

Agreed Syllabus Conference

held on Monday, 14 March, 2016 at 6.00 p.m.

at the Council House, Lichfield Street, Walsall

Present

Councillor Craddock
Councillor Robertson
Councillor Rochelle
Mr. P. Prasadam,
Mr. C. Hopkins (Chairman)
Ms. Karen Donnellan
Mrs. B. Groombridge
Dr. G. Gomez
Mr. D. Lomax
Mr. M. Lad
Mrs. D. Barrett

In Attendance:-

Ms. M. Daniels (Queen Mary's High School)
Ms. Anna Meer (Rushall Primary School)
Ms. R. Broughton (Lower Farm Primary School)
Mr. A. Martin (Blue Coat Academy)
Ms. V. Heydon-Matterface (Children & Family Worker for the Brownhills & Willenhall Methodist Circuit) (Observer)
Mr. S. Flynn (Children's Services)

1/16 Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillor Phillips, Mrs. S. Blackmore, Mr. D. Thakker, Mrs. M. Gibbons, and Mr. R. Askari.

2/16 Appointment of Chairman

Resolved

That Mr. C. Hopkins be appointed Chairman for the remainder of the current Municipal Year.

3/16 Late items to be introduced by the Chairman

There were no late items for introduction by the Chairman.

4/16 Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)

There were no items for consideration in the private session.

5/16 Agreed Syllabus

The Agreed Syllabus was submitted:-

See annexed

Mr. Flynn introduced the following R.E. lead teachers to the Committee who had been part of the working group which had been set up to review the Agreed Syllabus:-

Ms. M. Daniels – Queen Mary's High School
Ms. A. Meer – Rushall Primary School
Ms. R. Broughton – Lower Farm Primary School

Unfortunately, other members of the working group had been unable to attend this meeting to assist with the presentation.

Ms. Broughton informed members that it was the view of the working group that there should be three years of learning which would provide more of a skills aspect. The working group looked at early years and considered that the syllabus should be more appropriate for non-specialists; suggestions had been made on an easier way to use the document.

Ms. Daniels stated that the working group wanted to take on board British values and wanted the Agreed Syllabus to recognise British values across all key stages. This had been included in some of the schemes of work; 15 units had been suggested and it was expected that secondary schools would adopt 9 of them; 3 for use in year 7, 3 for year 8 and 3 for year 9. Every effort had been made to incorporate all the World Religions and information for non-specialists had been included. Efforts had also been made to make the document very user friendly by including key suggestions throughout. A variety of other Agreed Syllabi from other parts of the Country had been looked at and elements from the Nottinghamshire Syllabus had been used and amended to make it appropriate to Walsall.

Ms. Meer stated that the most up to date census for Walsall had been used to consider the most up to date population, the religions covered and progression from Key Stage 1 and 2 up to secondary to reflect the children's surroundings and communities and how to live in a diverse community. Ms. Broughton informed members that the working group had based the syllabus on the questioning method and the questions could be incorporated into the schemes of work to allow for debate and critical thinking.

In response to points raised, Ms. Daniels stated that Academies would be encouraged to attend the Launch and it was hoped that a C.D. version of the Syllabus could be provided and kept up to date. The design of the syllabus enabled all the skills to be used; it was philosophical and would encourage engagement by young people. She informed members that her involvement in the review of the Agreed Syllabus has encouraged her to join NATRE (National Association of Teachers of RE) and all schools could join and value from the support of that body.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference thanked the members of the working group for all the work they had carried out in producing the revised Agreed Syllabus.

Members adjourned to their respective groups to discuss the vote, which was recorded as follows:-

Local Authority – Approve the revised Agreed Syllabus
Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education – Approve the revised Agreed Syllabus
Other faiths and religious denominations – Approve the revised Agreed Syllabus
Teacher Associations – Approve the revised Agreed Syllabus

Resolved

That the revised Agreed Syllabus to be implemented in Walsall schools from 1 September, 2016 be recommended to SACRE for approval.

Termination of meeting

The meeting terminated at 6.25 p.m.