

AGENDA

Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference

Date: **Tuesday 1 December 2009**

Time: **3.15 pm (or on the rising of SACRE if later)**

Place: **Council Chamber, Brockington**

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

For any further information please contact:

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If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please call Paul James, (01432) 260460 on or e-mail in advance of the meeting.

Agenda for the Meeting of the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference

Membership

Chairman
Vice-Chairman

Councillor J Stone

Councillor WU Attfield
Mrs. C. Ault
Mrs L Barker
Revd. P. Barlow
Mr. P. Bowen
Mrs. J. Brown
Councillor P Jones CBE
Mrs G Jutle
Mr T Leach
Mrs S McCamley
Sr. D. O'Donnell
Mr. Z. Pandor
Rev L Rickards
Ms C Wolfe

Local Authority
Bahai faith
Secondary Teachers
Church of England
Church of England
Special Education
Local Authority
Sikh Faith
Church of England
Primary Schools
Roman Catholic Church
Muslim Faith
Free Church Representative
Jewish Faith

Non Voting

GUIDANCE ON DECLARING PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

The Council's Members' Code of Conduct requires Councillors to declare against an Agenda item(s) the nature of an interest and whether the interest is personal or prejudicial. Councillors have to decide first whether or not they have a personal interest in the matter under discussion. They will then have to decide whether that personal interest is also prejudicial.

A personal interest is an interest that affects the Councillor more than most other people in the area. People in the area include those who live, work or have property in the area of the Council. Councillors will also have a personal interest if their partner, relative or a close friend, or an organisation that they or the member works for, is affected more than other people in the area. If they do have a personal interest, they must declare it but can stay and take part and vote in the meeting.

Whether an interest is prejudicial is a matter of judgement for each Councillor. What Councillors have to do is ask themselves whether a member of the public – if he or she knew all the facts – would think that the Councillor's interest was so important that their decision would be affected by it. If a Councillor has a prejudicial interest then they must declare what that interest is. A Councillor who has declared a prejudicial interest at a meeting may nevertheless be able to address that meeting, but only in circumstances where an ordinary member of the public would be also allowed to speak. In such circumstances, the Councillor concerned will have the same opportunity to address the meeting and on the same terms. However, a Councillor exercising their ability to speak in these circumstances must leave the meeting immediately after they have spoken.

AGENDA

	Pages
1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN To note that the Local Authority has appointed Councillor J Stone as Chairman of the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference.	
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive apologies for absence.	
3. NAMED SUBSTITUTES To receive details of any Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
4. GUIDANCE FOR THE AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE To inform the Conference of a number of issues relating to the role of an Agreed Syllabus Conference and agree key principals and a draft timetable to guide the formulation of an Agreed Religious Education Syllabus.	1 - 8
5. AGREED SYLLABUS REVIEW - CURRENT POSITION The Consultant for Religious Education will report on the background work undertaken so far and propose areas of work to be undertaken.	

GUIDANCE FOR THE AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE

Report By: Clerk to SACRE

Purpose

1. To inform the Conference of a number of issues relating to the role of an Agreed Syllabus Conference and agree key principals and a draft timetable to guide the formulation of an Agreed Religious Education Syllabus.

Background

2. At the meeting of the Herefordshire Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held on 9 March 2009, SACRE noted that Herefordshire Schools are using the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus which was introduced in September 2006. It is a requirement that the Syllabus be reviewed every 5 years. Therefore the current syllabus needs to be reviewed and agreed for implementation by September 2011. Having considered the time needed to undertake consultation and redrafting of the Agreed Religious Education Syllabus, particularly in view of the changes to guidance and the introduction of the new secondary curriculum and the Primary Curriculum Review, SACRE agreed to recommend that the Local Education Authority re-establish the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference.
3. In accordance with Section 35, Schedule 31 of the Education Act 1996 the Local Education Authority (LEA) established a Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference to produce and recommend to the LEA an agreed Religious Education Syllabus for Herefordshire.
4. The Conference should be aware that the process of undertaking a syllabus review is governed by legislation and legal advice will be made available at the meetings as necessary.

Current Guidance

5. In late spring 2009 the DCSF produced a consultation document "Religious education in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2009" which is designed to supersede the guidance in circ DfE 1/94. At the time of writing the new guidance has not been confirmed, however, the basic principals governing the workings of an Agreed Syllabus Conference have not changed from those given in cir DfE 1/94 and therefore an extract from the 2009 draft guidance is attached at Appendix 1.

