



Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

1. Topic of assessment

EIA title	The 2023 revised Agreed Syllabus for RE
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EIA author	Carrie Traill
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2. Approval

	Name	Date approved
Approved by	Liz Mills	24/04/2023

3. Quality control

Version number	1.0	EIA completed	20/04/23
Date saved	20/04/23	EIA published	

4. EIA team

Name	Job title	Organisation	Team role
Carrie Traill	Head of Education	Children, Families and Lifelong Learning	Commissioner of the SACRE support contract
Rachel Boxer	RE consultant	Diocese of Guildford	Advisor to the SACRE and co-author of the revised syllabus

5. Explaining the matter being assessed

What policy, function or service is being introduced or reviewed?	The revised Surrey County Council Agreed RE syllabus – This was formally approved by the Surrey Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) at its meeting on 10 May 2023 when the group convened its legally constituted Conference in order to make this decision.
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	<p>The function of the Agreed RE syllabus is to set out the statutory curriculum content for the teaching of RE in all Surrey County Council Maintained Schools. The syllabus is also available to other schools and academies to select as their adopted RE syllabus.</p> <p>There is a statutory requirement on all schools in England to teach RE and facilitate daily collective worship which is mainly (but not exclusively) Christian in nature. (Ref. 1944 Education Act; Section 375 (3) Education Act 1966 and Education Reform Act 1988)</p> <p>The Agreed syllabus has to be reviewed every five years by SACRE (ref. Education Act 1993)</p>
<p>What proposals are you assessing?</p>	<p>A complete revision of the Agreed syllabus content for RE teaching in schools age 5-18 years. NB The syllabus is intended for use by all Surrey Maintained, Foundation and Voluntary Controlled schools but is optional for Voluntary Aided schools and academies/Free Schools who may make other arrangements for the teaching of RE.</p>
<p>Who is affected by the proposals outlined above?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students receiving RE lessons • Parents and carers • Teachers delivering RE lessons • The main religions and faith groups in the UK, as far as they operate within Surrey, and groups of people holding a non-religious world view. <p>The presentation of the 6 main world religions in terms of their practices and beliefs, and the beliefs of those holding a non-religious world view, form the basis of the content of this curriculum. The syllabus affords an opportunity for students to understand about people who hold different views to their own and gives guidance to teachers about creating opportunities in lessons in which to discuss, in a respectful way, these views and beliefs as being of equal value.</p>

6. Sources of information

<p>Engagement carried out</p>
<p>The RE syllabus has to be reviewed every 5 years to take account of changes in statutory guidance, legal judgements and pedagogic approaches to the subject. The review group consisted of a small working/re-drafting group of primary and secondary RE specialist teachers in Surrey schools, 1 RE consultants and all members of SACRE representing the major faiths and non – religious beliefs in Surrey had an opportunity to add input.</p>
<p>Data used</p>

Consultation and re-drafting took place between July 2021 and April 2023. Revised Guidance in the form of reports and statutory and non-statutory Guidance from the DfE have been referred to in the review process:

- [Balanced RE](#) (Church of England Education Office, March 2018), used in the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus (2019)
- [Religion and Worldviews – the way forward](#) (CoRE, Commission on RE, 2018)
- [Revised Ofsted Framework](#) (September 2019)
- [Worldview – a multidisciplinary report](#) (REC, 2020)
- [Worldviews in Religious Education](#) (THEOS, October 2020)
- [Ofsted’s RE Research Review](#) (May 2021)
- [Worldviews Project - DRAFT](#) (REC, May 2022)

7. Impact of the new/amended policy, service or function

The main changes to the syllabus are as follows:

- Whilst the subject is still called Religious Education in statute, the syllabus uses the term ‘worldviews’ in the development of pupils’ subject knowledge. This term is widely accepted as more inclusive and accurate, reflecting the reality that everyone has a worldview, which may be influenced by a number of factors, including religious or non-religious beliefs.
- Concept maps (created in partnership with local faith and belief communities) outline agreed content across the whole of the syllabus. What this substantive knowledge looks like for different ages and stages is described in the units of work as ‘sticky knowledge’.
- Disciplinary knowledge is shaped through key questions reflecting theological, sociological and philosophical approaches (called ‘God’, ‘Community’ and ‘Identity’ in the Primary phase) and ensures that pupils’ RE learning is not one-dimensional. Pupils’ personal knowledge is linked with their learning: key questions throughout the units of work help pupils to use skills and articulate their views, insights and understanding in increasingly sophisticated ways.
- End of phase expectations reflecting the theological, sociological & philosophical approaches help teachers to understand & articulate progression through the syllabus. Materials for EYFS reflect current practice and are linked to the Early Learning Goals, as outlined in the statutory EYFS Framework.
- A more flexible approach to content at KS3, enabling schools to design a curriculum that reflects their local context (e.g. set across multiple schools within an academy chain) and the specific needs of their students, including transition into provision at KS4.

