

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

CABINET

Date of Meeting:	1 August 2011
Report of:	Director of Children's Services
Subject/Title	Religious Education Agreed Syllabus for Cheshire East
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Hilda Gaddum, Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services

1.0 Report Summary

This report requests Cabinet to consider and agree the Religious Education Agreed Syllabus for Cheshire East Council. This is a statutory requirement. The previous syllabus was agreed by Cheshire County Council in 2005. The syllabus has been reviewed and drafted by a working party. It was agreed at the Religious Education Agreed Syllabus conference held on 25 May 2011 by the SACRE members.

2.0 Decision Requested

- 2.1 For Authorised Officers to take all necessary actions to agree the Religious Education Agreed Syllabus for Cheshire East Council.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Religious Education (RE) syllabus must be revised every five years. The previous syllabus was approved and adopted by Cheshire County Council in September 2005 and is, therefore, now due for review so that a revised syllabus can operate from September 2011. It is a duty of the Local Authority to establish an agreed syllabus conference, to produce and recommend an agreed syllabus for RE, as set out in Schedule 31 of the Education Act 1966 which derives from the 1944 Act.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All

6.0 Policy Implications including - Carbon reduction - Health

- 6.1 N/A

7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1 None

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1 Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (Religious Education, sex education and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over) in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. (For further information on the right to withdrawal see HANDBOOK Part 1).

8.2 The statutory document in determining the teaching of RE is the locally agreed syllabus within the Local Authority concerned.

8.3 Schools designated as having a religious character are free to make their own decisions in preparing their syllabuses. Local Authorities must, however, ensure that the agreed syllabus for their area is consistent with Section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996, which requires the syllabus to reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. (1)

8.4 Schools are not obliged to provide Religious Education to pupils who are under compulsory school age (section 80(2)(a) of the Education Act 2002), although there are many instances of good practice where RE is taught to these pupils. Separate legislative provision on RE is made for maintained special schools. Regulations covering maintained special schools require them to ensure that, as far as practicable, a pupil receives Religious Education.

(1) The major world religions referred to in this syllabus are Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Some study of secular world views and a religious community with a significant local presence may be appropriate.

For further guidance see- 'Religious Education in English Schools; Non Statutory Guidance 2010' www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications DCSF-00114-2010

9.0 Risk Management

9.1 Not meeting the statutory requirement; Schedule 31 of the Education Act 1966 which derives from the 1944 Act.

10.0 Background and Options

10.1 The focus of this Agreed Syllabus is to set a framework to support those who are responsible for the provision and quality of Religious Education in maintained schools in Cheshire East. It aims to be fully inclusive, exploring the beliefs, ethics and lifestyles that Religious Education encompasses. It seeks to promote high levels of consistency in teaching and learning, while giving teachers freedom to find the best ways to help pupils engage with challenging spiritual, moral, social and cultural questions that arise in their lives and in their community.

10.2 Every pupil has a statutory entitlement to Religious Education as it makes a distinctive contribution to a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils should have the opportunity to explore the role and significance of religion in society and the important beliefs and values that shape the world today. Religious Education helps pupils understand the religious experience of others and the ways in which it gives adherents a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives.

10.3 Section 1 of Appendix 1 details what it is that the Cheshire East RE agreed syllabus is trying to achieve under the following headings:

- The importance of RE
- The Legal Framework
- Access & Entitlement
- RE & Inclusion
- Gifted & Talented
- RE & pupils with SEN
- How RE contributes to Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Education
- RE & Integrated communities

10.4 Section 2 details how the learning is organised.

10.4.1 Part A

- Content, time allocations & reporting in the key stages
- Introduction to aspects of faith
- Attainment targets in RE
- Effective learning in RE
- Skills for effective learning

10.4.2 Part B

- Introduction to content overviews
- Progression units in
 - Buddhism
 - Christianity
 - Judaism
 - Islam
 - Hinduism
 - Sikhism

- 10.5 The membership of the Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education is set out in Appendix 2.

11.0 Access to Information

- 11.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report author.

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