

Education and Inclusion Services Directorate

Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics

Curriculum for Wales Religion, Values and Ethics



CYFLAWN I **TEGWCH** A RHAGORIAETH
MEWN **ADDYSG** A **GWELL LLES** I BAWB
EQUITY AND **EXCELLENCE** IN **EDUCATION**
AND **ENHANCED WELLBEING** FOR ALL

July 2022

Foreword

As we begin our transition into the new Curriculum for Wales we are reflecting on what we teach, how we teach and why we teach certain topics. It is both a challenge and a source of excitement that we are now tasked with lighting the fire of the imagination and inspiring our learners to expand their knowledge, understanding and wisdom. Perhaps the most challenging and exciting of these is the area of Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) which is now within the curriculum and is essential for promoting an individual prepared for their life in our diverse and pluralistic world.

Religion, Values and Ethics is a statutory requirement of the Curriculum for Wales and is mandatory for all learners from ages 3 to 16. Whilst part of the Humanities Area, encompassing geography; history; religion, values and ethics; and business studies, these disciplines share many common themes, concepts and transferable skills, and have their own discrete body of knowledge and skills. Schools and settings within Rhondda Cynon Taf are seizing opportunities to develop rich, exciting and innovative RVE within an authentic and purposeful school designed curriculum. All schools and settings will have 'regard to' their locally Agreed Syllabus for RVE when designing and implementing their curriculum.

The Curriculum for Wales is an opportunity to enhance RVE's importance in the role and delivery of RVE in helping to encourage learners' spiritual development. It is acknowledged that 'spirituality' can be religious or non-religious and is a responsibility across the whole curriculum, for the whole learning community in each school and setting, whilst acknowledging the specific significance that exploration of 'spirituality' has within RVE as part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience. It is this spirituality that makes a major contribution to wellbeing and can provide the vehicle for resilience to help learners through the many experiences that they will encounter in life.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to all those who have been involved in the creation of this document and to those who will subsequently provide support. I would also like to thank the Education workforce in RCT who have worked very hard in the preparation of the new curriculum and who will continue to provide the very highest level of teaching and learning experience as we strive to achieve our mission of 'Excellence in Education and Enhanced Wellbeing for All'.

Gaynor Davies

Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Letter from the Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus Conference Chair

The law requires that when a new Agreed Syllabus is needed it is written by an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC). This is made up of members of the Borough Council who represent the whole community, practising teachers representing educational professionals, and local leaders of various beliefs, both religious and non-religious, who represent their faiths. As Chair of the ASC of Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) I have appreciated how they have all worked collaboratively to produce this Agreed Syllabus which I am pleased to present to you on their behalf.

The Welsh Assembly decided to bring together 'Religion, Values and Ethics' (RVE). It has enabled us to create an exciting, totally different syllabus. It recognises that values and ethics flow from our beliefs, whether religious or non-religious, enabling teachers, if they wish, to explore how all three impact each other and shape our lives.

I'm pleased that RVE is set alongside Geography, History, Business and Social Studies as part of Humanities. Beliefs do not exist in a vacuum but in the local, national and international settings, shaping our society and how we do business. Beliefs and societies have shaped and been shaped by the past and are relevant to our present and our future.

The Welsh Assembly and the ASC are committed to subsidiarity. They required us by law to draw up a syllabus having regard to their guidelines and requiring schools to frame their courses with regard to the syllabus. We believe that we have created a syllabus that enables schools of all kinds the flexibility to create stimulating, challenging and enriching lessons appropriate to the whole range of their pupils.

As well as chairing the ASC I am also Chair of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) now to be the Standing Advisory Council (SAC).

As a former secondary Head of RE, a retired clergyman and a former primary school Chair of Governors, I am excited by the potential of this syllabus for our pupils, but I have no illusions about the scale of the challenge facing our teachers as they implement it.

The SAC is committed to do all it can to support our schools in delivering this new syllabus. This SAC will be a forum where representatives of teachers, the Local Authority, faith groups and a SAC and RVE Adviser from the CSC will



meet at least once a term to wrestle creatively with these challenges to seek to ensure that our schools get the best possible support to produce the highest quality education for our pupils across the borough.

We've accepted RCTCBC's offer of space on their website to share links to resources, courses and information that teachers might find helpful. We hope that teachers and faith leaders will send us suggestions. Everything will be vetted by our CSC SAC Adviser to ensure quality and appropriateness.

Please would those seeking to implement this Syllabus let us know if there is anything you think that we can do to help you or if you would like us to hold one of our meetings in your school, so that we can see your excellent work or the challenges you are facing within RVE.

