of non-statutory guidance etc, connected with the issue and implementation of the new Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.	



COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the meeting of Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference held at Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Monday, 28th November, 2005 at 3.15 p.m.**

**Present:** Councillor J. Stone (Chairman)

**Mrs. C. Ault, Revd. P. Barlow, Mrs. J. Brown, Dr. D. Goodman,  
Mrs S McCamley, Mrs A. Mundy, Mr. J. Rendall and Mr M. Rollnick**

**In attendance:** Ms. K. Mayglothling and Mr K. Scot.

**6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr. Mrs. W. U. Attfield, Cllr. P. E. Harling, Mr Z. Pandor and Rev. I. Terry.

**7. NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

There were no named substitutes.

**8. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held 24th June 2005 be approved and signed by the Chairman.**

**9. ACTION PLAN FOR THE REVIEW OF THE AGREED SYLLABUS**

The Syllabus Conference were informed of actions taken to progress the RE Agreed Syllabus to the current draft stage and considered whether any revision to the Syllabus production action plan were necessary.

The Chairman thanked the Diocesan Authority for their hospitality in hosting the Syllabus Review Working Group meeting on 2nd November 2005. It was agreed that the meeting had been extremely productive in its analysing and drafting amendments to the Syllabus. Detailed consideration of the draft Syllabus is reported in the next agenda item.

The Conference acknowledged the work and leadership of the RE Consultant in compiling the re-drafted version of the Syllabus for consideration.

To clarify the actions needed to progress the review of the Agreed Syllabus Mr Rendall circulated an Action Plan and highlighted that the Working Party would meet in February 2006 to consider any feed back from the consultation with schools and produce a final draft for consideration by the Syllabus Conference at its meeting on 20th March.

The Syllabus Conference were advised that they were still on target to produce the draft Syllabus for consideration, and unanimous recommendation to the Local Education Authority, at its meeting in March 2006. However, the RE Consultant warned that it was still a tight timetable and a number of important administrative and

production issues still needed to be considered. These are reported in a later agenda item.

**RESOLVED: That the current position regarding the Agreed Syllabus production target be noted.**

## **10. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT AGREED SYLLABUS**

The Agreed Syllabus Conference considered initial recommendations and agreed a draft Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education for consultation with schools.

Arising from the drafting work by the Working Parties (involving teachers) culminating in the Syllabus Review Working Group (members of the Syllabus Conference) meeting on 2nd November 2005, and subsequent re-drafting by the RE Consultant, a draft Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education was presented for detailed consideration by the Conference. (Copies having been previously issued to Members).

During discussion the following principal comments were noted:

- In response to recommendations by the Secondary Working Party, who had specifically reviewed L6-Exceptional Performance, a number of changes were considered.
- Page 37. No major changes were proposed for Level descriptor 6.
- The Exceptional Performance level (EP level) had been very difficult for teachers to translate into teaching.
- Level 7 & Level 8 had been modified to ensure that each was challenging but achievable and to ensure that pupils performed at that level. This was particularly so where the Non-Statutory National Framework (NSNF) wording for Level 7 was considered not particularly helpful in this respect.
- The examples in the “I Can” statements were considered to be very useful.
- That the syllabus would need proof reading to ensure any grammatical errors are corrected throughout.

The following principal amendments to the draft were noted during discussion:

- Page 24. Wording for “Promoting values education” had now been received from Bridget Knight, Education General Inspector, and would be inserted in this section.
- Page 35 numbered paragraph 2 – the word “use” be deleted and substituted by “include wording in relation to the”.
- Page 37. An amended page 37 was circulated at the meeting. This indicated changes to Attainment Targets AT1 & AT2 by incorporating Herefordshire changes from the Non-Statutory National Framework (red wording). Minor changes to the summary statement, in the Level descriptor column of text, indicated amendments suggested by secondary teachers (blue wording). Elements from the Exceptional Performance level (EP level) had been integrated into level 8. The Herefordshire scale would therefore not have an EP level.
- As a consequence of changes to page 37 indicated above the “I Can” statements at page 41 would be revised to reflect the changes.
- The singular reference to Apostle be amended to plural.

