



EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – INFORMATION ITEM

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE CAERPHILLY AGREED SYLLABUS FOR
RELIGION, VALUES AND ETHICS (RVE)**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics for Caerphilly Local Authority Schools.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021, each local authority must prepare and adopt a syllabus of Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) for use in all maintained schools and have due regard to guidance given by Welsh Ministers on this matter.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Scrutiny is asked to receive the report for information.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 This report is for information only.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Following the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021, each local authority must prepare and adopt a syllabus of Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) for use in all maintained schools, and have due regard to guidance given by Welsh Ministers on this matter.
- 5.2 Religion, Values, and Ethics is a statutory requirement of the Curriculum for Wales and

is mandatory for all learners from age 3 to 16. RVE forms part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE).

- 5.3 This AoLE encompasses Geography, History, Religion, Values and Ethics, Business Studies. These disciplines share common themes, concepts and transferable skills, whilst having their own discrete body of knowledge and skills.
- 5.4 The RVE syllabus must have due regard to Curriculum for Wales (CfW) guidance and the RVE guidance. In addition, the syllabus must reflect the following points:
- (a) the religious traditions in Wales are in the main Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Wales;
 - (b) a range of non-religious philosophical convictions are held in Wales;
 - (c) the local authority may make different provision in respect of different descriptions of schools maintained by the local authority and different descriptions of learners.
- 5.4.1 It should be noted that within Caerphilly the decision to adopt the Agreed Syllabus for RVE is an Executive (Cabinet) function, which is delegated to the Chief Executive or any Director or the relevant Head of Service, under the Council's Constitution Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions).
- 5.4.2 It should also be noted that the removal of the parental right to withdraw from RVE is a legislative change under the new Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021, and is not at the discretion of each local education authority to adapt or amend in any way.

The development of the Caerphilly Agreed Syllabus Religion, Values and Ethics

- 5.5 The local authority convened an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) to prepare and recommend the proposed agreed syllabus for RVE for adoption.
- 5.6 The ASC is a separate legal body from a Standing Advisory Council. However, it has the same group structure as the Standing Advisory Councils.
- 5.7 The ASC must:
- have regard to any guidance given by the Welsh Ministers;
 - ensure that any sub-committees appointed by the conference shall include at least one member of each of the committees constituting the conference;
 - give one vote only for each of the committees constituting the conference, upon any question to be decided by the conference or by any subcommittee thereof;
 - seek unanimous agreement upon a syllabus of RVE to be recommended for adoption by the local education authority;
 - meet in public and be chaired by an appointee of the local authority or be permitted to choose its own Chair.

Membership of the Agreed Syllabus Conference

- 5.8 The ASC is made up of representatives from the following three groups:
- Group A - a group of persons to represent Christian denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions and non-religious philosophical convictions;

- Group B - a group of persons to represent such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought to be represented, having regard to the circumstances of the area;
- Group C - a group of persons to represent the authority;
- There is no legal provision for an Agreed Syllabus Conference to include co-opted members, but it can seek the advice it considers appropriate from those it considers appropriate, to inform the development of effective RVE provision in its area.

Legislative Changes

5.9 In addition to the changes relating to the content of the RVE syllabus within the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021; there are also legislative changes relating to the roles and legal responsibilities of Agreed Syllabus Conferences:

- any agreed syllabus for RVE must reflect both religious beliefs and non-religious which are philosophical convictions within the meaning of Article 2 Protocol 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights;
- provision for the appointment of persons who represent holders of non-religious philosophical convictions is carried out in the same way as the appointment of persons who represent holders of religious beliefs.

Timeline for the Agreed Syllabus Conference and adoption of the Religion, Values and Ethics Syllabus

5.10 The locally Agreed RVE syllabus must be implemented in nurseries and primary schools from the 1st September 2022, and in all year groups and all schools by September 2026.

5.11 The following table outlines the timeline for meetings to ensure that the Agreed RVE syllabus is in place in Caerphilly by the end of July 2022.

Date	Action
14 th February 2022	Confirmed representation from SACRE to support the ASC, and initial way forward agreed
1 st March 2022	Agreed RVE Syllabus Conference Workshop 1
8 th March 2022	Agreed RVE Syllabus Conference Workshop 2
10 th March – 17 th March 2022	Consultation with key stakeholders
28 th March 2022	Proposed Agreed RVE Syllabus presented to Standing Conference for endorsement and recommended to the local authority for adoption and implementation from September 2022
20 th June 2022	Agreed RVE Syllabus for consideration to LA.
1 st September 2022	Implementation of the Agreed RVE Syllabus in Caerphilly schools

5.12 Conclusion

Following the above steps, the ASC unanimously agreed to advise the LA to adopt the WG Guidance on Religion, Values and Ethics as the new Caerphilly Agreed Syllabus for RVE. A copy of the new Agreed Syllabus for RVE is attached to this report.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 There are no specific assumptions.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report is for information only, therefore there no Integrated Impact Assessment is required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This work is funded through the EAS, therefore there are no specific financial implications.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no specific personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The Consultees are noted below.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021.

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Consultees:

Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
Dave Street, Corporate Director Social Services and Housing
Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities
Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Jo Rao, Vice Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
Sue Richards, Head of Transformation and Education Planning & Strategy
Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN
Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Officer.

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Caerphilly Agreed Syllabus for RVE