

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

The meeting will be held at **6.30 pm** on **8 June 2022**

This meeting will take place via Microsoft Teams

Membership:

Committee A:

Miss R Saul, Diocese of Brentwood, Roman Catholic Member
Mr J Hussein, Muslim Member
Ms H Kaur Takhtar, Sikh Member
Mr T Ojetola, Pentecostal Member
Mr A Kariyawasam, Buddhist Member
Mr L Trup, Jewish Member
Vacancy, Hindu Member
Vacancy, Free Church Christian Member

Committee B:

Mr P Anderson, Church of England Member
Mrs L Fry, Church of England Member
Ms L Olajide, Church of England Member
Mrs R Everett, Church of England Member

Committee C:

Ms H Martins, Teachers' Associations
Ms J Culloty, Teachers' Associations
Ms A Jellicoe, Teachers' Associations
Mrs C Pumfrey, Teachers' Associations
X1 Vacancy

Committee D:

Councillor Qaisar Abbas
Councillors Daniel Chukwu
Councillors James Thandi

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Minutes** **5 - 10**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education meeting held on 5 January 2022.
- 3 Items of Urgent Business**

To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 4 Declarations of Interest**
- 5 Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chairs**
- 6 Collective Worship** **11 - 18**
- 7 Agreed Syllabus Support Material Updates** **19 - 24**
- 8 Verbal Update on the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education queries about RE provision in Thurrock Academies**
- 9 Any Other Business**

Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Kenna Victoria Healey, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Agenda published on: **30 May 2022**

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1. If you are feeling ill or have tested positive for Covid and are isolating you should remain at home, the meeting will be webcast and you can attend in that way.
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DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;
- Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and
- leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
 - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
 - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
 - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together

2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
 - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
 - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
 - Fewer public buildings with better services

3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
 - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
 - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
 - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

Minutes of the Meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education held on 5 January 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Committee A: Miss R Saul (at 6.42pm) and Ms H Kaur (at 6.50pm)

Committee B: Mr P Anderson, Mrs Fry and Mrs Everett

Committee C: Ms Culloty, and Mrs Pumfrey

Committee D: Councillors Gary Collins, Martin Kerin and James Thandi

Apologies: Mr A Kariyawasam, Mr T Ojetola, Mrs A Jellicoe and Ms D Webster

In attendance: Deborah Weston, Associate Advisor for Religious Education
Andrea Winstone, Strategic Lead for School Effectiveness and SEND
Tony Ward, Strategic Lead for Teaching School Hubs
Kenna-Victoria Healey, Senior Democratic Services Officer

17. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2021 were approved as a true and correct record, subject to showing Associate Advisor for Religious Education agreeing to work with Thurrock BME Group with regards to improving the update of RE as a subject in Secondary Schools.

18. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

19. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

20. Teacher Education in Thurrock – the role of Teaching School Hubs

The Strategic Lead for the Teaching School Hubs presented a presentation to SACRE on the role of the teaching school hubs.

During discussions it was observed that making the offer of attending teaching school hub maybe more accessible for teachers a more efficient for them to complete courses. It was commented by councillor Collins he was surprised to hear there was a shortage of teachers within the borough. The Strategic Lead for School Effectiveness and SEND advised there was a national shortage of teachers and with help from the Teaching School Hubs keeping a focus and assisting schools with recruitment and retention, would also assist to help keep teachers in teaching.

Mrs Pumfrey explained to be a teacher you had to have a work life balance as even when in school holidays most teachers we're still working. The Associate Advisor for Religious Education echoed Mrs Pumfrey's comment I'm further stated with Thurrock being on the border of London and London having extra allowances applied it was more likely for nearly qualified teachers to seek employment in London rather than Thurrock.

The strategic laid the teaching school hubs thanked members for their feedback in stated it was important for schools to support each other but developing networks I'm working as a community.

The Chair suggested an additional recommendation proposing should it be agreed, SACRE was to have an update on recommendation 1.3 in the next 6 to 12 months. This was supported by all Members.