The Syllabus Conference appreciated the considerable work and commitment by the

Working Parties and the RE Consultant in preparing the revised Agreed Syllabus to this draft stage.

**RESOLVED: That the above amendments be incorporated into the draft RE Agreed Syllabus and the revised RE Agreed Syllabus be issued as the consultation document in the Consultation Pack.**

## **11. FURTHER WORK TO PROGRESS THE SYLLABUS REVIEW**

The Syllabus Conference considered a number of issues as part of the review of the RE Agreed Syllabus.

### **The Consultation process.**

The Syllabus Conference debated options in relation to the level of consultation with schools and concluded that, while more expensive in terms of printing and administrative costs, to ensure early dissemination and to instil a feeling of ownership and inclusiveness, all schools rather than a sample should receive the full draft Syllabus and consultation pack.

### **Consultation Pack distribution and return**

It was suggested that consultation packs be issued at the Secondary School RE Co-ordinators meeting in January 2006. It was also suggested that the covering letter should suggest that the draft RE Syllabus could be discussed during a school staff meeting.

The consultation pack should include an easy to answer questionnaire to be returned by 31st January, 2006, a draft of which was suggested by the RE Consultant.

### **Consultation feedback and final draft**

Feed back from the consultation to be considered by the Working Party at their meeting scheduled for 8th February. A final draft RE Agreed Syllabus will be presented to the Agreed Syllabus Conference meeting on 20th March 2006 for consideration and recommendation to the Local Education Authority.

### **Design and layout of Syllabus**

The Syllabus Conference were reminded of the design and layout of the current RE Syllabus. The Syllabus Conference appreciated that the printing/production costs were currently unknown. However, they expressed a view that the current 4 ring binder was very useful format in that information can be inserted or taken out.

The Syllabus Conference appreciated that the foldout "Programme of Study Overview" at page 43 may cause problems with production. However, the general view was that it should remain as a complete document. It was further suggested that the "Programme of Study Overview" could also be offered by the LEA to schools as a laminated wall chart.

It was suggested that the LEA should also consider issuing the Agreed Syllabus in Compact Disc format thereby enabling teachers to 'copy and paste' sections to their individual work plans. The Agreed Syllabus should also be available via the Internet.

### **Use of Photographs/Art work**

The use of photographs e.g. pupils at work or visiting a place of worship, should be explored. While the LEA had a stock of photographs these may have been use in other publications. It was suggested that schools be invited to submit photographs for consideration. This invitation should be included in the covering letter in the

consultation pack. Appropriate permissions would need to be sought.

**Training for the introduction of the new RE Agreed Syllabus**

The Conference were reminded of the training provided for the current Agreed Syllabus and discussed the desirability of training being given in cluster area meetings in school time. The LEA advised that it could promote the courses in their training newsletter. However, due to the newsletter production timetable the dates and venues would need to be arranged well in advance.

It was agreed that the Working Party on 8th February, 2006, will assemble a programme of Inset training to implement the new Syllabus for confirmation by the Conference at its meeting on 20th March 2006.

**Non-Statutory Guidance**

The RE Consultant reported that Non-Statutory Guidance would be produced to support the new RE Syllabus. However, she warned that due to limited time and resources, the guidance may not be as comprehensive as previously issued.

**RESOLVED: That the above suggestions in relation to the consultation, production, publication training and issue of Guidance connected with the RE Agreed Syllabus be considered by the LEA and a report on their proposals be made to the March 2006 meeting.**

The meeting ended at 4.21 p.m.

**CHAIRMAN**



## SECOND DRAFT HEREFORDSHIRE AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Report By: **Committee Officer (Scrutiny)**

### Purpose

1. To consider the second draft of the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, to consider any further amendments in the light of further consultation and to consider formally recommending the revised Agreed Syllabus to the Local Education Authority.

