

Redbridge and Havering Agreed Syllabus Working Group: Meeting: Thursday Dec 12th 2013

In attendance:

Fiona Moss RE Today, Julia Diamond-Conway' Ian Morris Free Church, Jane Murray Ravensbourne, Amanda Harris, Gurmeet Dhanjal Newbury Park, Mac Leonard CofE rep Chris Cornwell Humanist rep, Andy Lewis Sacred Heart, Chris Speller Elm Park, Kirsty – Hallmead, Judith Payne School Improvement, Deborah Weston Redbridge Adviser Graham Edwards Oaks Park School, Barbara Usher Coopers Coborn, John Lester from 5.45pm

1. Welcome and introductions

2. Overview of the Agreed Syllabus Project

- FM set out the timeline leading to a proposed launch in the autumn term of 2014. BU asked why Easter and Christmas progression grids are included in the list of contents. Following discussion it was agreed that progression grids would illustrate other religious celebrations too, perhaps Diwali

3. Developing and agreeing the core purpose of RE

- The group read the 'purpose of RE' statement from the NCFRE and it was suggested that this be included in the AS and also a 'core purpose' statement which would be brief enough to be remembered by teachers as an overarching description of RE in Redbridge and Havering.
- The following points were made:
- A paragraph needs to be written to explain why RE is important - particularly with view to explaining it to parents. This paragraph should clearly state what it is useful for in the world of work etc.
- Several people liked the reference to varied responses including their own. Others suggested the ending: "accept the existence of different religions including their own" but it was felt that this didn't have the depth of what is in the current purpose.
- There was approval for the academic rigour of the statement
- What sort of challenging questions were meant? Challenging questions would be those that are difficult to answer/ are academically and personally challenging and also questions that are those that make you think deeply and personally
- Some were concerned about the phrase 'challenging questions' The following was suggested, "the exploring and responding to ultimate questions and sources of wisdom offered by religions and world views "
- The following was agreed: ".... is to engage pupils in exploring and responding to challenging questions"

4. Religions and beliefs specified for study

- The group approved of the FS, KS1, KS2 and KS4. There was a difference of opinion over KS3. Some people would have preferred students to explore all 6

religious traditions in KS3 but focus on two of their choice in addition to Christianity in depth.

5. Programme of study

- Aims
- Suggested questions
- Planning outlines
- Unit plans
- KS3-4 detail of specification

The humanist representative wanted FM to look at the titling of some of the questions to ensure they were inclusive of worldviews. Despite the explanation that world views were going to be looked at in the thematic units and the question in KS2 that looks at humanist and Christian values the Humanist rep wanted a systematic unit on humanism. Whether or not this goes ahead will need to be decided by Daniel and Deborah.

It was decided that no non statutory questions would be given for KS3, instead a paragraph of guidance with some hints would be given eg the importance of Judaism in today's world. There was still no agreement on number of religions at KS3 as many schools are doing a 2 yr KS3. DH and DW to decide and inform FM and SP.

The KS1 planning outline was agreed as the model to follow for KS1 and 2. FM and SP to work on these ASAP. We will then agree which units SP and FM are writing and which ones the schools will write. DW will be in charge of guiding and editing the schools writing. A proforma will need to be agreed between DW, FM, SP and DH.

One representative explained that it was important to include the info on religion and beliefs as in the Havering syllabus.

Julia DC wanted samples of how the questions could be organised across a key stage.