RESOLVED that SACRE:

- 1.1 receive a presentation from one of the Teaching School Hubs working in Thurrock.**
- 1.2 share their ideas about the strengths and weakness of teacher education for RE nationally considered in previous meetings such as:**
 - primary trainees receiving between 0-3 hours teaching on RE during their initial training (NATRE primary survey)**
 - lack of primary teacher confidence in RE subject knowledge (NATRE primary survey)**
 - insufficient supply of secondary RE specialists reported by Thurrock senior leaders**
 - the need for RE Teachers' Network group**
- 1.3 Agree a series of actions for establishing a partnership between SACRE and Teaching School Hubs serving Thurrock**
- 1.4 That SACRE receive an update on Recommendation 1.3 (above) in the next 6/12months.**

21. Annual Report 2020-2021 Thurrock SACRE

The Chair of SACRE presented the report explaining it outlined the work undertaken by SACRE over the previous year. He continued by advising the foreword had been circulated to all Members via email following publication of the agenda.

The Associate Advisor for Religious Education referenced the spiritual competition had by SACRE for local schools which had been included within the annual report. She thanked Mr Ojetola and Mrs Fry for presenting prizes to the winners. Mrs fry advised members she presented the winner at Purfleet Primary School and it was a pleasure to do so.

RESOLVED that SACRE:

- 1.1 Accept this report as an accurate record of its work for the period September 2020 – July 2021**
- 1.2 Requests that the Assistant Director Education and Skills continues to include discussions about RE provision in the scheduled discussions with senior leadership teams**
- 1.3 Requests that the school effectiveness team include a review of schools' provision for RE and Collective Worship as part of their annual conversations. Specifically, that they consider:**
 - **whether the level and quality of provision in academy schools is similar in breadth and ambition to that provided in LA maintained schools (i.e. through compliance with the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus including the knowledge, understanding specified and the standards for each key stage. This is the expectation of the DfE and Ofsted**
 - **If timetabling of RE in secondary schools ensures that those delivering RE are suitably trained/qualified to do so.**
 - **Whether RE is treated differently from other subjects on the secondary curriculum, such as being offered in tutor time, drop down days, taught by teachers who mainly teach other subjects etc.**
 - **the impact on pupil outcomes of the combination of subjects such as RE, RSE, Citizenship and PSHE**
 - **the level of training provided to those teaching RE in all phases especially when they have no previous experience of teaching the subject**
 - **the impact on pupil attainment of pupils being entered for a GCSE at the end of year 10**

22. Agreeing the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

The Associate Advisor for Religious Education presented the report to members following the June meeting which proposed that SACRE make a decision to renew its licence with RE Today to use its model syllabus A with additional material -model A+ as the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

Mr Anderson, Chair of SACRE proposed that members formed the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC). SACRE agreed to form the Agreed Syllabus Conference for the remainder of Item 7.

During discussions members commended on Appendix 2, the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus Review, during which it noted that not one school had asked for a new syllabus or new content which was pleasing to see. Members further noted there was a general satisfaction with the agreed syllabus with all Schools in Thurrock including Academies, who were not obligated to use the agreed syllabus doing so.

It was commented that from a teacher's point of view option A appeared to be the best option, as it included schemes of work which were good foundation and starting point for teachers.

The Strategic Lead for School Effectiveness and SEND echoed the view of teachers stating option A gave teachers the resources they needed and as teachers knew the bulk of the curriculum already, it would make teaching the subject a little easier. She continued option A it would just be introducing some new units which would offer a refresh for teachers, as they would not be teaching the same thing in the same way, maybe even a little refresh in material and some new current material.

SACRE Members highlighted some concerns with regards to the phrasing of some assessment titles within the syllabus, the Associate Advisor for Religious Education agreed to contact RE Today to seek if different or better wording could be used.

Members agreed they were happy with option A from RE Today in principle subject to any guidance received relating to being able to rename or reword assessment titles.

The Chair of SACRE suggested an additional recommendation that SACRE review and agree the detail of the supplement information within the Appendix 1 before formally agreeing the new Thurrock Syllabus. This was agreed by Members and the Chair stated he was happy for agreement to be received via email, given the timescales of meetings.

RESOLVED that SACRE:

- 1.1 Reconvene an Agreed Syllabus Conference (first meeting June 2021)**
- 1.2 Consider the results of the survey of teachers**
- 1.3 Confirm option A from the options set out in Appendix 1 from RE Today**
- 1.4 Review and agree the detail of the supplement information within the Appendix 1 before formally agreeing the new Thurrock Syllabus.**

23. Any Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

The meeting finished at 8.10 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**

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8 June 2022	ITEM: 6
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education	
Collective Worship	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key
Report of: Deborah Weston, Associate Adviser for Religious Education	
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Learning Inclusion and Skills	
Accountable Director: Shelia Murphy, Corporate Director of Children’s Services	
This report is: Public	

Executive Summary

One of the duties of SACRE is to monitor the provision of Acts of Collective Worship in schools in the local authority. In the past, the information that enabled a SACRE to fulfil this duty might have been provided by a specialist local adviser who worked full time in an area. Cuts in the budgets of local authorities mean that only a small number employ such an adviser. Thurrock SACRE is fortunate that the Council do fund a specialist adviser for a fixed number of days to support their work. Likewise, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) used to report on Acts of Worship but shorter inspections and a change in their focus means that inspectors do not systematically report on Acts of Collective Worship.

