

## The New Secondary Curriculum – RE

The roll out of the new secondary curriculum is now gathering pace; this brief document is to update you on what is happening, and to open up discussion about how SACRE can support the initiative.

### Organisation

NATRE and RE Today are working with CfBT to deliver the roll out on behalf of the DCSF (Dept for children schools and families). To achieve this **Dave Francis** has been appointed as the **National Subject Lead for RE**. **Rosemary Rivett** (National Association of Teachers of RE) is the project manager.

Both are in regular communication with the REC (RE council) and PREG (Professional RE group which includes NASACRE), and have their support for this significant initiative.

### Statutory Syllabus for RE

The statutory position of RE remains unchanged and the locally agreed syllabus (or aided school syllabus) has to be taught. The materials used will make reference to the non-statutory National Framework for RE (2004) and the revised Programmes of Study published by QCA in July 2007. For RE, these PoS represent minimal change due to the relative youth of the Framework; other subjects have seen much more significant changes and reductions in content.

This whole-curriculum initiative provides us with **a range of new approaches to consider, to enhance delivery of the agreed syllabus (or aided school syllabus), maximise student engagement and raise standards.**

### Regional Subject Advisers

In the **summer term 2007** some 200 advisers with responsibility for RE were contacted, asking them to suggest high calibre teachers (possibly ASTs, but not necessarily) who would be suitable for the role of **Regional Subject Adviser (RSA)**. There was a good response. All the suggested teachers were contacted, along with others, to alert them to the advert for the post of RSA. As a result, **32 RSAs** were appointed, almost all of them serving teachers, and with **between 2 and 5 in each DCSF region**. The RSAs will all be aware of the place and status of the Agreed Syllabus (or aided schools syllabus) but will not need to know the details and particularities of each one in their area. They will also be aware of the role of RE in the various types of school (e.g. community, aided etc).

The RSAs attended a briefing meeting on the **18<sup>th</sup> September**, during which their role was outlined and the process of identifying how that role might best be carried out in their local context begun. They are employed for just **2 days per month** between September 2007 and March 2008, which means that they will need to be very alert to opportunities for maximising their impact (e.g. a session at a teacher training event is more effective use of time than visiting an individual school). The initiative depends on the support of LA and/or Diocesan advisers.

**The RSAs will be adding temporarily to a region's capacity to support schools as they work with the new curriculum; they are not in any way a replacement for current provision.**

### **Senior leader training**

During the **autumn term 2007** training for senior leaders in schools will take place – this will be delivered by the NCSL (National College of School Leadership) and SSAT (Specialist Schools and Academies Trust). Although the Subject Associations are not involved in this, the curriculum messages are the same. At least one senior leader from every school (presumably the head) will be invited to a training event. Therefore, when the RSAs start work there will already be at least one person in every school who understands the initiative and is thinking of its implications for their school. ASPECT will be involved in this training, and they are also working with the Subject Associations on the subject-specific parts of the roll out.

### **Regional Conferences for Subject Leaders**

Between January and March 2008 there will be **one regional conference for RE in each of the 9 regions**. This will be for up to 100 teachers, plus subject advisers, and representatives of other stakeholder groups. The details of this are being worked out by CfBT – each subject will have the same opportunities. These conferences will be led by Dave Francis (National Subject Lead) and Rosemary Rivett, with input from the RSAs in that region. No dates are available for this as yet. As soon as they become available these will be circulated.

### **Materials**

The materials for this project will all be web-based. This is one of many ways in which this strategy roll out is different to previous ones. The website went live on 1<sup>st</sup> September, and some materials are already there. The majority of the subject-specific materials are currently being written and filmed, and will be available from 1<sup>st</sup> January (possibly slightly earlier). The web link is <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk>. This was mentioned in the QCA newsletter circulated earlier this week.

### **Diocesan Advisers**

RE today and NATRE are very keen to ensure that we have a comprehensive and up-to-date list of Diocesan and LA RE Advisers who work with secondary schools, so that they can be included in all updates. If anyone has been missed, please **send names and contact details to Rosemary Rivett**.

Rosemary Rivett  
Executive Officer, NATRE  
Director of Professional Services, RE Today  
Tel: 0121 430 2959  
Email: [rosemary@retoday.org.uk](mailto:rosemary@retoday.org.uk)

17<sup>th</sup> September 2007