

**REPORT:** Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 5 September 2011

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise

**SUBJECT:** Halton Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

**WARDS:** Borough-wide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform the Board of the recommendation of the Halton Agreed Syllabus Conference for Religious Education to readopt the 2006 to 2011 Syllabus as the Halton Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011 for a further five years.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDED THAT:**

- (1) the minutes of a meeting of the Halton SACRE and the Halton Agreed Syllabus Conference on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2011 be received (Appendix 1);**
- (2) the Board accept the recommendation of the Halton Agreed Syllabus Conference for Religious Education to readopt the 2006 to 2011 Syllabus as the Halton Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011 for a further five years.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

#### **AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE**

- 3.1 There is a statutory duty on the Local Authority to establish and convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference to review the agreed syllabus for RE every five years. The role of the Agreed Syllabus Conference is to produce and recommend an Agreed Syllabus for adoption by the LA. The Agreed Syllabus needs to meet fully the requirements of the Education Act 1996 and be educationally sound.
- 3.2 A Conference is a separate legal entity from a SACRE and, although common membership is permissible, it must be separately convened. Similar to SACRE, it comprises of four committees, representing Christian denominations (and other religions and religious denominations), the Church of England, associations representing teachers and the LA.

3.3 The constitution of the Conference is prescribed in a DfES Circular as a result of which the recommended composition of the required representative committees is:

Committee A -	Christian denominations and other religions	
	Roman Catholic	- 2 representatives
	Others (as identified)	- 1 representative each
Committee B -	Church of England	- 3 representatives
Committee C -	Teachers' Associations	- 3 representatives
Committee D -	Local Authority	- 3 representatives

3.4 The number of representatives appointed to Committee A and B should reflect the proportionate strength of denominations in the area.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The costs of producing and publishing the revised Agreed RE Syllabus is a LA responsibility and will be resourced from within the Children and Enterprise budget. However, the Syllabus will be published electronically so costs will be minimal.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 None

#### **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 N / A

#### **8.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

8.1 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011

#### **9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
DfE Circular 1/94 Religious Education and Collective Worship	1st Floor Ecclestone Building Grosvenor House	Carole Furbank

## Appendix 1

### HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL CHILDREN AND ENTERPRISE DIRECTORATE

#### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE HALTON AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE

HELD ON 11TH JULY 2011  
IN GROSVENOR HOUSE, RUNCORN

#### **PRESENT:**

Cllr J Swain	Local Authority
Mr. A. Ackers	(NUT) – The Bankfield School
Mrs T Newman	Chester Diocese
Mrs A Maxfield	Methodist Districts of Liverpool & Chester
Paul Smalley	Co-opted Member
Adrian Hallett	Local Authority Adviser
Margaret Morgan	Shrewsbury Diocese

#### 1. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr Chris Rowe  
Cllr Mark Dennett  
Jackie Coughlan  
Jan Brown

#### 2. **HALTON AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RE FROM SEPTEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> 2011**

At the last SACRE meeting it was agreed to extend the life of the current Syllabus on the grounds that there has been no negative feedback whatsoever. Indeed all feedback has been positive.

PS - The syllabus can only be reviewed within 5 year period, and you can then review before the 5 years is up. SACRE has to appoint an agreed Syllabus Conference before the 5 years runs out to review this syllabus. The agreed Syllabus Conference must then agree a Syllabus to be used in Halton schools. That Syllabus must then be reviewed within 5 years. Agreed Syllabus can be reviewed at any point but must be reviewed before 2016.

AH – it would be good to have some kind of review process that may or may not lead to some changes before the 5 years is up. PS as Vice Chair of SACRE has offered to lead the process.

PS - legally must review this before September 1<sup>st</sup>, short time frame and limited amount of money. PS recommended that we do readopt this syllabus. During the lifetime of this Syllabus there have been 2 Ofsted inspections of Halton's schools, and nothing has been sited to AH in either of those inspections. In terms of

ongoing review, at the moment there is a whole scale review of the Curriculum but RE is not part of that review. 4 subjects will have new curriculum produced shortly - English, Maths, Science and PE. The remainder of the National Curriculum subjects not including RE as a basic curriculum subject will get renewed; the current government is very much of the mind that RE should be locally determined.

It is still unknown what that Curriculum review is going to recommend. It has been suggested that things quite fundamental such as the 8 level scale may not feature in the new Curriculum. The nature of attainment targets may change. The way that the curriculum and schemes of work are set out it is likely to go in the next curriculum review. Therefore, it doesn't make any sense to radically change anything we have until we have seen what the subjects look like. We can make sure our syllabus fits with the new Educational Landscape in 12 or 18 months time.

**At this point an Agreed Syllabus Conference was convened.**

**Cllr Swain and MM moved to elect PS as Chair. This was agreed by unanimous decision.**

**PS proposed that the existing Agreed Syllabus be adopted from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2011. This proposal was agreed unanimously.**

Minor things on document that need to be changed. AH suggested that we have document electronically, and make changes electronically and send the new version to schools. AH/PS will work on the changes minor changes that need to be made. A letter to schools to be sent before the end of term that the Syllabus as it stands is not changing, but in September will be reissuing updated electronic version.

Document needs to go to Policy and Performance and Executive Board to get approval. It is Important that schools know. Letter will say we are envisaging a review of the syllabus earlier than the 5 years in response to the governments curriculum review. Paul will draft letter and send to AH/CD to send out to schools this week.

Next year we will get feedback from schools either large scale questionnaire or an invitation to send any feedback. There have been over couple of years a number of collaborative agreed syllabi Trafford and Manchester and Rochdale in our area have looked at syllabus together to share expertise. If there are other Syllabi up for renewal at the same time would be worth sharing correspondence with them.

**Action: PS to put together letter and email to CD to email to schools**

PS thanked everybody for coming.

#### **Date and Time of Next Meeting of SACRE**

**The next meeting will take place on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at 4.30pm in Runcorn Town Hall, Committee Room 1.**