Thurrock SACRE reviewed the policies of a number of schools in the summer term meeting 2019 and summer term 2020 and reported to schools on their findings. This report proposes that SACRE review a third sample of policies on Acts of Collective Worship that appear on school websites to determine if anything has changed in the last year and to identify good practice. As with the 2019 and 2020 exercises, the aim of the exercise will be monitoring of provision and also for SACRE to become more informed about practice in local schools.

- 1. Recommendation(s) that SACRE:**
 - 1.1 Consider a sample of policies from Thurrock schools to determine how Collective Worship is offered in local schools in the light of the legal requirements set out in section 3 below.**
 - 1.2 Consider the advice sent to schools previously (Appendix 1) and whether or not any amendments need to be made to the advice in the light of any new evidence**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Acts of collective worship – traditionally called ‘assemblies’ by teachers and pupils alike – have long been a feature of British school life. The 1944 Education Act simply stated that each school day should begin with an act of collective worship on the part of all pupils in attendance at the school. The daily requirement was restated in the 1988 Education Act which also set out a series of new legislative requirements concerning the organisation and character of collective worship.
- 2.2 The government introduced guidance for schools in relation to the law of Religious Education and Collective Worship in the form of Circular 1/94. The Religious Education element of this document was updated by the publication of ‘Religious Education in English Schools’ in 2010 but no update was provided in relation to Acts of Collective Worship leaving schools with guidance that is more than 20 years old.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 What does the legislation require?

The legal requirements can be summarised as follows:

- 3.1.1. All registered pupils in state-funded schools should take part in a daily act of collective worship unless wholly or partly withdrawn by parents. The term ‘registered pupils’ includes students up to and including the age of eighteen years in a school sixth form or at a sixth form college but not pupils in nursery schools or classes. Students over the age of 18 are entitled to withdraw themselves from the Act of worship. Collective worship for special school pupils should be provided so far as practicable.
- 3.1.2 There can be a single whole school act of collective worship or separate acts for pupils in different age of school activity groupings.
- 3.1.3. Acts of collective worship can take place at any time of the school day and, with certain exceptions, should take place on the school premises.
- 3.1.4 In a community, academy or foundation schools (ie other than at voluntary-aided schools), most acts of collective worship each term should be ‘wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character’, that is, ‘reflecting’ the ‘broad traditions of Christian belief’ without being denominationally biased. But acts of collective worship should also be appropriate, having regard to pupils’ ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds.
- 3.1.5 If a community, academy or foundation school believes that the Christian character clause (4 above) is inappropriate for the whole school or certain pupils within it, application can be made for a determination to have that clause lifted or modified. In the case of Academy schools, that application

should be made to the Educational Funding Agency. In the case of community or foundation school, to the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) Unless the school requests otherwise, a determination will be reviewed by the local SACRE after five years. A determination does not lift the requirement for daily collective worship. Such worship must not be denominational but may be distinctive of a particular faith.

- 3.1.6 Teachers – including head teachers – have the right to withdraw from collective worship (though, in voluntary schools, these conditions may vary) and cannot be discriminated against for so doing. Attending ‘assemblies’, on the other hand, is part of a teacher’s contractual duty.
- 3.1.7 In a community or foundation school, it is the responsibility of a head teacher, in consultation with the governors, to see that these arrangements are carried out. In a voluntary-aided school, it is the responsibility of the governors, in consultation with the head teacher.
- 3.2 The legislation on Collective Worship requires schools to offer a daily act of collective worship that is ‘wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character’. At first reading, this language may appear to disadvantage children who come from families that do not practice a religious faith or who come from a faith other than Christianity.
 - 3.2.1 The legislation does however, permit schools to apply to SACRE for a determination to vary the character of Acts of Worship if they see fit. Alternatively, they may use flexibility present in the language i.e. wholly or mainly may be interpreted to mean 50% or more. Similarly, ‘broadly Christian’ is different from ‘distinctively Christian’ and a worship theme such as the importance of forgiveness, that is broadly Christian might also be broadly Jewish, Muslim, Sikh etc.
 - 3.2.2 Acts of worship provide an opportunity to celebrate the diversity present in their school community, locally and nationally. The way that policies are developed are therefore a useful indicator of how they engage with these issues.
 - 3.2.3 Acts of worship may help schools promote the British Value of tolerance and respect for those with different religions and beliefs.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 In the absence of information from school visits to observe collective worship, the review of websites appears to be a strategy that can be used to conduct some monitoring of collective worship.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Not applicable