### Consideration following further consultation.

2. The initial drafting work for the new Agreed Syllabus was undertaken by Working Parties involving teachers during 2005. The excellent work that resulted was given preliminary consideration on 2nd November 2005 by the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) Working Group, comprised of members of the Conference. The resultant first draft was formally considered by the Agreed Syllabus Conference on 28th November 2005. At that meeting the Syllabus Conference considered and approved a number of minor amendments and approved the resultant document for issue to all schools for consultation and comment (the consultation version).
3. On 8th February 2006, the ASC Working Group met again to consider the detailed responses received from schools arising from the consultation version of the syllabus. In light of the responses the ASC Working Group compiled a second draft for consideration by the Agreed Syllabus Conference.
4. A summary of the responses received from schools as a result of the consultation version together with the comments or suggestions arising from the deliberations by the ASC Working Group at its meeting on 8 February is attached at Appendix 1. A copy of the proposed second draft Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education has been issued as a separate document to Members of the Agreed Syllabus Conference. (Copies can be made available to the public on request).
5. In the light of the responses received the Agreed Syllabus Conference is requested to consider whether any further amendment is required to the second draft Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

### Recommendation of the revised Agreed Syllabus to the LEA

6. If, following consideration of the responses received during the consultation period and consequent slight redrafting by the ASC Working Group, the Syllabus Conference is minded to give its formal agreement to the revised Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, then ALL committees constituting the Agreed Syllabus Conference must **UNANIMOUSLY AGREE** to recommend the revised Agreed Syllabus to the Local Education Authority for use in schools for which, or for the class or description of pupils for which, it was prepared. If necessary the Clerk will advise further on the 'unanimous recommendation' procedure at the meeting.

## RECOMMENDATION

- THAT (a) the second draft Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education be considered in the light of the further consultation; and
- (b) subject to (a) above all Committees of the Agreed Syllabus Conference consider whether they wish to **UNANIMOUSLY AGREE** to recommend the revised Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education to the Local Education Authority.

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

- DFE Circular 1/94

# SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO SCHOOL CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT RE SYLLABUS AND PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAFT BY THE SYLLABUS CONFERENCE WORKING GROUP

**Report By: Consultant for Religious Education**

## **Purpose**

1. To report the responses made by schools to the draft Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE and consider amendments to the draft Syllabus suggested by the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASG) Working Group in light of the school responses.

## **Background**

2. At its meeting on 28th November, 2005, the Syllabus Conference agreed a draft Syllabus for consultation with all schools in the County and invited comments by way of a questionnaire.

## **Schools Responding**

3. The following schools responded to the questionnaire:

High Schools: 5 (Bishops/Aylestone/Wigmore/Minster College/Fairfield)

Primary: 24 (Ashfield Pk/Bredenbury/Brilley/Broadlands/Brockhampton/Burghill/Colwall CE/Dilwyn CE/ Eastnor/ Hunderton/Kingsland CE/Leominster Junior/Little Dewchurch/Llangrove CE/ Lord Scudamore/ Much Marcle/Peterchurch/ Pembridge/ St James/ St Peter's/Shobden/Sutton/Whitbourne CE/ Whitchurch CE)

## **Summary of responses as at 8 February 2006**

4. The responses received from schools have been summarised by the Consultant for RE. This summary, reproduced below, together with detailed comments from a school by letter, was considered by the Agreed Syllabus Conference Working Group on 8th February 2006. Their response and subsequent suggested amendment to the draft Syllabus are detailed later.

### **Overall responses to the syllabus**

**All** except one high school broadly in agreement with the proposed changes as set out in the draft Agreed Syllabus.

**All** found the syllabus sufficiently clear overall.

7 schools added comments – 4 congratulatory/ 2 asking if there was to be non-statutory guidance / 1 High School did not agree that KS4 RE should require accreditation / 1 query about whether reference to Gifted and Talented was included.

## 1. Expectations

Attainment targets: all agreed these are clear.

Expectations: all agreed these are clear.

*Learning outcomes in the form of 'so that they can....' All found these are clear and helpful – many positive comments. Only one school made a negative comment – preferring the structure in the 2001 syllabus that included non-statutory examples of learning tasks.*

Level descriptions: all agreed these are clear and helpful.

Pupil friendly versions of level descriptions in the form of sample 'I can...' statements all agreed that these are clear and helpful- many positive comments welcoming these – some asking for more examples to be provided.

All agreed that the syllabus provides teachers with a sufficiently clear picture against which to assess pupils' progress.

## 2 Programmes of study organised around key questions

All agreed with the use of key questions as the focus for planning teaching units.

Most agreed that the overview grid was helpful in making continuity and progression in RE from 3-19 clear. Comments indicated it was important to keep this as a complete page.

