

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE

AGENDA

Wednesday 13th January, 2021 at 11.00 a.m.

This meeting will be held remotely. Joining details will be emailed to all participants.

The meeting will be livestreamed for the public to view on the Council's YouTube channel, 'sunderlandgov' at:-

<https://youtu.be/GTucW37TmsM>

ITEM		PAGE
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Minutes of the Meeting of the Agreed Syllabus Conference held on 22 January 2020 (Copy attached).	1
3.	Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Sunderland following presentations on 15th Dec 2020	

Contact: Paul Wood, Principal Governance Services Officer
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Information contained in this agenda can be made available in other languages and formats on request.

ELAINE WAUGH,
Assistant Director of Law and Governance.

Civic Centre,
SUNDERLAND

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION –
AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE**

**HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 22ND JANUARY, 2020 AT 4.30 PM
VENUE: COMMITTEE ROOM 3, CIVIC CENTRE**

Present: -

Local Councillors

Councillor Farthing
Councillor Hunt

Christian and Other Denominations

Andrew Barron
Matt Moore

Church of England

Caroline Weir
Stuart Bain
Win Lundgren

Co -Opted

Fiona Bridle

In Attendance

Cathryn Forbes, Specialist Officer
Richard Cullen, School Improvement & Early Years Strategic Service
Manager
Paul Wood, Principal Governance Services Officer

As the meeting was inquorate, the following discussions could not be viewed as having been approved and therefore, could not be acted upon until approved at a future quorate meeting.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Marshall and Williams. Lisa Quinn-Briton and Natalie Fountain.

Update on Survey Monkey sent out to schools on their experience of the current Agreed Syllabus

Cathryn Forbes, Specialist Officer provided an update (copy circulated) with an update on the initial feedback from the circulation of the Survey Monkey carried out in January 2020.

Suggestions made by the Council included using hyperlinks on the electronic versions of the Syllabus to allow users to easily locate certain sections faster.

It was also suggested that consideration be given to an open day at Venerable Bede School for secondary schools to be able to view best practice.

Update on Durham Agreed Syllabus

Richard Cullen, School Improvement & Early Years Strategic Service Manager advised the Council that they had approached Durham and were still awaiting a response on the prices involved and the details of progress made.

Ms Weir advised that there was no launch date as yet for the Durham Syllabus.

Mrs Forbes informed the Council that the purchasing of the document could still be done in principle and historically we have always adopted the Durham Syllabus, but the dilemma faced was between finding the balance of not making massive changes in learning for teachers to deal with but also to avoid complacency. Mrs Forbes advised that she didn't feel she had the skill set to produce the document from scratch and there was a need to have something to build upon.

The Council proceeded to discuss the options available from surrounding regions and other parts of the country in relation to their agreed syllabus. The links to which had been circulated to Members for their consideration before the meeting.

It was commented that Newcastle's Agreed Syllabus was currently being reviewed and they had previously relied on Sheffield's. It was felt this was lacking in certain elements and was not any improvement on what we already had. It was felt Newcastle's to be very dry, was not teacher friendly, it had not taken into account any recent developments and it would not inspire the pupils studying it.

In considering Blackburn's Syllabus, it was advised that many other regions had used Blackburn's as their basis, it was nationally recognised with lots buying into it. It had many reference points and access to people, was clear in terms of what it meant and was easily benchmarked.

It was commented that RE Today had clear outcomes in every single unit which would be better for the teacher in terms of planning and it was queried if

weight should be given on what makes the classroom practitioners life easier also with an enquiry approach and content for Key Stages. It was noted that the RE Today approach gave a much broader area of support.

Councillor Hunt queried if there would be support available for schools during the transition if there were to be big differences in the agreed syllabus. Mrs Forbes advised that as a SACRE they did not have a budget to do such but we could support Networks.

Mr Cullen advised that the current syllabus at Durham had been reliant on an Officer that has since left therefore whatever was decided going forward it would be something different and there was a need to make sure resources were accessible. Mr Cullen also commented that he felt we should look at RE Today as they offer a combination of modules and the training he attended previously had been fantastic.

Potential Working Parties

Mrs Forbes advised that there was not the need for the proposed working parties as yet until we were clear with what particular Syllabus we would proceed with.

Mr Cullen suggested that those respondees from the Survey Monkey be invited to discussions with a RE Today representative and then feed into the process.

It was AGREED that arrangements be made for representatives of RE Today to provide presentation and the participants of the Survey Monkey that indicated they would participate in a working party be invited to attend to feed into the process.

The Chairman thanked all attendees for their time and closed the meeting.

(Signed) Councillor L. Farthing,
Chairman