

Staffordshire SACRE options for Agreed Syllabus Review

Requirements:

SACRE must consider reviewing its RE Agreed Syllabus after five years. An Agreed Syllabus Conference can be set up to conduct the 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)

The development of a clear, well-structured agreed syllabus is probably the single most important function of SACRE. Combined with on-going implementation training and resources, a new syllabus offers the possibility of raising achievement in RE in all local schools.

Ofsted RE subject reports 2010 and 2013 highlight the need for syllabuses to:

- be clear about expected knowledge and understanding about religion(s) and belief(s)
- support and empower teachers to plan effectively
- offer coherent progression across the ages and key stages
- support clear and focused assessment
- encourage enquiry-based RE

The RE Council (REC) Review of RE produced the National Curriculum Framework for RE (NCFRE) in October 2013, to run in parallel with National Curriculum changes, with a foreword by the Secretary of State. The links will enable RE programmes of study to be easily understood and implemented alongside the new orders for National Curriculum subjects such as Science or History. To this end, the NCFRE should be taken into account when revising the agreed syllabus, as well as building on what is good in the current agreed syllabus.

Feedback from Staffordshire SACRE Agreed Syllabus Conference meeting 9th February 2015

SACRE strategy group had a long discussion about the value of the current syllabus, the changes to national education policy and their implications for a review. The detailed discussion is available, but here are the options set out by the Group:

The options for SACRE include:

- a) **Complete re-write**, based on new Framework. This is probably unfeasible due to cost, unless the LA finds substantial extra funding
- b) **Keep the current syllabus and offer a supplement** to update it a little. This is a possibility – there will be costs for producing the new supplement. One advantage of this is the continuity it will bring. The disadvantage is that it does not reflect the new Framework directly. The basic structure of the Staffordshire syllabus dates back into the 1990s.
- c) **Buy into the RE Today ‘model’ syllabus**. There will be some draft material on this if the LA wish to see it, although that will be commercially sensitive as far as RE Today are concerned. Four LAs are currently further along with this than Staffordshire in buying into this process.

Staffordshire SACRE are not opposed to adopting an agreed syllabus which has been produced by a different SACRE. Members have explored syllabus currently in use in Luton and Bedfordshire, Derbyshire, Sandwell and... Members would, however, prefer this to be modified to suit Staffordshire e.g. new front cover.

Staffordshire SACRE have expressed a preference for an online syllabus/online materials which could be updated. Staffordshire maintained schools could gain free access, academies or other schools e.g. VA, could purchase that access.

NB all of the review and rewrite options detailed are based on additional funding/days to be commissioned through the School Intervention SDA

Option A: Bespoke Staffordshire review

The LA could fulfil its statutory duty by requiring a local review of the agreed syllabus.

This would involve:

- an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) over-seeing the review (already established through SACRE);
- a survey of teachers;
- initial drafts by the adviser;
- teacher working groups to feed into the process of reviewing the drafts;
- re-writing by adviser;
- approval from ASC, SACRE and the Local Authority;
- design and production of text and/or online version.

This would need to be launched with either a county conference day or a series of regional CPD sessions, to provide training and resources to enable teachers to implement the syllabus in their schools. A syllabus with strong implementation training support will be far more effective than one with no training.

The production of support materials can extend the value of the revised syllabus.

Relevant recent examples:

RE today Services are our preferred partner for option A. RE Today Services have had recent involvement with LAs in Leicester, Sheffield, Wakefield, Oldham, Cambridge, Peterborough, North Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Kensington and Chelsea, Brighton and others in their Agreed Syllabus reviews; all of these LAs published a new syllabus in the last couple of years. They are currently working with Redbridge and Havering, Nottinghamshire and others. RE Today has a unique breadth of involvement in this work, which enables us to offer cutting edge nationally informed advice.

Advantages:

- Involvement of local teachers strengthens the commitment to the syllabus, resulting in greater buy-in for the revised syllabus
- The process is a form of professional development for those involved, who can then support local schools in the implementation process.
- The syllabus can reflect the local area closely.

Disadvantages:

- Costs are probably greater than a joint syllabus
- Duplication of work with other local SACREs.