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 The Local Authority reviews its Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education on a regular basis;

- Publishes an Annual Report of its work;
- Offers guidance on resources and methods of teaching and in consultation with Thurrock Schools;
- Monitors the quality of provision for RE and Collective Acts of Worship in Thurrock.

This exercise falls under the third element of this programme.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Strategic Lead Finance

There are no financial implications to this report since the analysis of the data collected through this exercise will be conducted by the Associate RE Adviser as part of her work

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Allison Thiele-Callan**
Locum Education Solicitor

SACRE has a statutory remit to advise the local authority on religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus

- SACRE must review its RE Agreed Syllabus every five years.
- An Agreed Syllabus Conference is to be convened to conduct that review.

The agreed syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain, as well as appropriately accounting for any changes made by case law and legislation.

[Section 375 (3) Education Act 1996 and Schedule 19, para 5 School Standards and Framework Act 1998; Academy School Funding Agreements; Academy School Funding Agreements]

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager, Community Development & Equalities

As mentioned in section 3.2 above, the Acts of Worship, like religious education can be a means by which schools celebrate the diversity in their school and local community. This in turn may help pupils to develop respect and tolerance for those with beliefs that are different to their own.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder or Impact on Looked After Children

- Not applicable

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 - Report Sent to Schools After Previous Review
- Appendix 2 - Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy

Report Author:

Deborah Weston OBE

Associate Adviser for RE

Report Sent To Schools After Previous Review

Collective Worship

One of the statutory duties of a SACRE is to monitor the provision of Acts of Collective Worship in schools.

Members agreed that the most helpful policies included some or all of the following:

- A statement about the legal requirements around collective worship including the parental and teacher right of withdrawal
- The aims of collective worship in the school including links to school ethos and values, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, fundamental British Values and the taught curriculum
- Objectives or intended outcomes for the programme of collective worship
- Practical arrangements about how Collective Worship is organised in the school:
 - Groupings (e.g. year groups, classes/tutor groups, houses, whole school)
 - Timings, including links to the school timetable, calendar and local and national occasions and festivals
 - Leaders and their roles in collective worship – e.g. visitors, senior and middle leaders, individual and groups of pupils
- A clear statement about the nature of collective worship; what it is and what it is not. How collective worship:
 - may link to but is distinct from ‘assembly’
 - is different from corporate worship
 - is implemented in a way that is inclusive of those with religious and non-religious worldviews
- A statement about how the effectiveness of the policy will be reviewed, by whom and when

SACRE members also noted that although it is no longer a requirement for schools to have a policy on Collective Worship, it is important that parents are clear about how schools fulfil this statutory duty. There was a legal challenge to an Oxford school’s practice in relation to Collective Worship in 2019. SACRE concluded that although the case was settled out of court, schools would be well advised to ensure their practice was fully inclusive of both religious and non-religious worldviews.

Religious education and collective worship policy

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT HACH

HACH follow the locally agreed Thurrock SACRE guidance for teaching Religious Education. This includes an exploration of enquiry questions that cover the 'believe', 'expressing' and 'living' component of faith. At Key Stage 3 this includes understanding the concept of faith, its function for the individual and society as well as reflective questions such as the purpose of life, the afterlife and ethical consideration of the use of violence and medical ethical issues. Students investigate these questions through the lenses of a range of religions as well as Humanism. The aim of which is to introduce students to different ways of viewing the world and ways of living. We aim to investigate together significant human questions and be able to appreciate and appraise various responses with curiosity and care as well as developing responses of their own.

As students' progress to KS4 they explore the Beliefs and Practices of both Christianity and Buddhism. They also apply these teachings to four ethical/philosophical themes: Social Justice, Equality, Human Relationships and Religion and Life (AQA specification).