All agreed that amendments to programmes of study improved their clarity – many positive comments:

*E.g. 'I felt everything seemed a lot clearer than before and I found it easier to use them than in the previous document'.*

*'Format easier to follow'.*

*'Staff agree that the amendments make the programmes of study more concise and relevant to children's lives'.*

3 schools raised issues relating to planning and time:

*KS2 – 'I thought they were clear and useful already – obviously always room for improvement – my concern is time. Time for me to reassess and amend our school plans, time to encourage and guide staff and time for them to amend lesson plans and assessment strategies'.*

*'Previous 9 units were easily 'shared' between 3 classes in KS1 – now its 7 units between 2 classes, but Judaism covered in Yr 2 – this could lead to planning difficulties and will certainly involve alot of work in reorganising'*

*9 units at KS2 is never an easy number to plan between 4 year groups. Help with this would be welcome.*

(These concerns will be addressed through the non-statutory guidance to be issued with the syllabus)

## 2c. Key stage details:

All primary responses agreed that the Key Stage programmes of study are clear.

All secondary responses agreed that the key stage programmes of study are clear.

One primary school asked whether KS1 unit 1b should be 'and how are these important to Christians and Jews today?'

Many positive responses to Foundation Stage section e.g.

*'clear and helpful' and 'much better'*

*'Very clear, detailed and helpful'*

Additional comments about Foundation stage in response to Q4:

*'A fantastic addition!*

*'Reception teachers said the FS syllabus was clear, easy to follow. A lot of time would be needed to resource it properly e.g. funding and purchasing the books listed'*

*'Love the format for Reception e.g. Learning activities. It would be useful if KS1 & KS2 was set out in same way'*

#### Points for ASC to consider:

**Item 1:** Response to the High School's objection to the requirement to provide accredited courses for pupils in KS4

**Item 2:** Pie chart representations for AT1 & At2 e.g. pg 13 – one school asked for the words 'Their own' to be added into At2 – to read *How learners express their own responses and insights in relation to questions and issues of...*

**Item 3:** Should pg 44 (summary of questions) go before the overview grid on pg 43?

**Item 4:** Does the wording of the heading of the column for FS – Working towards the following ELG – the wording 'in order to differentiate...' need to be amended – one teacher commented that this was 'a bit fuzzy'.

**Item 5** Does the wording of the key question for KS1 unit 1b need amending – a school asked whether it should be *'and how are these important to Christians and Jews today?'*

## 2d Planning

All agreed that the syllabus was sufficiently clear that schools need to make a decision about how they are going to work with the units in the programme of study.

Several replies stressed the need for:

*'opportunities /courses available in which we can discuss how best to incorporate them into our long term plans?'*

*'the more detailed guidance that they have had before'.*

*'examples of whole school planners as before. Suggestions on which year group teach which programmes of study so that there is good coverage & progression'*

### 3. Religions and beliefs broadened

3 High /12 PRIMARY agreed that the requirements relating to religions and beliefs are clear but 1 High + 12 primary didn't respond to this (only question with no yes/no response – comment only).

Primary school question:

'What is the percentage weighting for religions?

KS1 50% Judaism 50% Christianity?

KS2 25% each of 4 religions or 50% Christianity + 50% other 3 religions? '

Primary school issue:

'Syllabus reminded us to draw on 'beliefs viewpoints and ideas of children and their families' – in context of the community very few have regular experience of church or any other religion meetings – so we are reminded that the onus is on the school to provide these experience based on little other experiences.

We questioned the inclusion of Judaism at KS1 – express a strong preference for an emphasis on knowing OT stories and other events from Christian Calendar. Questioned if KS1 was an appropriate time to explore beliefs and practices of Judaism when children have a very shaky understanding of Christianity. We think it is more appropriate to explore Judaism/Christianity in Yr 5/6. '

High school comment:

'Just my concern that the two religions chosen along with Christianity that have to be studied in KS3 Buddhism and Judaism have much fewer followers in the UK than Islam Hinduism Sikhism'

#### Points for ASC to consider:

**Item 6:** Does the wording of pg 17 of the syllabus need amending to clarify question about % time for different religions?