Likely cost:

£11500 (establishing, managing and supporting the review process, writing time, draft and redraft services and production supervision; run teacher consultations: setting the parameters for writing review materials, and developing local applications of national materials; teachers to represent different phases/key stages) plus cost of teacher days c£1000 plus cost of production c£1000

Total: c£13,500

| | What is involved | opportunities | risks |
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| <p>Option A</p> <p>10 days additional funding through the School Intervention SDA at £575 a day total £5750</p> <p>10 days additional LA funding outside of SDA for RE Today consultant at £400 a day £4000</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for both Entrust consultant (10 days) via 10 days SDA funding and further funding for an external consultant e.g. RE Today (10 days at £400 per day) via additional LA funding Day 1: Thorough review of the syllabus to identify information which is no longer in date Day 2-4: Creation of new inclusions e.g. reference to the census, a statement on British values, new initial statement of purpose of RE, new information about what is required in different schools, links to EYFS, new requirements for KS4 and 5 Day 4-6: Creation of a new approach to assessment without levels Day 7-9: Creation of outline long term plans to support the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive rewrite of the syllabus Involvement of local teachers strengthens the commitment to the syllabus, resulting in greater buy-in for the revised syllabus The process is a form of professional development for those involved, who can then support local schools in the implementation process. The syllabus can reflect the local area closely. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Costs are much greater than a joint syllabus or an additional supplement</i> <i>Duplication of work with other local SACREs.</i> <i>No individual lesson by lesson plans (these could be produced later for a supplement)</i> <i>This doesn't include the cost of printing and production</i> <i>This doesn't include any costs associated with holding focus groups e.g. supply/transport costs</i> |

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| | <p>implementation of the syllabus effectively in the classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Day 10-12: Focus groups held with SACRE, headteachers, teachers, students in order to account for their views in the creation of the syllabus• Day 13-15: re-draft of syllabus materials taking account of focus groups• Day 16 SACRE validation day as all updates subject to SACRE approval, members can adapt the new materials and a final version approved• Day 17 Final redraft then submission to print• <i>NO Planning and resources for use within the classroom</i> | | |
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Option B: Staffordshire supplement

In 2011, Gloucestershire added a 24-page supplement updating its 2006-2011 syllabus. This model could be applied to the Staffordshire syllabus.

This process would be the same as for the full re-write but would take less time, and cost less in terms of development and production, and involve the Strategy Group rather than teacher groups.

This would need to be launched with either a county conference day or a series of regional CPD sessions, to provide training and resources to enable teachers to implement the syllabus in their schools.

Advantages:

- This builds on the strengths of the current syllabus, and allows for continuity at a time of great change.
- The syllabus can reflect the local area closely.
- It is a cheaper option than a full review.

Disadvantages:

- The current syllabus does not easily allow for an insert, so it would be a separate document, leading to some confusion about the syllabus, perhaps.
- The master copy of the current syllabus is currently held by members of the Central Print team due to the advanced programmes that they have on their computer. It may be possible to commission them to update our master copy as opposed to a supplement.
- It won't be possible to reflect the new Framework fully, or RE in the post-levels new National Curriculum context: danger: half baked RE
- Some changes (e.g. use of levels for assessment) are significant changes with implications throughout the 2011-2016 syllabus, so a supplement may not be feasible.
- Duplication of work with other local SACREs.

Likely cost:

£2,875 (as with full review, just fewer words and less time: establishing, managing and supporting the review process, writing time, draft and redraft services and production supervision; setting the parameters for writing review materials, and developing local applications of national materials) plus cost of

production/distribution c£1000 dependent on whether you supply schools with a paper copy or opt for an online only version.

Total: c£3,875

| | What is involved | opportunities | risks |
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| <p>Bronze</p> <p>5 days additional funding through the School</p> <p>Intervention SDA at £575 per day total £2,875</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 days funded via SDA for Entrust consultant to review the syllabus • Day 1: Thorough review the syllabus to identify information which is no longer in date • Day 2-4: Creation of new inclusions e.g. reference to the census, a statement on British values, new initial statement of purpose of RE, new information about what is required in different schools, links to EYFS, new requirements for KS4 and 5 • Day 5: SACRE validation day as all updates subject to SACRE approval, members can adapt the new materials and a final version approved | <p>A statutory and updated offering to schools</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The current syllabus does not easily allow for an insert, so it would be a separate document, leading to some confusion about the syllabus, perhaps.</i> • <i>The master copy of the current syllabus is currently held by members of the Central Print team due to the advanced programmes that they have on their computer. It may be possible to commission them to update our master copy as opposed to a supplement.</i> • <i>It won't be possible to reflect the new Framework fully, or RE in the</i> |

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| | | | <p><i>post-levels new National Curriculum context</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Some changes (e.g. use of levels for assessment) are significant changes with implications throughout the 2011-2016 syllabus, so a supplement may not be feasible.</i>• <i>This doesn't include the time/cost needed for further writing, drafting and production following day 5. Further days may be needed.</i>• <i>NO new approach to assessment</i>• <i>NO teacher focus groups</i>• <i>NO Planning and resources for use within the classroom</i> |
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Option C: Purchase an RE Today Syllabus plus schemes of work.

