

A confidential, draft model for the Agreed Syllabus had been circulated to SACRE members in advance of the meeting. Stephen Pett introduced the document, highlighting proposed new elements, and invited attendees to contribute local

information for inclusion in the working document; Mark Harrington was thanked for detailed comments and suggestions already provided.

The principal points of the discussion included:

1. It was intended that new forewords would be prepared by the Chairperson and by Herefordshire Council.
2. The inclusion of 'learning tool' icons, to identify ways of knowing / disciplinary approaches, was welcomed.
3. Attendees suggested and considered which places of worship, and other places special to pupils and their families, could be included as examples of places to visit within the county, or within reasonable travelling distance. Attendees also shared different visit experiences. Acknowledging challenges around travel costs, it was suggested that links could be provided to online searchable databases to help schools to identify their closest places of worship.
4. It was noted that the document would include local census data.
5. It was reported that matters to explore at the launch conference would include sample long-term plans and new units of work.

The Chairperson requested that any further contributions on this topic be provided before Monday 18 November 2024.

7. PROPOSED OUTLINES FOR 2025 RE LAUNCH CONFERENCES

Stephen Pett introduced the 'Launching the 2025 RE Agreed Syllabus' document and invited feedback.

Attendees discussed:

- The possibility of utilising a planned conference in Worcestershire on 25 June 2025 to brief Herefordshire secondary schools.
- The potential for a July date for Herefordshire primary schools, with Herefordshire Council to explore venue options.

8. ANNUAL SACRE REPORT DISCUSSION

A draft of the Annual Report September 2023 - August 2024 had been published on the morning of the meeting. Stephen Pett advised the meeting that all SACREs were required by law to produce an Annual Report; to be submitted to the Department of Education and usually copied to NASACRE (National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education).

An overview was provided of the key elements; it was noted that a foreword would be prepared by the Chairperson and examination results would be added once available.

The Chairperson requested that any changes or additions be provided before the end of November 2024.

9. THREE COUNTIES SECONDARY RE CONFERENCE 25 JUNE 2024 FEEDBACK

Stephen Pett reported on the evaluations from the secondary RE conference. It was noted that all respondents rated the overall value of the conference as 'excellent' (95%)

or 'good' (5%). Attention was drawn to the positive comments received and to potential areas for improvement, e.g. considering content from the perspectives of non-specialists.

10. TEACHER SUPPORT (NETWORK MEETINGS)

Tracy Westlake provided a verbal update on the last network meeting that had been held in September 2024. The key points included:

1. Seventeen schools were represented, including some in Shropshire and Worcestershire.
2. There was a need to raise awareness of the resources available through NATRE (National Association of Teachers of Religious Education), particularly for ECTs (Early Career Teachers).
3. The focus of the session was the 'School Linking Programme', run by The Faith & Belief Forum, which matched schools with different demographics. It was intended that a trial, 'Virtual Linking' project would take place during the current academic year, perhaps with one physical meeting of the two schools at a mutually convenient venue. The potential benefits of exposing pupils to diverse communities and beliefs, and education settings, were noted.

It was commented that the project could be informed by the experience of Stretton Sugwas CE Academy in setting up virtual links with schools internationally.

4. Participants made positive comments about the conference and the resources provided by RE Today.
5. The network discussed how to maximise the value from visits through planning and clarity of purpose.
6. In response to a question, it was reported that network participants did not have anything to add on the new syllabus.
7. It was noted that Kingsland CE Primary School would be holding an interfaith day in 2025.

11. SACRE TRAINING

Stephen Pett commented on the training and support offer available through NASACRE, including a virtual training programme and 'in conversation' regional online events; [link to NASACRE training webpage](#). It was reported that re-subscription to NASACRE was being progressed to enable access to the resources.

The Chairperson noted the potential for SACRE members to visit schools to share their beliefs and experiences. Attendees discussed:

- Potential methods to make the contact details of SACRE members available to schools.
- The RE Hubs project which sought to connect schools to trained and accredited speakers; [link to RE Hubs website](#).
- The courses involving different faith representatives available through the Diocese of Hereford.

- It was suggested that the local network group could invite interested SACRE members to attend online sessions on occasion, to establish connections and build confidence, possibly leading to invitations to visits schools in the future.

12. NATIONAL RE UPDATES FOR SACRE

Stephen Pett introduced the National RE Update for SACRE from RE Today (Autumn 2024). In particular, attention was drawn to the Curriculum and Assessment Review, set up by the Department for Education, including a call for evidence for people to share their ideas for potential improvements; the deadline being 22 November 2024. It was reported that NASACRE had urged SACREs to consider submitting evidence but recommended that unique responses be provided to ensure that repeated points were not filtered out. Comments were made about: how education was increasingly being talked about in terms of pupil wellbeing, as well as academic achievement; and the potential role of RE in exploring self-awareness and understanding of others.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was reported that the Hereford InterFaith Group, to mark National Inter Faith Week, were due to conclude a pilgrimage walk with a pancake brunch at Hereford Cathedral on 16 November 2024.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting was Friday 14 March 2025.

[Note: this was changed to [Friday 28 March 2025](#) subsequently]

The meeting ended at 3.34 pm

Chairperson