

**MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
REPORT**

<p>SUBJECT: Monmouthshire Agreed Syllabus for Religion Values and Ethics (RVE) MEETING: Council DATE: 23rd June 2022 DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All</p>
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1. PURPOSE:

To receive and consider the proposed Monmouthshire Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics.

2. RECOMMENDATION:

Council adopt the Monmouthshire Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics.

3. KEY ISSUES:

Monmouthshire Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics

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.

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. This area encompasses geography; history; religion, values, and ethics; business studies. These disciplines share many common themes, concepts, and transferable skills, whilst having their own discrete body of knowledge and skills.

The RVE syllabus must have due regard to Curriculum for Wales (CfW) guidance and in particular, 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.

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

The local authority convened an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) to prepare and recommend the proposed agreed syllabus for RVE for adoption.

The ASC is a separate legal body from a Standing Advisory Council. However, it has the same group structure as the Standing Advisory Councils:

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

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, 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

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 and Standing Advisory Councils.
These are that:

- any agreed syllabus for RVE must reflect both religious beliefs and also 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

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

The following table outlines the timeline for meetings to ensure that the Agreed RVE syllabus is in place in Monmouthshire by the end of June 2022. This will ensure schools have sufficient time to plan for the implementation of the Agreed RVE Syllabus from 1st September 2022.

9th March 2022	Agreed representation from SACRE to support the ASC
28th March 2022	Agreed RVE Syllabus Conference and workshops
26th April 2022	Draft Agreed RVE Syllabus for discussion in SACRE
27 th April – 20 th May 2022	Consultation with key stakeholders
23 rd May	Proposed Agreed RVE Syllabus finalised
23 rd June 2022	Agreed RVE Syllabus for consideration by full Council
25 th June 2022 (provisional)	Agreed RVE Syllabus circulated to schools
1 st September 2022	Implementation of the Agreed RVE Syllabus in Monmouthshire schools

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

None

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

None

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

8. CONSULTEES

Religious and non-religious groups
Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE)
Monmouthshire Primary and Secondary Headteachers
Torfaen County Council
Caerphilly County Council
Newport County Council
Blaenau Gwent County Council
Welsh Ministers
Estyn
Trades Unions
County Councillors
SACRE
Town and Community Councils

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asc/2021/4/schedule/2>

with Education Act 1996:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/schedule/31/enacted>

Summary of legislation for Religion, Values and Ethics:

<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/summary-of-legislation#religion,-values-and-ethics>

Summary of legislation for the Agreed Syllabus Guidance 2022:

<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/summary-of-legislation#agreed-syllabus-conferences-and-the-agreed-syllabus-for-religion,-values-and-ethics>

Guidance for Religion, Values and Ethics:

<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/humanities/designing-your-curriculum#religion,-values-and-ethics-guidance>

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