The revised syllabus is seen by the teachers in the review group and members of SACRE as an improvement in terms of its more unified approach (one syllabus for all age groups which allows for progression in learning). It is a more inclusive syllabus in terms of its

approach to curriculum content e.g. it now includes a discrete section on worldviews, which specifically include non-religious worldviews. It also takes into account recent statutory and non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education.

It is felt that the syllabus content is now more relevant and compliant with good practice in RE teaching across England.

The impact of this change in content is intended to inform pupils about religious and non-religious beliefs, it does not promote any single belief system or make value judgements about any faith or belief being more important than others.

The syllabus allows for schools to incorporate British Values teaching into the RE modules, and indeed promotes RE as an important contributor to this initiative in schools.

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During the redrafting process there was discussion about the impact of the syllabus content on people with Protected Characteristics and their Carers; every attempt has been made to ensure that the new syllabus is non-discriminatory in its content and also in the advice it offers to teachers to ensure that the delivery of RE is made in a non-discriminatory way.

7a. Impact of the proposals on residents and service users with protected characteristics

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Protected characteristic	Potential positive impacts	Potential negative impacts	Evidence
Age	Syllabus content is more relevant to all age groups in schools and facilitates differentiation and entitlement so that children of all ages may access learning in RE	None anticipated	Page 5 'Time for RE' sets out the guidance for taught time across each key stage P9 sets out the statutory entitlement and emphasises breadth and balance P10 sets out areas of learning, linked to multi-disciplinary approaches, and scopes what pupils should know and what progress is expected by the end of each Key Stage The syllabus provides a scaffold for learning to progress in an age-related way, with each phase building on the previous one in a very deliberate way
Disability	The syllabus allows for differentiation of learning in the way it is set out. Teachers can easily see what is expected of children from the P scales through to KS4	None anticipated but this will depend on the quality of teaching and classroom management in each school	For pupils or staff with Sight impairment the syllabus content can be made accessible in braille by schools, as required, and large print formats are also available as all schools have access to an electronic copy. There are sections intended for use in special schools and specialist centres
Gender reassignment	The syllabus promotes respectful discussion of ways of life and an understanding of all people irrespective of their gender	None anticipated but this will depend on the quality of teaching and classroom management in each school	Gender re-assignment is not overtly addressed in the RE syllabus, although it may well be raised by pupils themselves during the course of their learning, especially in the secondary phase. Schools will be expected to address any questions in line with their PSHE policy and curriculum. All the belief systems included in the syllabus promote respect for other people's beliefs, choices and life styles. Qualities such as understanding, compassion and acceptance of difference and personal freedom and choice are

			supported by the enquiry based learning approach advocated in the syllabus
Pregnancy and maternity	The syllabus can be accessed by all students and teachers whatever their context	None anticipated	
Race	There are numerous opportunities for the topic of race and faith to be covered in the syllabus throughout each Key Stage in an age appropriate way	None anticipated but this will depend on the quality of teaching and classroom management in each school	Racial justice was identified as one of the areas of concern in the content of the syllabus e.g. See KS 2 unit How do people try to make the world a better place? P80 and What can be done to reduce racism? Can RE help? P102 and in the Worldviews thematic units 'Equality and Diversity' at KS3 P222. This will also be addressed through advice given to schools about resources
Religion and belief	Syllabus is more inclusive in that it covers the main world faiths plus non-religious world views. It also promotes learning through respectful discussion and enquiry	None anticipated but this will depend on the quality of teaching and classroom management in each school	Changes to syllabus reflect the diversity of faith and non- religious belief groups living in Surrey
Sex	The syllabus does not make any distinction between what can be taught to boys and girls	None anticipated	The syllabus does not present gender stereotypes
Sexual orientation	This is not a feature of any of the faiths or belief systems covered in the syllabus	None anticipated but this will depend on the quality of teaching and classroom management in each school	Opportunities for discussions with older pupils are there and teachers have guidance on how to manage these, should the question arise. Schools will be expected to address any questions in line with their PSHE policy and curriculum.
Marriage and civil partnerships	Marriage is a sacrament of a number of faiths and is covered in the syllabus. It is not presented as the only lifestyle	None anticipated	There are opportunities in the syllabus from Early Years and KS1 units through to the later sections to learn about the belief in marriage and about alternative partnerships and lifestyles. Schools will be

			expected to address any questions in line with their PSHE policy and curriculum.
Carers (protected by association)	Carers and parents are legally entitled to remove their children from RE lessons by notifying the school	None anticipated	Because the breadth of the RE syllabus overlaps with other subject areas such as PSHE, Humanities or English there are many opportunities for addressing potential discrimination against Carers of people with Protected characteristics by children or by staff. This is the role of the Head Teacher and Senior Pastoral staff in every school and is not restricted to the RE curriculum.

