

Contextual information

5. This report links to the Hampshire Strategic plan through ensuring children and young people are well educated and about to contribute to Hampshire's strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity. Further, high-quality religious education will contribute to well-educated children and young people who will ensure all people in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives. Religious education also contributes to ensuring people in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment through consideration of particular curriculum materials relevant to the environment and relates to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Finally, a high-quality religious education will contribute to ensuring everyone in Hampshire can enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities.
6. Primary legislation requires that an agreed syllabus for religious education is reviewed every five years. The current syllabus, Living Difference III that built on previous syllabus of 2004 and 2011, was adopted for use in December 2016. Living Difference IV has been developed following a period of review since the ASC in February 2020.

Consultation processes including with other authorities that share the agreed syllabus.

7. The locally agreed syllabus Living Difference III has been shared across the four local authorities of Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton, since December 2016.
8. Following an initial survey in the winter of 2019 and a teacher consultation meeting in January 2020, Agreed Syllabus Conferences in all four authorities agreed to commence the review.
9. Meetings have taken place with representatives from SACREs from the four authorities in July 2020 and again in 2021. In between time many consultation meetings took place with teachers and other advisers and experts in the field. In light of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, all meetings have taken place virtually.
10. This is a significant time to be reviewing the locally Agreed Syllabus in the light of recommendations of the Commission on RE (CoRE) report published in 2018. The review has taken the CoRE recommendations into account in developing Living Difference IV.
11. SACRE has been involved in all consultation processes and reports have been made at each meeting during the period of review and revision.

Conclusions

12. Living Difference IV has been prepared and a presentation will be made to SACRE to support this report on the key elements that have stayed the same and the key elements that have been revised in light of the consultation process. It is intended that Living Difference IV will ensure teachers across the authority have access to the guidance and support they need to teach the highest quality religious education to Hampshire children.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Living Difference IV, the proposed locally agreed syllabus for religious education recommended for adoption at this meeting, has an interest in equalities at its heart. A high-quality religious education taught according to Living Difference IV seeks to contribute to the elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation especially and directly with regard to the protected characteristics of race and religion. Further through experiencing a high-quality religious education taught according to Living Difference IV there is the intention to mitigate xenophobia of all kinds thus fostering good relations. In the revision of the locally agreed syllabus equalities in relation to race and religion have been taken into account through examining the way religious and other orientations on life are presented in the classroom.