

Nottingham City and County RE Syllabus Review

A joint SACRE project Meeting 1 / October 7th 2019, 1-4pm

Notes from Chris Richards

This was the first meeting of the review group, and its purpose was to direct the work of the RE Today syllabus writing consultant in progressing the review of the syllabus.

The review is resourced in such a way that the consultant expects to spend around 15 days in total working on the review – so it is a light touch, not a complete rewrite.

This purpose of this first meeting was to enable the consultant to set priorities and commence drafting the revised syllabus. The agenda was as follows:

Agenda

1. **Welcomes, introductions, scope of the project**
2. **Strengths of the current syllabus** (we intend to produce a syllabus with strong continuity, avoiding ‘change for change’s sake’)
3. **New movements impacting RE over the last 5 years**
 - a. Latest EYFS
 - b. New developments in the National Curriculum
 - c. Latest inspection framework
 - d. GCSE 9-1
 - e. Core knowledge, powerful knowledge focus in the curriculum
 - f. Changing religious landscape of the UK
 - g. Commission on RE report ‘Religion and Worldviews’ – a call for a new national entitlement
4. **Other recent syllabuses:** examples from around the country to examine for examples of best practice
5. **Who will teach?** The syllabus needs to be usable by teachers with other specialisms, but never to reduce RE to low levels of expectation because of workforce issues: high aspirations and high support are both needed.
6. **Setting priorities for the review:** group exercise
7. **Work programme for the next 3 months till December 12th, meeting point 2**

The meeting was attended by several members of the County SACRE, and one member of the City SACRE.

The meeting was positive and successful, giving the consultant a clear brief for the next stage, including the following points:

The Syllabus should reflect current thinking and developments both in RE and in education generally.

The assessment element of the Syllabus should be strengthened.

The Syllabus should be as easy to use as possible for both class teachers and for coordinators.

The working party will meet again on 12th December (in Rainworth) and early in 2020. (Date and venue to be confirmed).

Action points for SACRE:

- Confirm support for the process so far;
- Encourage more SACRE members, particularly teachers, to attend the next meetings;
- Make arrangements to convene the Agreed Syllabus Conference in order to adopt the revised Agreed Syllabus in line with Agreed timescale. (March 2020?)

Chris Richards

Schedule for revision of the Nottinghamshire RE County Syllabus

Provided by Lat Blaylock, RE Today Services, July 23rd 2019

Revision to be published / Launched in June 2020 for teaching from September 2020.

The purpose of the contract	To enable Nottinghamshire SACRE and Local Authority to meet its statutory obligations to review and revise its RE Agreed syllabus in line with all current requirements and to a high professional standard.
The consultant and RE Today Services	Lat Blaylock works nationally on behalf of the Educational Charity RE Today Services, with many local authorities in the area of Religious Education, providing consultancy, writing and stakeholder inclusion services in regard to religious education. Where local authorities used to employ curriculum advisers for RE, many now work with RE Today Services advisers (there are 5 nationally) to meet legal requirements.
The commissioning of a new RE syllabus in relation to ' Your Nottinghamshire, Your Future ' – the County Council's Strategic Plan	<p>SACRE have asked me to prepare a plan for the review and revision of the RE syllabus for publication / launch in June 2020, meeting the needs for an up to date RE Syllabus and supporting teachers in all schools to deliver excellence in RE.</p> <p>This plan recognises the place RE plays in relation to the commitments of the LA in its strategic plan, particularly, putting local people at the heart of the Council's work, standing up for local people, being creative in its work and empowering Nottinghamshire people.</p> <p>This project makes a particular contribution to:</p> <p>Commitment 3: Children and young people go to good schools. RE is the only local curriculum responsibility of the Local Authority, and as such SACRE's work is a potential benefit for all Nottinghamshire pupils.</p> <p>Commitment 7: People live in vibrant and supportive communities. In relation to our faith communities, the RE Agreed syllabus will represent a major stakeholder process which empowers all groups in our religiously plural County.</p>
Work plan for new RE syllabus. Phase 1.	<p>Objective 1: To agree the scope of the RE review needed and plan the writing of the new syllabus.</p> <p>The consultant will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan an agenda for a half day meeting on Monday 7th October liaising with SACRE representatives • Collect and analyse recent Agreed Syllabuses from other relevant local authorities. • Make proposals for essential updating of the syllabus in line with the latest guidance and legal rulings about RE from DfE and other sources • Conduct and conclude the meeting, setting a work plan for the Syllabus Review, to include more planning support for schools. • Report on progress and issues to SACRE and the LA.
Work plan for new RE syllabus. Phase 2.	<p>Objective 2: To draft the new RE syllabus, based upon agreements made at the meeting of the working group.</p> <p>The consultant will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan an agenda for a half day meeting on Thursday 12th December liaising with SACRE representatives • Develop a draft text for key sections of the new RE agreed syllabus

	<p>based on the direction of the working group, national requirements and the policy of the LA and SACRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate a draft syllabus two weeks in advance of the meeting with a clear briefing for members of the working group about decisions and actions taken. • Conduct and conclude the meeting, reporting to SACRE and amending the syllabus in every way the working group requires.
<p>Work plan for new RE syllabus. Phase 3</p>	<p>Objective 3: To review and finalise a draft RE Agreed syllabus for the working group, SACRE / ASC and the LA.</p> <p>The consultant will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan an agenda for a final half day meeting on Monday 10th February 2020 liaising with SACRE representatives • Finalise a draft text incorporating the decisions and amendments for key sections of the new RE agreed syllabus based on the direction of the working group, national requirements and the policy of the LA and SACRE • Circulate the final draft syllabus two weeks in advance of the meeting with a clear briefing for members of the working group about decisions and actions taken. • Conduct and conclude the meeting, reporting to SACRE and amending the syllabus in every way the working group requires. • Liaise with SACRE about the formal approval of the syllabus and about production and publication issues, including planning a launch conference (which is a separate project to the syllabus writing, but should recover some costs for the LA from its investment in the new syllabus, generating a surplus from fees paid by schools)

Note: There is collaboration with Nottingham City so the processes outlined here are open leading to a shared syllabus publication and launch.

Lat Blaylock 23.9.19