7b. Impact of the proposals on staff with protected characteristics

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Protected characteristic	Potential positive impacts	Potential negative impacts	Evidence
Age	N/A	none	
Disability	Syllabus content can be made accessible in braille and large print formats	none	Reasonable adjustments must be made by the employer to enable staff with disabilities to be able to access everything they need to work
Gender reassignment	N/A	None anticipated	
Pregnancy and maternity	N/A	None anticipated	
Race	Race and religion are topics that inevitably will arise in RE	None anticipated	



	lessons. The syllabus enables these to be addressed using factual information and promotes a respectful approach to the subject. Students are encouraged to ask the 'big questions' and teachers are supported through the guidance to help them explore a range of views without feeling pressurised to explain their own personal belief system or culture		
Religion and belief	See above	None anticipated	
Sex	N/A	None anticipated	
Sexual orientation	N/A	None anticipated	
Marriage and civil partnerships	N/A	None anticipated	
Carers (protected by association)	N/A	None anticipated	

8. Amendments to the proposals

Change	Reason for change
Need to introduce formats for people with sight impairments has been acknowledged by SACRE. This is the responsibility of individual schools	Currently there is no mention of braille or large print formats in the previous syllabus, although schools may already make provision for this if necessary. This EIA establishes that this and all other reasonable adjustments must be made to make the revised syllabus and associated teaching materials accessible to all.

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9. Action plan

Potential impact (positive or negative)	Action needed to maximise positive impact or mitigate negative impact	By when	Owner
Reasonable adjustments	Note to go out to schools regarding reasonable adjustments required for sight impaired teachers or parents. To go onto websites	September 2023	Carrie Traill

10. Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated

Potential negative impact	Protected characteristic(s) that could be affected
None	

11. Summary of key impacts and actions

The key impact of this complete syllabus review is that teachers following this syllabus will be better equipped to effectively deliver RE content in their lessons at all Key Stages of learning. The syllabus, and its associated free training for all Surrey teachers, also gives helpful guidance on how to encourage students to ask big philosophical questions, enables them to challenge prejudice and discriminatory behaviour in the classroom, and underpins the teaching of British Values across the

curriculum. It supports specialists in RE and non-specialist teachers and promotes religious tolerance and understanding to all groups.

The recommended learning and teaching styles, and the revised content, intrinsically promote equality of opportunity and treatment towards all. The Approved Syllabus therefore enables schools to address inequalities and bias towards people and groups, especially those with Protected Characteristics in law, by establishing opportunities within the curriculum to explore these issues with pupils of all ages and abilities.

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<p>Information and engagement underpinning equalities analysis</p>	<p>The review group consisted of key stakeholders - primary and secondary RE specialist teachers, the SCC SACRE RE consultants and all members of SACRE representing the major faiths and non – religious beliefs in Surrey.</p> <p>A wide range of data was considered including, but not exclusively limited to the texts and documents listed above in paragraph 6</p> <p>The syllabus will be available for schools to access on SACRE webpages, currently hosted by the Diocese of Guildford as part of SCC’s contractual arrangements. The public will soon be able to access it from a link on the SACRE website hosted on the SCC website.</p>
<p>Key impacts (positive and/or negative) on people with protected characteristics</p>	<p>The syllabus will be available to both school staff and parents by accessing it from the Diocese of Guildford website, a directional link will be placed on the SCC hosted SACRE website. This means that all individuals or groups can see what is being taught in schools within RE lessons.</p>
<p>Changes you have made to the proposal as a result of the EIA</p>	<p>At the next LA Agreed Syllabus review, SACRE will include text regarding recommendations or adaptations that can be made for people with sight impairments</p>
<p>Key mitigating actions planned to address any outstanding negative impacts</p>	<p>Free teacher training sessions have been offered by the SACRE RE adviser (through the Diocese of Guildford) to facilitate specialist and non-specialist RE teachers and Heads of Department to understand the changes in content and approach so that these may be cascaded to other colleagues in schools. These sessions have also been made available as videos for any schools that missed the training.</p>
<p>Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated</p>	<p>It is impossible to ensure that no individual teachers will bring their own bias into the delivery of this subject: this is raised as part of the training for teachers, relating to their, and pupils’, personal knowledge. A big challenge in education at present is the lack of trained RE teachers; this means that in some schools it is delivered by non-specialists. However there are processes and procedures in place in all schools for dealing with complaints, including those related to Equalities Issues.</p>