The Religious Education provided allows students to make reasoned and informed choices about key ethical dilemmas which may be presented to students throughout their lives; as they learn both about and from religion. It is also a method of delivering key fundamental British Values and promoting religious tolerance in the community. Embedded within our curriculum are the principles of promoting positive well-being and belonging, community cohesion as well as the moral and spiritual development of our students.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Students are all given the opportunity to develop socially, morally, spiritually and culturally in an activity or experience that is separate from normal academic school activities. At HACH, these activities also draw students' attention to the values that we hold as important to develop within each student. These values include achieving one's personal best, developing an appreciation of others and enabling students to grow up into responsible members of our community. As a non-faith/non-denominational school we do not lead any formal collective worship, but we do embrace students that chose to do so and join in celebrations throughout the year. Students and staff both have access to our multi-prayer room if they wish to use this facility for worship. We also open our doors to the local community as the local Christian church use our facility on Sundays for worshipping.

STRATEGY

Religious Studies within HACH focuses on the need to prepare our students to play a full and active role in society, with a thorough understanding of religious and cultural difference in a pluralistic society. This is accomplished through quality teaching of the history of religions, differing theologies and their social presence in the public sphere. Religious Studies in HACH also compliments our SMSC and PSHE offer to develop our students' understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism, discrimination and extremism. We also focus on the impact of religion and religious ethics on our local communities. Students at HACH are able to tackle these topics in a reasoned, nonprejudicial manner, and are enabled through quality teaching to critically analyse sources of authority and religious teachings and philosophies. We pride ourselves on ensuring that our students leave our school as well rounded citizens. They have a holistic understanding of British Values related to (particularly) Abrahamic faiths ethics, as well as knowledge of all other major world faiths and humanism increasing an awareness and appreciation of the changing face of British society (as per section 375 (3) of the Education Act 1996). Religious Education is mapped against the Thurrock agreed SACRE syllabus.

OUR STRUCTURE

Religious Studies is compulsory for all Key Stage 3 students.
Year 7 – 9 classes, 2 contact hours per fortnight
Year 10 – 11, 4 contact hours per fortnight if it was a selected option
Year 12-13, 10 contact hours per fortnight if it was a selected option

Author: Francis Sanni Principal: Heather Stannard Chair of governors: Mr P Udrzal
Date of policy: Sept 2021

Review of policy: June 2022

Please also see the attached Adobe Acrobat documents containing the policies of St Thomas of Canterbury Primary and Thameside Primary

8 June 2022	ITEM: 7
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education	
Agreed Syllabus Support Material Updates	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key
Report of: Deborah Weston, Associate Adviser for Religious Education	
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Learning Inclusion and Skills	
Accountable Director: Shelia Murphy, Corporate Director of Children’s Services	
This report is: Public	

Executive Summary

This report introduces the details of the additions to Model Syllabus A and the additional support materials for the Agreed Syllabus (see page numbers in appendix A that can be viewed online before the meeting) The Agreed Syllabus Conference agreed at its January meeting, to renew its license with RE Today subject to changes to the titles of two units.

RE Today have confirmed in writing that they will update the titles as requested WHEN the syllabus is published for Thurrock. A preview is available online – see separate email with confidential password to copyright documents.

- 1. Recommendation(s) that SACRE:**
 - 1.1 Reconvene an Agreed Syllabus Conference (first meeting June 2021)**
 - 1.2 Review the additional materials**
 - 1.3 Approve the amended titles as follows:**
 - **From U2.9 What can be done to reduce racism? Can religion help? To U2.9 What can be done to reduce racism? What can we learn from religious and non-religious worldviews?**
 - **From U2.10 Green religion? How and why should religious communities do more to care for the Earth?**
 - **To U2.10 Green religion? What do religious and non-religious worldviews teach about caring for the earth?**

2. Introduction and Background

Every Local Authority 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.
- Institute a review of its locally agreed syllabus within five years of the last review, and subsequently every five years after the completion of each further review
- With any sub-committee it may appoint, ¹ meet in public, subject to exceptions in relation to confidentiality²
- 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 unanimous³
- 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.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The current Agreed Syllabus for Thurrock was implemented in schools in September 2016. It is now due for review.
- 3.2 The Agreed Syllabus conference was convened at the June meeting and three options were discussed from those in appendix A. Option A was agreed on the condition that amendments could be made to two questions.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The steps recommended are required in order that SACRE can launch the Agreed Syllabus updates in the Autumn Term.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Not applicable

¹ Schedule 31(6), Education Act 1996

² Regulation 3, S1 1994/1304

³ Schedule 31(10), Education Act 1996

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 The Local Authority reviews its Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education on a regular basis;

- Publishes an Annual Report of its work;
- Offers guidance on resources and methods of teaching and in consultation with Thurrock Schools;
- Monitors the quality of provision for RE and Collective Acts of Worship in Thurrock.

