

**AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE held at the Town End Academy on  
MONDAY 26 March 2012 at 5.30 p.m.**

**Present:-**

**Group A  
Christian and Other Denominations**

Mrs. E. Whitfield  
Ms. C. Nicol

**Group B  
Church of England**

Rev. G.M. Beck

**Group C  
Teacher Associations**

Ms. T. Laybourne  
Miss. A. McChesney

**Group D  
Local Councillors**

Councillor Francis  
Councillor Williams

**Also in Attendance:-**

Isobel Short	-	Inspector for RE at Durham County Council
Margaret Ferrie	-	School Chief Inspector
Emma Hindmarsh	-	Governance Services Officer

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Pat Smith and Councillor Paul Stewart.

## **Locally Agreed Syllabus Review**

The Agreed Syllabus Conference considered a draft Agreed Syllabus report that was presented by Isobel Short, asking for comments and amendments prior to adoption by Council.

Ms Short advised that questionnaires had been sent to R.E. Co-ordinators in the relevant Sunderland schools to ascertain their views and responses would be collated prior to consultations taking place on the 30 April and 3 May.

Each section of the draft syllabus was then considered in turn.

In response to a question from the Chair with regard to the legal status of Academies in respect of them having to follow the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus and how this could be reflected in the document, Isobel Short commented that it might be useful to include a footnote in Section 1 of the agreed syllabus setting out the legal requirements for teaching R.E. as set out in the Education Act 1998, confirmed by the Education Acts of 1996 and Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Discussion ensued in relation to the core religions and it was agreed this was a priority that required further discussion and consideration with regard to key stage 1, 2 and 3.

Governance services agreed to ascertain Council/Cabinet deadlines for the forthcoming municipal year as the formal vehicle to agree the final syllabus.

Summarising the discussions, the Chair commented that the draft Syllabus presented to the conference was very clear and there were a lot of strengths within it for Sunderland to adopt. There had been an emerging suggestion that the core religions be re-examined and for a focus on more varied and improved planning and training resources to support it.

The Conference agreed that the content and structure were generally very well placed to meet Sunderland's requirements. It was agreed that all comments, including those in the questionnaires and discussion at the consultation meetings would be reviewed and a revised document be brought back to the next meeting for consideration.

RESOLVED that

- i) Isobel Short and the Locally Agreed Syllabus Working Group be thanked for their work on the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and
- ii) A revised Agreed Syllabus be presented to the next meeting to reflect proposed amendments for Sunderland.

(Signed) T. Laybourne,  
Chairman.