Key Principles for the Review

6. It is important that the review of the Herefordshire RE syllabus is linked to some key principles that provide both a foundation for the review and give direction to the task ahead. These principles will therefore provide an important reference point for those practitioners involved with any working parties formed to revise the syllabus and report back to the Conference. In accordance with the decision of SACRE on 9 March 2009 the Chairman (Cllr J Stone), SACRE Lead Officer (Mrs B Knight) and the Consultant for RE (Mrs J Mackley) have undertaken some preliminary work to inform

the Syllabus review. As a result the Consultant for Religious Education has compiled 6 key principles for the review for consideration (Appendix 2).

Timetable for the review

- 7 To ensure that the review meets the Syllabus implementation date of September 2011, the Consultant for Religious Education has compiled a draft timetable for consideration (Appendix 3).

Decision-making

- 8 On any question to be decided by conference, the representative committees, as outlined in Appendix 1 paragraph 5.4.2, shall each have a single vote.
- 9 Only an Agreed Syllabus Conference may recommend an agreed syllabus and its recommendation must be unanimously agreed by the committees constituting the conference.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT

- a) **the report be noted and the key principles for the review, set out in Appendix 2, be adopted and;**
- b) **the timetable set out in Appendix 3 for the review be accepted.**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- DFE Circular 1/94 "Religious Education and Collective Worship"
- DCSF - Religious Education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2009

Extract from DCSF Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory Guidance 2009

Section 5 – What Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education and local authorities need to know.

5.4 Agreed Syllabus Conferences

5.4.1 Role and working of Agreed Syllabus Conferences

Every LA is required to establish and support an occasional body called an Agreed Syllabus

Conference (ASC). Its role is to produce and recommend an agreed syllabus for RE which meets legal requirements and is educationally sound, and then review it every five years. An ASC can specify what must be taught through the locally agreed syllabus but it may not require schools to allocate particular time to RE in the curriculum. The guidance offered by the Framework provides a national benchmark for an ASC when revising its syllabus.

An ASC and any sub-committee it may appoint³⁸ must meet in public, subject to exceptions in relation to confidentiality.³⁹ Each of the four committees of a conference must cast its single vote in favour of a recommendation that an agreed syllabus be adopted by the LA before the LA can adopt that syllabus.⁴⁰ Any sub-committee of an ASC must include at least one member of each of its constituent committees.

5.4.2 Membership of an ASC

An ASC is required to be made up of four committees representing respectively:⁴¹

- A Christian denominations and other religions and religious denominations
- B The Church of England
- C Teacher associations
- D The local authority

There is no provision for an ASC to include co-opted members, but this does not mean that advice cannot be sought beyond its membership. Some individuals might be invited to attend all

38 Schedule 31, para 6, Education Act 1996

39 Regulation 3 of S1 1994/1304

40 Schedule 31, para 10, Education Act 1996

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

28 Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2009

meetings of the conference, and of committees of the conference, in order for their advice to be available to members of the ASC. For an ASC to work effectively and produce a syllabus, it is important that its membership is as inclusive as the law allows.

5.4.3 Nature of an agreed syllabus

The local agreed syllabus must meet statutory requirements and reflect breadth and balance in RE, particularly in taking into account local characteristics and circumstances. To ensure the effective promotion of high quality RE for pupils, it is recommended that an agreed syllabus should:

- provide a clear structure which users find easy to follow and which highlights the contribution of RE to the curriculum;
- ensure that learning in RE has both continuity and progression;
- have clear statements about expected standards and assessment arrangements;
- provide clear guidance about the process of learning which should underpin effective planning of pupils' learning in RE;
- provide appropriate levels of challenge for pupils of differing ages and abilities; these should be progressive and demanding but realistic; and
- reflect curriculum developments nationally (such as the aims of the curriculum, the use of key concepts and ideas, the personal, learning and thinking skills) to ensure RE is part of a coherent curriculum for all pupils.

The Framework is the basis for the illustrative non-statutory programmes for RE set out by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) alongside the National Curriculum. Both the Framework and the programmes of study, provide guidance on designing a RE curriculum for agreed syllabuses and for programmes of RE in schools with a religious character. To ensure a consistent entitlement to breadth and richness in RE for all pupils, and adherence to a coherent national set of standards, it is recommended that ASCs should use the illustrative programmes of study published by the QCA, as the basis for their development of the local syllabus. The ASC can interpret those programmes of study in the light of local circumstances, and to select appropriate content and construct learning experiences.⁴²

Syllabuses should enable schools to develop a balanced and inclusive approach to the organising of concepts, content, understanding, skills and attitudes.

