

SACRE HUB MINUTES 6 SEPTEMBER 2021 4.00 PM ON ZOOM

Present: Karen Butler, Beth Rowland, Angela Hill, Anne Andrews, Mark Laynesmith, David Taylor, David Rees, Christine Isles, Ashpreet Singh, Gareth Barnard, Madeline Diver
Apologies: Stephen Vegh

Item 1: Agreed syllabus forward plan.

The following plan had been sent to SACRE hub members in July

1. *We need to ask LAs about the possibility of funding the syllabus review to the tune of £900 for each of the financial years 22-23 and 23-24. This would give the hub £10, 800 to fund the review over the two years, bringing it in line with the minimum suggested by NASACRE for an effective syllabus review.*
2. *We will send an online survey to all teachers across the Pan-Berkshire region in October and again in Jan/Feb (if necessary). AH and DR are pooling questions for this, but we will keep them simple and straight forward.*
3. *We aim to launch the Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs) in the summer term 2022, when we have the results of the survey and have analysed what sort of changes teachers are keen to see. (This might need to come forward to spring term 2022)*
4. *Generate teacher and faith groups working/writing parties early in the summer term 2022.*
5. *First draft to ASC's late autumn 2022*
6. *Revisions during spring 2023*
7. *Final design and publication – May -June 2023*
8. *Online launch – July 2023*
9. *Fully implementation in September 2024*

There was robust discussion around the first item on the list with a couple of members in favour of extending the timescale. Covid and current teacher workload were cited as reasons why a postponement might be in order. On the other hand, the release of the Ofsted RE research review in May 2021 and the forthcoming publication of the next Ofsted report into RE, alongside the major changes in thinking around RE, suggest that aiming to stick to the proposed timescale might be beneficial. This, coupled with the hope that the syllabus requires more clarification and exemplification than major revision, encouraged SACRE hub to broadly accept the proposed timeline, but with some provisos.

- a) The survey in October/November (repeated or extended in January/February as necessary) should focus on gauging teacher capacity and desire for revisions.
- b) Any revision must take into account the Real People, Real Faith films and allied work. A proposal to include some exemplification of the syllabus referring directly to the films was supported.
- c) The results of the survey(s) would inform the next steps, and if it were necessary or deemed wise because of teacher capacity, we could consider extending the review period over three rather than two years.

There was also discussion about whether £900 per year per SACRE would be sufficient funding. It appears that each SACRE contributed £1700 per year last time. It was felt that in current circumstances, if we could run the revision on the proposed £10,800 over two years, it would be manageable for SACRE budgets, as some SACREs and LAs are more cash strapped than others. For a final decision to be made about costs, SACREs and the hub would need to know how much revision for the syllabus was required, and whether it would be in electronic form only, or whether there would be printed copies available. The amount spent on design would also need to be considered, as the current syllabus lacks the professional appearance of some others. Using the full amount each year

would mean that SACRE needs to devote most of its time and effort to the syllabus, not leaving capacity for additional work.

There was also discussion about the decisions that individual SACREs would need to make. Hub members were asked to take the above proposals to their SACREs for the first meeting of the year or agree in principle ahead of that if meetings take place later than mid-October.

SACREs need to agree in principle to continuing to collaborate on the syllabus.

They need to agree to the funding proposal.

It was suggested that some SACRE time looking at different recent agreed syllabuses across the country might be instructive. Two per SACRE seems reasonable and ideas can be pooled.

It was also suggested that the Agreed syllabus should aim to be compatible with the widely used Understanding Christianity resource (produced by RE Today), but that the syllabus should not be too closely tied to it, as for many schools three days of training and the cost of the resource makes it prohibitive. Discounts are available to community schools, but the training is still essential as the resource is not available without it.

Decisions:

AH, DR and AA to meet to decide on the questions for the survey and the platform to be used. (Meeting scheduled for 09/09/21)

Survey to go to hub for approval asap

Survey to be launched early to mid-October, but closing date extended to 12 November.

Hub to meet in early December when survey data processed and available (Tuesday 7 December TBC)

Item 2 the survey questions

DR offered the following questions as a starter:

1. To what extent is your school's provision for RE based on the current Agreed Syllabus?
2. Please give a brief explanation for your answer above
3. What do you like about the current Agreed Syllabus?
4. Are there any specific changes you would like to see in a new Agreed Syllabus?
5. Are there any other comments about the Agreed Syllabus you would like to make?
6. What do you think the aim of RE should be?
7. If a new Agreed Syllabus is developed, what support would you find helpful? (Tick all that apply)
8. Would you be interested in providing further input into the development of the Agreed Syllabus?

If yes, please provide your name and email address

There was general agreement that these were heading in about the right direction, but that we needed to keep the focus to teacher capacity. AH has additional questions and these will be discussed at the meeting on Thursday.

AOB

Update on Filming:

Catholic film has been produced, but not yet received in question episodes. AA to chase.

We are close to getting the money from Reading Faith forum for the next batch of filming; if we get this this will mean that the project can continue, despite hub devoting itself to the syllabus review.

Meeting closed at 5.10 pm