This exercise falls under the third element of this programme.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Strategic Lead Finance

Funding to produce an agreed syllabus is provided by central government within the Central Schools Serviced Block. The operational guidance 2020-2021 page 72 includes a statement to this effect.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Allison Thiele-Callan**
Locum Education Solicitor

SACRE has a statutory remit to advise the local authority on religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus

- SACRE must review its RE Agreed Syllabus every five years.
- An Agreed Syllabus Conference is to be convened to conduct that review.

The agreed syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain, as well as appropriately accounting for any changes made by case law and legislation.

[Section 375 (3) Education Act 1996 and Schedule 19, para 5 School Standards and Framework Act 1998; Academy School Funding Agreements; Academy School Funding Agreements]

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager, Community Development & Equalities

SACRE will continue to dedicate time for the discussion of the way in which religious education can help improve the level of community cohesion in Thurrock. The current Agreed Syllabus is specific about the expected outcomes of teaching of religious education in this respect. The teaching of RE should help schools to fulfil their statutory duty to promote community cohesion and to encourage better respect and tolerance for those with different religions and beliefs.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder or Impact on Looked After Children

- Not applicable

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 - Thurrock Agreed Syllabus: Model A+ Additional Material

Report Author:

Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for RE

Thurrock Agreed Syllabus: Model A+ Additional Material

Background

Option A, Renew licence with RE Today syllabus (model A) plus supplement

The Thurrock syllabus was written by RE Today. It has been adopted by over 15 other local authorities, with very positive feedback as to its effectiveness.

This syllabus provides the minimum for a SACRE / LA to fulfil its legal requirement.

- The licence renewal would include a slight update to the 2016 syllabus – including new dates, a few corrections and potentially an updated Foreword.
- It would also include a **supplement**. This would be produced electronically, so that it can be sent around to all schools together with the updated syllabus.

The supplement will include: Syllabus Model A+

This updates Model A, including:

- Updated EYFS outcomes, in line with 2020 EYFS Profile (page 25)
- Guidance on curriculum design (page 18)
- Guidance on idea of worldviews (in line with CoRE - institutional/personal) (page 19)
- Additional questions (C3):
 - L2.5a How do people from religious and non-religious communities celebrate key festivals? (multi-disciplinary approach)
 - L2.10 How do family life and festivals show what matters to Jewish people?
 - U2.9 What can be done to reduce racism? Can religion help?
 - U2.10 Green religion? How and why should religious communities do more to care for the Earth?
- Systematic units for KS3: Islam, Sikhi, Buddhism
- Expanded SEND guidance (page 98)
- Revised and rewritten guidance on assessment (page 106-113)
- Local demographic information

Appendices on:

- cultural capital
- creating a coherent curriculum
- types of knowledge (in line with Ofsted Subject Review - substantive knowledge, ways of knowing, personal knowledge) (Page 123)
- introduction to knowledge organisers (E5)
- keywords and core concepts (E7)
- descriptions of achievement for pupils with SEND working below national curriculum outcomes
- planning RE in special school settings (page 98)

Online support including:

- Knowledge organisers
- Sample long-term plans
- Guidance on religious and non-religious worldviews (religions guide, do's and don'ts etc)

The licence includes:

- **Permission for each school to use the syllabus** – including photocopying within school for classroom use
- The syllabus will be **provided to schools as a PDF, via a password protected area** of the RE Today website. The syllabus cannot be made available for public access – this is a breach of the licence conditions. It is the responsibility of the SACRE to ensure all licences schools are compliant.
- **Licences are per school**, not bundled per academy chain, for example
- A **hard copy** of the syllabus will be provided for each school if you choose to adopt model B
- A **hard copy** of the supplement will be provided for each school if you relicence model A
- A **summary document will be supplied as a PDF** to the SACRE/LA to host as a publicly available document on their website
- Licence also includes **essential updates from RE Today** during the five-year licence period. These will be available electronically, not in print.
- The syllabus remains the copyright of RE Today.