

1.1 Introduction from the Chair of the Agreed Syllabus Conference

As Chair of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC), I heartily recommend this revised edition of Barnsley's Local Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education to all educational practitioners in Barnsley.

Locally, we are seeing a growing diversity in our school populations, offering new experiences and challenges to pupils and staff. During the last few years we have seen new residents in Barnsley from a growing number of countries including Poland, Kosovo, Czech Republic, Albania, Republic of Latvia, Portugal and Africa. We now have the most diverse population that Barnsley has ever known. 'Religion and beliefs for many people form a crucial part of their culture and identity' (DCSF 2010)

Current statistics inform us that the Black and Ethnic Minority Community in Barnsley has increased from 0.9% in 2001 to 3.9% in 2011 (2011 census). We anticipate that the 2021 census will reflect this growing trend. The total BME population in 2011 was 9,057. However, although this is a significant increase, Barnsley still has a low proportion of BME residents compared with the rest of South Yorkshire and the country as a whole.

We have attempted to create a syllabus in line with the needs of this diverse population and current educational thinking.

In 2013 the sections of the Barnsley Local Agreed Syllabus relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) were completely revised in line with new national guidance. Many thanks to Jeanette Stratton and Lynsey Andrews (Lacewood Primary School) and Katrina Dalton (Royston CE Primary School) for their expertise in assisting me with the revision of this section.

The World Religions section of the Barnsley Local Agreed RE Syllabus has been recently revised and will be published on our website – www.barnsley.gov.uk/sacre - in 2020 following approval by SACRE members at the Agreed Syllabus Conference held 11 February 2020. In each of the six World Religions covered in the syllabus we have included a page of useful

publications and websites and references to the global issue of climate change.

Members of the Barnsley SACRE regularly monitor RE GCSE results in all of our ALC/Secondary Schools. I am pleased to report that in the last two years those secondary schools in Barnsley with students taking RE at GCSE level attained significantly higher 9-4 achievements than the national average. SACRE members have sent congratulatory letters to all the schools concerned.

Support for the Barnsley Agreed RE Syllabus will continue to be given to SACRE members, teachers, teaching assistants and governors through development days - visiting various places of worship. From 2015 to 2019 groups have visited Wakefield Cathedral and Chantry Chapel and two Wakefield Mosques; a Hindu Mandir and Sikh Gurdwara in Bradford; a Buddhist Centre and Synagogue in Sheffield; and a Synagogue, Mosque and the Minster in Leeds.

Our revised website www.barnsley.gov.uk/sacre and subject leaders' meetings give valuable additional support to facilitate the effective use of the Barnsley Local Agreed Syllabus which we hope will support practitioners through the recent changes to Ofsted Inspections.

SACRE strongly recommends a minimum allocation of curriculum time to deliver the RE Syllabus in our schools (2.3)

KS1 – 36 hours of tuition per year;
KS2 – 45 hours of tuition per year;
KS3 – 45 hours of tuition per year;
KS4 – 70 hours of tuition per year across the key stage.

In order to meet the expectations of the recently published Ofsted School Inspection Handbook, Primary Schools will need to build into their planning ways of developing a re-visiting previously taught areas of study:

"Over the course of study, teaching is designed to help pupils to remember long term the content they have been taught and to integrate new knowledge into larger areas." *

* Ofsted School Inspection Handbook – November 2019

In the recent publication by The Commission on Religious Education – "Religion and World Views: The Way Forward" a "new vision" for RE was promoted:

"The subject should explore the important role that religious and non-religious world views play in all human life. This is an essential area of study if pupils are to be well prepared for life in a world where controversy over such matters is pervasive and where many people lack the knowledge to make their own informed decisions. It is a subject for all pupils, whatever their own family background and personal beliefs and practices. To reflect this new emphasis, we propose that the subject should be called *Religion and Worldviews*."

Finally I would like to convey my sincere thanks to all SACRE members, past and present, and particularly our Chairperson, Mrs Jenny Witty, for their help and encouragement in continuing to develop our Agreed RE Syllabus and support Barnsley Practitioners. Thanks also to Mrs Joanne Bentley (Barnsley Primary School Evaluation Officer) for her advice on how schools should meet the expectations of the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and to our Clerk to SACRE, Mrs Marion Proudfoot, for her sterling work.

SACRE is fully committed to supporting schools in their delivery of RE in the 21st Century.



Roger Holmes
Chair - Barnsley Agreed Syllabus Conference
Consultant to SACRE