



**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)
Solihull Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) Agenda and Report
Wednesday 2nd October 2024, 4:30pm to 6:15 pm**

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Agenda:

- Welcome, introductions and apologies BP
- Minutes of last SACRE meeting, accuracy and actions BP
- The role of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) BP
- Developments in the world of RE since the 2018 Agreed Syllabus launch BP
- Agreeing the stakeholders to consult with, and how to consult effectively, to inform any changes to the ASC All
- Feedback from Worcestershire Council in relation to their Agreed Syllabus (RE Today) BP
- Overview of Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus 2020-2025 (RE Today) CK
- Allocation of actions following this meeting BP/All

The following notes are taken from the minutes of the initial Solihull ASC held on 19th October 2023 to provide supporting background information.

Executive Summary

This report introduces the process by which Solihull SACRE and its Agreed Syllabus Conference will review the agreed syllabus for Religious Education in the family of Solihull schools.

Recommendation(s)

That SACRE Members:

- convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)
- agree to begin the process of reviewing the agreed syllabus by conducting a survey of teachers and feeding this back to support decision-making
- agree to establish a working group to explore potential options for the future
- work on a suggested way forward in relation to Religion and Worldviews
- agree the proposed timeline for any agreed changes

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.
- Implement 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, meet in public (Schedule 31(6), Education Act 1996), subject to exceptions in relation to confidentiality (Regulation 3, S1 1994/1304).
- 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 unanimous (Schedule 31(10), Education Act 1996).
- 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.

Membership of an ASC

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

- **Committee A** – Christian denominations and such other religions and religious denominations as, in the opinion of the LA, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area
- **Committee B** - the Church of England
- **Committee C** - teacher associations
- **Committee D** - the Local Authority

There is no legal provision for an ASC to include co-opted members, but it can seek the advice it considers appropriate from those it considers appropriate, to inform the continuous development of effective RE provision in its area.

Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- The current agreed syllabus for Solihull was implemented in schools in July 2018. It is now due. This discussion will inform that process.
- It is appropriate to note that since the 2018 launch of Solihull's locally agreed syllabus, the Covid-19 pandemic appropriately led to many pupils not being in school and, instead, experiencing remote learning. As a result, these pupils experienced a narrowed curriculum within which RE learning may well have been limited or non-existent. In essence, RE was paused over time for many pupils in our schools. We may need to consider this when determining the duration within which schools have had the opportunity to consistently teach the current Agreed Syllabus.
- This discussion will help members to agree the stakeholders it needs to consult to inform the Agreed Syllabus Review and to strengthen its monitoring role.

Reasons for Recommendation

- Monitoring of provision for RE and reviewing the agreed syllabus are key elements of the remit of SACRE and its ASC.

The legal requirements

- SACRE must review its RE agreed syllabus every five years.
- An ASC is to be convened to conduct that review. An agreed syllabus must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.' *Education Act (1996 Section 375 (3))/School Standards and Framework Act (1998, Schedule 19,para.5)*