⁴² Further guidance on this is to be found in *Using the framework to develop an agreed syllabus for RE*, published by QCA 2007, www.qca.org.uk/qca_7882.aspx

See also the aligned framework in the new curriculum, <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk>

Review of Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

The Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus is about to be reviewed in line with statutory requirements. The following draft suggests some principles to underpin this review.

Key Principles

The review and development of the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus will....

- ◆ ***be built on collaboration and consultation;***
- ◆ ***be evolutionary not revolutionary: build on the strengths of the current syllabus, taking account of the secondary curriculum changes from Sept 2008 and the primary curriculum review (2009f)***
- ◆ ***draw strongly on national developments in RE, particularly the non statutory national framework for RE 2004;***
- ◆ ***promote improved teaching and learning in RE;***
- ◆ ***provide support for teachers through non statutory guidance and training.***

Do these draft principles accurately represent the position of the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus conference?

APPENDIX 3

REVIEW OF HEREFORDSHIRE AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RE (2011-2015):

Provisional outline timetable for consideration by the ASC in December 2009 (for LA/ASC)

Date	Activity	By who?	Consultant days
Autumn term 2009	<p>Agreed Syllabus Conference established</p> <p>LA to identify funding to support the statutory review and implementation of the local Agreed Syllabus for RE</p> <p>ASC to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine the breadth of the Agreed Syllabus review. What needs to change? • agree some overarching principles for the review process • agree a programme of activities subject to funding: Required: ASC meetings; AS development; Recommended: teacher consultation/working groups/ implementation training • agree the form the revised syllabus should take (taking account of QCA guidance?) 	<p>Local Authority</p> <p>ASC (supported by consultant)</p>	<p>1 + 1 day prep</p>
BEFORE Feb 2010	<p>First draft of the revised 2011-2016 syllabus developed in line with ASC advice (taking account of QCA guidance to ASC's)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statutory section to be the main focus • non statutory – in outline only at this stage 	<p>SP (consultant)</p>	<p>8 days</p>
March 2010	<p>Draft circulated at least 2 weeks in advance of ASC mtg</p> <p>ASC meeting – review and amendment of draft. Direction regarding the non statutory section of syllabus to be given by ASC to consultant</p> <p>Teacher consultation group to be identified/established if possible- details conveyed to consultant</p>	<p>Clerk to SACRE</p> <p>SP/ASC members By ASC/LA</p>	<p>1 day</p>
		11 contract days from 2009-10 consultant agreement	
Following ASC	<p>Amendments made to draft (statutory section) in light of ASC recommendations</p> <p>Draft syllabus copied and sent to members of Teacher consultation group/s</p>	<p>consultant</p> <p>Clerk to SACRE or LA support personell</p>	<p>1 day follow up to mtg</p>

April– May 2010	<p>Consultant develops first draft of non statutory in prep for teacher discussion</p> <p>Teacher consultation group meetings (primary and secondary) - members to make recommendations for amendments - first draft</p> <p>1 meetings per group with following email responses from group members to consultant.</p> <p>Consultant produces Draft 2 to take to the ASC</p>	<p>consultant</p> <p>Teacher consultation group members</p>	<p>12 consultant days for this activity – as follows:</p> <p>4 days drafting</p> <p>Primary meeting (1 meeting days + 3 writing/prep days)</p> <p>Secondary group (1 meeting days + 3 writing /prep days)</p>
June 2010	ASC meet – Draft 2 – discussion, amendment and agreement of draft 2 of syllabus (Statutory + non statutory sections)	ASC	1 day + 3 days finalising docs
Autumn 2010	Teacher groups – development of sample units to exemplify the teaching and learning process advocated by the syllabus (4 primary /4 secondary?)	Working party + consultant	8 consultant days made up of: Primary meeting (1 meeting days + 3 writing/prep days) Secondary group (1 meeting days + 3 writing /prep days)
December 2010	ASC meet to agree the Syllabus – statutory and non-statutory elements – and recommend to the LA	ASC	1 day
Spring 2011	Final version of the syllabus (web-based?) designed and uploaded - or printed?	<p>LA</p> <p>External design consultants;</p> <p>IT support/web design;</p> <p>RE Today consultant</p>	<p>To be agreed</p> <p>2 days</p>
		28 consultant days 2010-2011 for Agreed Syllabus development work	
Summer 2011	CPD to support implementation of AS		To be agreed
Autumn 2011	New Agreed Syllabus implemented in schools		

Joyce Mackley RE Adviser RE Today
v.2 amended June 2009