

**From:** Penny Smith-Orr – Religious Education Consultant  
Joel Cook – Democratic Services Manager

**To:** **Agreed Syllabus Conference –12 May 2022**

**Subject:** **Kent Locally Agreed Religious Education Syllabus 2022-2027 - Update**

**Classification:** **Unrestricted**

**Past Pathway of report:** N/A

**Future Pathway of report:** Cabinet Member Decision pending recommendation of the ASC.

**Electoral Division:** All

**Summary:** This report summarises the work to be undertaken by the Agreed Syllabus Conference and asks the Agreed Syllabus Conference Members to recommend the Kent Agreed Syllabus for religious education 2022-2027 to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

**Recommendation:**

The Agreed Syllabus Conference is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on the proposed Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education for 2022-2027.

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 This report informs Members of the work of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) on the development of the Kent Agreed Syllabus for religious education 2022-2027. The report also seeks to highlight that an Executive Decision will be taken in due course, subject to the recommendations of the ASC, to approve the new syllabus and this decision will have to be taken prior to the summer meeting cycle.

1.2 Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum covering religious education (RE), 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includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over) in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The key document in determining the teaching of RE is the locally Agreed Syllabus within the Local Authority concerned.

## **2. Background**

2.1 The Local Authority is required to revise its Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE at least every five years. The current Kent RE syllabus was introduced in September 2017 and is therefore due to be reviewed in 2022. Section 375 and Schedule 31 of the Education Act 1996 requires the establishment of an Agreed Syllabus Conference to oversee the Syllabus review.

2.2 Members of the 2022 Kent Agreed Syllabus Conference comprise of the members of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) which includes representatives of local faith groups, teacher representatives and elected Members, organised as follows:

- i. Group A – Christian Denominations (other than Church of England) and other religions which reflect the principal religions in the area
- ii. Group B – Church of England
- iii. Group C – Teacher representatives (from a range of teacher associations)
- iv. Group D – Local Authority (LA councillors)

2.3 Subject to the Agreed Syllabus Conference recommendation and the subsequent approval by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, the new syllabus will be formally launched in July 2022 and will become effective from 1 September 2022. An update paper on the progress with the development, approval and launch of the syllabus may be provided at the next Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee meeting.

2.4 Further events to support the introduction of the syllabus in schools will take place during October 2022. SACRE will monitor and support the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus within schools.

2.5 The recommended syllabus will be shared with Kent County Council Members via the normal proposed decision process, at which point there will be an opportunity for any specific comments or questions to be raised prior to the decision being taken.

### **3. Proposal**

3.1 At the SACRE meeting held on 8th March 2022, SACRE Members considered the current syllabus and expressed a preference for continuing with the current provider. SACRE Members also noted that the resources required to independently write a new syllabus would outweigh the costs involved with the license renewal. It is therefore proposed to renew the RE Today Model A+ syllabus licence for a further five years.

### **4. Financial Implications**

4.1 The costs of the Agreed Syllabus, if approved, will be met from within existing budgets.

4.2 The outline proposal below is based on the renewal of the RE Today Model A+ syllabus licence for a further five years and purchasing the new

additional units. RE Today have confirmed that the cost could be spread over 2 financial years.

4.3 Opting for PDF only will reduce the total payment by **£3,504**.

**RE Today PDF and hard copy of syllabus per school:**

Element	Number required	Gross cost	Applied discount	Net cost including vat	Total discount	Total to pay including vat
5 Year syllabus licence	584	£75	£35	£48	584 x £35 £20,440	584 x £48 £28,032
Schemes of work						
Per set of new additional units						
Primary/special school schemes of work – additional units	483	£96	£49	£47	483 X £49 £23,667	483 x £47 £22,701
Secondary schemes of work – additional units	101	£48	£ 9	£39	101 X £ 9 £ 909	101 x £39 £3,939
<b>Totals</b>					<b>£45,016</b>	<b>£54,672</b>
<b>Equivalent total cost per school</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>£170.70</b>	<b>£77.08</b>	<b>£93.62</b>		

## 5. Legal implications

5.1 The adoption of a revised locally agreed syllabus fulfils the duty under Section 375 and Schedule 31 of the Education Act 1996 to review syllabi periodically.

## 6. Equalities implications

6.1 An EqIA will be developed based on the recommended Syllabus as part of the necessary decision-making. No adverse implications are expected at the time of writing.

## 7. Conclusions

7.1 Historically, SACRE has led the development and introduction of the Agreed Syllabus via its Outside Body Status, alongside the relevant Agreed Syllabus Conference. For 2022, the approach has been amended to include a specific Executive Decision by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to better evidence the full process for developing and adopting a Locally Agreed Syllabus, balancing the independent role of the ASC and SACRE more broadly and the obligation for KCC as the Local Authority to make the final decision.

7.2 The eventual adoption of the Agreed Syllabus is in line with and supports the Kent County Council vision to ensure that children and young people in Kent get the best start in life as set out in the Interim Strategic Statement and the 'Commissioning Plan for Education – Kent' (2020 – 2024).

## **8. Recommendation:**

The Agreed Syllabus Conference is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on the proposed Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education for 2022-2027.

## **9. Appendices**

Appendix 1: RE Today Syllabus Model A + The new units for 2022

Appendix 2: Kent Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2017-2022 (Exempt due to commercial sensitivity)

## **10. Background Documents**

Non-Statutory Guidance for the Kent Agreed Syllabus:

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/Curriculum/curriculum-resources/standing-advisory-council-for-religious-education>.

RE Today Agreed Syllabus brochure:

<https://www.retoday.org.uk/consultancy/sacre-la/agreed-syllabus-brochure/>

SACRE Constitution and Terms of Reference:

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13145>

## **11. Contact details**

Report Author:  
Katy Reynolds – Democratic Services  
Officer

03000 422252

[katy.reynolds@kent.gov.uk](mailto:katy.reynolds@kent.gov.uk)

Relevant Director:  
Benjamin Watts – General Counsel

03000 416814

[benjamin.watts@kent.gov.uk](mailto:benjamin.watts@kent.gov.uk)

## **RE Today Syllabus Model A + The new units for 2022**

### **Green religion? How and why should religious communities do more to care for the Earth?**

This investigation enables pupils to learn in depth about the challenges of climate justice issues and about how different religious and spiritual ways of life can contribute to the urgent human need to stop spoiling the environment and the Earth. Pupils will develop a rich knowledge of examples, concepts, sources of wisdom and authority and practice in different religions and worldviews with regard to climate change, environmental care and building a sustainable future.

### **What can be done to reduce racism? Can religion help?**

This investigation enables pupils to learn in depth from different religious and spiritual ways of life through exploring ideas and examples of what religions do to reduce racism, including for example the work of different religious leaders in promoting respect and the teaching of different sacred texts about human unity.

### **How do family life and festivals show what matters to Jewish people?**

The unit implements the principal aim of RE, which is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

### **How do people from religious and non-religious communities celebrate key festivals?**

This unit offers a multidisciplinary focus using the lens of a sociologist and of a religious studies expert.