

## **Proposal from Humanist representative of committee A of City of York SACRE**

### **Request for SACRE members to agree the following statement**

*York SACRE recognises that the present agreed syllabus does not sufficiently address the legal requirement to cover non-religious worldviews, such as Humanism. Pupils need to develop their understanding of these worldviews thoroughly and systematically throughout their education, alongside an understanding of the major world religions. Therefore York SACRE commits to ensuring that the agreed syllabus is revised in order to do this as part of the next Agreed Syllabus Conference and formally requests that the LA ensure that sufficient resources are made available to complete this work and ensure that schools are updated and trained appropriately.*

### **Background information for York SACRE members:**

What is a locally agreed syllabus?

The locally agreed syllabus is the statutory document for RE in the local authority. It sets out what should be taught to pupils in all key stages and the standards expected of them at the end of each key stage. It is produced by an agreed syllabus conference (ASC). The agreed syllabus has to be reviewed every five years. If, at some other time, a majority of the groups of the SACRE asks the LA in writing to reconsider its agreed syllabus, it must convene a conference for that purpose. (Education Act 1996, Chapter III)

What is the Agreed Syllabus Conference?

An agreed syllabus conference (ASC) is a statutory body brought together in order to produce an agreed syllabus for RE. It is a separate legal entity from a SACRE. An ASC:

- has the same committee structure as the SACRE;
- can be made up of SACRE members but need not be so. There is no provision for co-opted members. In some LAs the Chair of the ASC is appointed by the local authority whilst in others, the ASC chooses its own Chair. The LA's responsibility to convene the ASC includes the duty to provide funds and support for its work. <sup>1</sup>

### **What has been taken into account in the current City of York Syllabus?**

#### **Page 13 of current syllabus notes:**

The agreed syllabus has a duty 'to take care that information or knowledge included in the curriculum is conveyed in a pluralistic manner' and 'must accord equal respect to different religious convictions, and to non-religious belief'.<sup>8</sup> Note that the term 'religion' encompasses both religious and non-religious beliefs.<sup>9</sup>

#### **Page 14 of the current syllabus states:**

Non-religious worldviews. Good practice in RE, as well as European and domestic legislation, has established the principle that RE in schools without a religious character should be inclusive of both religions and non-religious worldviews. Schools should ensure that the content and delivery of the RE curriculum are inclusive in this respect.

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<sup>1</sup> May 2015 SACRE Handbook <http://www.nasacre.org.uk> page 10

<sup>8</sup> [www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/r-fox-v-ssfe.pdf](http://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/r-fox-v-ssfe.pdf) 'Equal respect' does not entail equal time.

<sup>9</sup> In accordance with Human Rights Act 1988

This syllabus requires that, in addition to the religions required for study at each key stage, nonreligious worldviews should also be explored in such a way as to ensure that pupils develop mutual respect and tolerance of those with different worldviews. This is enabled through the following key questions: L2.6, L2.9, U2.1, U2.5, U2.7, 3.1, 3.4, 3.9, 3.10 and 3.12