

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR, PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

**DECISION NO: P&C14**

SUBJECT: The locally agreed syllabus for religious education (RE)

DECISION: To adopt a new agreed syllabus as unanimously approved by the Standing Advisory Agreed Syllabus Conference of North Somerset

BACKGROUND:

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is legally required to review the agreed syllabus at least every five years. The previous syllabus was published in 2011, so North Somerset SACRE was fulfilling this requirement in holding a standing advisory agreed syllabus conference. This was held on 25th February 2016 and was attended by representatives of all four SACRE committees, namely, (a) the Church of England, (b) other Christian and religious denominations, (c) teachers' associations and (d) the local authority. The following members attended: Jo Backus, Ganga Devi, Pauline Dodds, Marianne McAleer, Kevin Magner, Qari Majeed, Gurdial Singh, Emma Smith, Martin Taylor, Joan Willcocks, Cathy Cowell, Chris Sammons, Jan Thomson, Sue Ivermee, Tony Moulin, Laura Harris, Councillor Robert Cleland, Councillor Sarah Codling, Councillor Deborah Yamanaka.

Reasons:

Just one change (marked in bold below) was to be made to the existing syllabus programmes of study: Members noted the importance of including non-religious worldviews in religious education, particularly in the secondary phase. It was agreed that 'Over Key Stages 3 and 4 as a whole, there should be teaching about Buddhism, Sikhism and a non-religious worldview, such as Humanism.'

Options Considered:

Members considered not including non-religious worldviews in the programmes of study. This was rejected, largely in view of the importance of ensuring that RE is seen by pupils and parents as an inclusive subject, reflecting current patterns of belief and practice. It was thus felt important for the syllabus to provide opportunities for study of a non-religious as well as religious worldviews, at least at secondary level. Opportunities to study non-religious points of view are still available for primary age pupils, but it was


felt that no specific study of a non-religious worldview should be included in the programme at that stage.

Financial Implications:

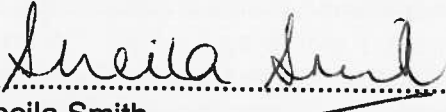
The existing website hosting the agreed syllabus and supporting materials is no longer available for North Somerset schools, as it is run by Somerset CC. A new website is being set up and the costs for set-up are to be shared between the authorities adopting the new syllabus, namely, Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, Haringey and North Somerset. This amounts to £500 each in the first year, 2016-17.

Implications for Future Years:

There will be on-going web-hosting and maintenance costs in subsequent years. These are envisaged to be less than £100 for each partner authority.

Reviewed: 
Sue Ivermee
Assistant Director, Learning and Achievement

Dated: 12.7.16

Signed: 
Sheila Smith
Director, People and Communities

Dated: 12.7.16