

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet 13 October 2014

ITEM 6(f)
**Revised North
Tyneside Agreed
Syllabus for Religious
Education**

Portfolio(s): Children, Young People and Learning

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Ian Grayson

Report from Service Area

Children, Young People and Learning

Report Author: Jean Griffiths

Tel: (0191) 643 8782

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to submit the new North Tyneside Syllabus for Religious Education for approval by Cabinet.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

(1) approves the Religious Education Syllabus for use in North Tyneside schools.

1.3 Forward Plan:

28 days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 2nd September 2014.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report relates to the Council Plan, Our North Tyneside 2014 – 2018, Priority 1; Our people will - Be supported to achieve their full potential, especially our children and young people.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

The local authority has a statutory responsibility to review its Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education every five years. This has been undertaken by the North Tyneside Standing Advisory Conference for Religious Education (SACRE) which established a process for reviewing the syllabus, as required by law.

The process agreed, based on thorough consultation with schools in North Tyneside, was to work with practitioners to amend the existing syllabus, reflect changes in the local population as well as the content for all phases of education and ensure that the final document was accessible and easy to use by teaching and support staff in schools. This process took into account Ofsted's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development and that the religious traditions in the United Kingdom are mainly Christian but need to reflect all six major religions. This includes Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Sikh, Jewish and Hindu faiths.

A draft syllabus was shared with schools in the summer term for consultation and some modifications were made in response to that feedback.

The syllabus will enable schools to develop their own religious education curriculum alongside the current review of the whole curriculum.

The draft document is fully supported by members of the SACRE Committee.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Receive the report and approve the Religious Education Syllabus for use in North Tyneside schools.

Option 2

Formally receive the report and decline to agree the recommendations.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

The new syllabus has been drawn up with the needs of children and young people at the heart of the proposals.

Schools have been fully involved at all stages of the process of consultation and the specific views of teaching and support staff responsible for Religious Education have been incorporated into the final document.

The North Tyneside SACRE has representatives from Elected Members, the Church of England, other religions and faiths as well as representatives from Teacher Associations.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix: Draft - The North Tyneside Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

1.9 Contact officers:

Jean Griffiths, Head of Children, Young People and Learning; tel: (0191) 643 8782

Joyce McCarty, School Improvement Officer (Health and Wellbeing including SACRE), School Improvement Service, tel. (0191) 643 8556.

Alison Campbell, Financial Business Manager; tel: (0191) 643 7038

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

(1) Section 390 of the Education Act of 1996.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part/V/chapter/III/crossheading/constitution-of-standing-advisory-councils-on-religious-education>

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

This proposal has no financial implications for the Council.

2.2 Legal

The local authority has a duty to appoint a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) to advise on all matters related to the teaching of Religious Education in schools as set out in Section 390 of the Education Act of 1996. The SACRE committee has agreed the process of the review of the syllabus for Religious Education and agreed to submit that draft for approval by Cabinet for subsequent adoption by schools. Cabinet must be satisfied that the new syllabus reflects the fact that the religious traditions are mainly Christian while taking account of the other five major religions in the UK. If Cabinet is not satisfied that the new syllabus reflects those conditions, then the SACRE committee would need to review the syllabus.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

The original proposals were developed on the basis of a thorough consultation with schools with a really positive 80% response rate. SACRE members have been fully involved in the proposals and colleagues from many schools have contributed to the final document. The final draft has been shared and further comments from schools incorporated into the final document. The Cabinet member is Chair of the SACRE Committee.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

SACRE has approved the draft document and members include representatives of faiths and the teacher associations. Schools across the borough have welcomed the proposals too.

2.4 Human rights

The Human Rights Act 2000 protects the right to have one's own thoughts, beliefs and religion. This includes the right to change one's religion or beliefs at any time.

Individuals also have the right to put their thoughts and beliefs into action. Importantly, this right protects a wide range of religious beliefs and other beliefs including veganism, pacifism, agnosticism and atheism.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

The Equality Act of 2010 protects people from discrimination and religion is included in that duty. Learning about religions in schools will help ensure that acceptance of religious beliefs is core to a pupils' experience in school.

2.6 Risk management

There are no risk management issues arising from this report.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder issues arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability issues arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Corporate Strategy