**Item 7:** Does the statement on Religions and beliefs at KS1 (pg 61) and KS2 (pg 73) need amending to stress the legal requirement that Christianity should predominate over each key stage but sufficient time is given to other key beliefs as required to ensure the outcomes of the syllabus are met?

#### Further comments relating to key stage requirements

**14-16** All 5 High schools agreed the amended requirements for 14-16 were clear

1 High school does not agree with the requirement for accreditation at KS4

**16-19** Only one school responded- and agreed that the requirements were clear but added the comment:

*'Except that I had to confirm the new stipulation about schools with a sixth form having to offer 'the option of at least one course in religious education' which hadn't been the case in the previous syllabus'*

### **Further comments received about the syllabus revisions/draft in general:**

*'Feel this is excellent!'*

*An excellent document, thank you for making it so easy to follow and understand*

*Thanks to all for all the hard work.*

*I found the whole document useful and informative.*

*There is some anxiety about further changes at this time when all we see is change. This is bound to impact on teacher stress levels as they try to assimilate new information and to accommodate necessary changes in practice. Will confidence erode further?*

*The revised syllabus is going to be very useful. Thank you.*

*Will we be having non-statutory guidance as before? Learning activities for FS are super – they would be useful for KS1 & 2*

*A well thought out, constructive and useful document. Thank you for your hard work.*

*A detailed response by letter was received from one school – which the ASC Working Group much appreciated.*

## **Amendments proposed by Agreed Syllabus Conference Working Group**

5. Having given due consideration to the responses by schools to the consultation the Working Group made the following comments or suggestions:

### **Item 1: Response to one High School's objection to the requirement to provide accredited courses for pupils in KS4**

This issue was fully discussed and the ASC Working Group recommended that the requirement be retained for the following reasons:

- County advice is that students taking courses in KS4 should be following an accredited course.
- The 2006 Agreed Syllabus draft is putting into place the strong recommendation of the national framework that all students should follow an accredited course in RE.
- All schools have had the opportunity to comment; only one school has raised this concern.
- The ASC recognise that for some schools it may be challenging to implement this in the short term – but all high schools should be moving towards providing appropriate accredited courses in RE as soon as possible.

### **Item 2: Suggestion that the wording of the diagram relating to AT2 (e.g. pg 13) be amended to include 'their own' to read *How learners express their own responses and insights in relation to questions and issues of...***

This was agreed.

**Item 3: Suggestion that the summary of questions on pg 44 should precede the overview grid on pg 43**

This was not agreed – it was felt that this acted as a summary and should therefore follow the main grid.

**Item 4: Suggestion that the wording of the heading in the Foundation Stage programmes of study be amended to aid clarity.**

This was not agreed – the Agreed Syllabus Conference Working Group felt that it was better to leave the wording as recommended by the Early Years consultants.

**Item 5 Suggestion that the wording of the key question for KS1 unit 1b be amended to put more focus on ‘how’ Jesus and Moses are important to Christians and Jews today rather than ‘why’**

This was not agreed. The ASC Working Group reviewed the wording and recommended that the wording should remain as in the draft.

**Item 6 & 7: Suggestions that greater clarification was needed about the requirement for Christianity to predominate and about percentages of time given to each required religion**

The ASC felt that the statement in the KS1 and KS2 programme of study ‘*ensuring that across the key stage the majority of this time is spent on a study of Christianity*’ was sufficient and allowed schools flexibility.

They decided that the phrase ‘*with enough time for other faiths to be studied at sufficient depth.*’ should be added to avoid other faiths being dealt with in a tokenistic fashion. This wording is drawn from the non-statutory national framework. It is recommended that this wording be added to KS1 (pg 61) KS 2 (pg 73 + pg 17).

## **The second draft Syllabus**

Arising from the deliberations of the Working Group the Consultant for RE has been tasked to amend where necessary the draft Syllabus to reflect the above suggestions and present the resultant second draft to the Syllabus Conference meeting on 20th March for consideration.

## **Acknowledgements**

The Agreed Syllabus Conference Working Group expressed their gratitude to all the schools who took time to respond to this consultation. They also recommended that the hard work by members of the teachers’ working parties should be recognised and thanks conveyed.