RE Today is currently writing a model agreed syllabus, based on the NCFRE and NSNF, and building on all of the experience in syllabus writing that the charity has developed over the last three decades.

A syllabus would provide the minimum for a SACRE / LA to fulfil its legal requirement.

To make a positive impact on raising standards in RE in the county, additional resources will be available for purchase (by individual schools or by LA).

Costs are set out below.

Advantages:

- Full syllabus available with minimal effort from LA/SACRE
- Up to date, informed by very latest best practice
- Flexibility built in to allow schools to adapt to their particular situation
- Support materials available
- On-going support from RE Today with potential upgrades within the 5-year review period if necessary.
- Worcestershire is buying into this syllabus, which would make cross-county support and co-operation much easier for future savings.

Disadvantages:

- Little involvement from local teachers or SACRE on the content and style.

Details and likely costs

Syllabus licensed for adoption by SACREs.

Syllabus includes:

- Aim/purpose of RE
- Legal requirements
- Contribution of RE to whole-school: SMSC, well-being, literacy, PSHE, citizenship
- Breadth of study: which religions/beliefs and when

- Programmes of study EYFS-KS5
- Core knowledge outline
- Assessment processes
- Planning processes
- Inclusion
- Creative curriculum and cross-curriculum outlines
- Application of syllabus requirements to special school contexts

Flexibility and freedom will be built in to requirements, to encourage creative development and adaptation within a school.

Scale of costs as at November 2014:

| | Individual school | 2-20 schools | 21-50 schools | 51-100 schools | 101-300 schools |
|----------|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Syllabus | £150 | £100 | £60 | £45 | £35 |

In Staffordshire the number of schools which would need a statutory copy of the syllabus (i.e. schools that are not academies or voluntary aided) is 294 (correct as of cop 20.11.14) so our initial purchase price would be **c.£10,290 to be fully funded by the LA outside of SDA**. This will change should more schools become academies between this date and the purchase date.

In addition, RE Today will be developing schemes of work, 28 units for primary and 12 for secondary, to support the model syllabus. These will be available to buy, with discounts for schools if ordering through the LA.

SACRE / the LA could purchase exemplar SoW for all schools as a way of demonstrating its on-going support for RE provision. If schools wanted more support in terms of units of work, they could purchase these from RE Today.

| | Individual school price | If bought through the LA | RRP |
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| Exemplar SoWs (1 each EYFS-Y9) | £58 | £48 | £85.50 |
| Primary Full SoW (28 units) | £180 | £150 | £238 |
| Secondary Full SoW (12 units) | £75 | £65 | £102 |
| Full primary + secondary SoW (40 units) | £255 | £215 | £340 |
| On-going support | E.g. updates to syllabus within the 5 year cycle. | | |
| Annual NATRE membership | E.g. discounted rate negotiated for your schools, if purchased through LA | | |

On-going support

On-going support would be negotiated with RE Today. Minor updates within the 5 years of adopting the syllabus would be included in the price; major revisions would be chargeable.

Launch events

In conjunction with the local RE advisor RE Today would set up and run a series of launch events to introduce the syllabus to schools, for which schools would pay. These costs will be confirmed by RE Today before agreement. Up to 2 additional days would need to be commissioned annually through the School Intervention SDA to enable the Entrust RE Consultant to launch the syllabus and support/maintain it locally. .

FAQs/ Legalities:

If we were to buy into the RE Today syllabus what are the terms and conditions for that? T&C are currently in development. The offer at the moment is that all Staffordshire schools get a disc and a print copy of the syllabus, and it is customised to Staffordshire SACRE with a front cover and introduction – RE today have a print on demand service. This means we can have the syllabus on the LA / SACRE /Entrust website as part of our license agreement with them.

The agreement lasts for 5 years, what happens if RE Today stops trading in that time? This is unlikely of course, but RE today would deposit assets with us in this eventuality.

Where would the syllabus be held...within the Staffordshire/Entrust computer system...or would it be held by RE Today with Staffordshire schools having a log-in to your system? The main syllabus held in within Staffordshire and within RE today. Exemplar and / or full schemes of work, if purchased, RE today aren't quite committed to the detail of this yet.

Costings report produced by Emma Jardine RE Consultant to Staffordshire SACRE

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Any current queries to be sent to mary.gale55@yahoo.co.uk (maternity cover for Emma Jardine April 15-April 16.