We wish all those involved in any way with RCT education every success as they seek to continue to create excellence in all our schools.

David Brownutt BA (Rev)
Chair of ASC and SACRE

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All information highlighted in 'grey' has been taken directly from the Hwb website. Links are provided

Rhondda Cynon Taf's Vision for Religion, Values and Ethics

Rhondda Cynon Taf's schools and settings have this new opportunity to engage with rich Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) for all learners. RVE, undoubtedly affords a unique and important value to our learner's education. A chance to encourage all learners to know and understand their communities and the world around them. To become tolerate, respectful and instigators of social change and justice.

Vision:

All children and young people within the Rhondda Cynon Taf locality to experience high quality RVE education and develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that enable them to become personally successful, with the skills for lifelong learning and globally engaged citizens. The **four purposes** are the shared vision and aspiration for every child and young person within the Curriculum for Wales Act 2021.

In fulfilling these, we set high expectations for all, promote individual well-being, tackle ignorance and misinformation, and encourage critical and civic engagement. A school's RVE curriculum is everything a learner experiences in pursuit of the four purposes. It is not simply what RVE we teach, but how we teach and crucially, why we teach it.

Values the Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus Conference are committed to:

- The development of happy, well informed and resilient learners, through a focus on RVE academic achievement, personal well-being and progression beyond school.
- Equality of opportunity, championing and celebrating the success and life chances of all children and young people, through all learners studying RVE.
- Respecting the rights of all children and young people and actively listening to them and involving them in their RVE curriculum.
- Raising the aspirations of all children and young people and our expectations of what they can achieve, irrespective of their background.
- Embracing the diversity of the locality, practising tolerance and respect.
- Respecting and protecting our natural environment for the children and young people of today and for generations to come.
- Sharing knowledge, practice and learning openly and collaboratively.

Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics

Audience

The Rhondda Cynon Taf Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) Agreed Syllabus has been written to be accessible to all those responsible for designing and delivering the RVE curriculum. The intended audience includes:

- the headteacher of a maintained school or a maintained nursery school
- the governing body of a maintained school or a maintained nursery school
- a provider of funded non-maintained nursery education
- the teacher in charge of a pupil referral unit
- the management committee for a pupil referral unit
- a person who provides teaching and learning for a child, otherwise than at a maintained school, maintained nursery school or pupil referral unit, by virtue of arrangements made under section 19A of the Education Act 1996 (c. 56)
- a local authority in Wales

In addition, the Agreed Syllabus may also be useful to practitioners, regional consortia, awarding bodies, Estyn, teacher unions, religious organisations, non-religious organisations, parents and carers and other bodies in Wales with an interest in RVE.

Overview

Agreed Syllabus

“As RVE is a locally determined subject, the agreed syllabus specifies what should be taught in RVE within each of the 22 local authorities in Wales for those schools that teach the agreed syllabus.” [RVE Guidance](#)

This document sets out the details regarding teaching and learning in the mandatory element of Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) in line with the Curriculum for Wales, for all Rhondda Cynon Taf schools and settings maintained by the local authority. This document has been adopted as the Agreed Syllabus for RVE in Rhondda Cynon Taf, in accordance with the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021.

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Authority have adopted this document as the Agreed Syllabus for RVE in July 2022, following a formal recommendation to the Local Authority by the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) on the 30th June 2022.

“Once an agreed syllabus has been adopted, all maintained schools and settings are required to have regard to the agreed syllabus including schools of a religious character, in their design of the agreed syllabus element of their RVE provision.” [RVE Guidance](#)

All maintained schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf, in addition to the mandatory areas of the Curriculum for Wales, are required to **‘have regard’** to the Agreed Syllabus for RVE when designing their curriculum. The Local Authority has a duty to review the Agreed Syllabus every five years.

The Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus recognises the approach of the Curriculum for Wales Framework is based on the principle of **subsidiarity** and, as such, the Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus recognises and reflects the autonomy of each school and setting in realising its own curriculum.

Implementation

This Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus will be effective from **September 2022**, for Religion, Values and Ethics in respect of all learners, up to and including year 6. In respect of year 7 learners, schools in the region will have flexibility on whether to roll out the Curriculum for Wales in September 2022, or to roll out the Curriculum for Wales for years 7 and 8 together in September 2023. During the period of curriculum roll out, as a secondary school or setting ‘adopts’ the Curriculum for Wales Framework for a particular year group, this Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus will supersede the current/legacy Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus. From September 2023, this Agreed syllabus, in respect of years 7 and 8 as all schools and settings will have implemented the Curriculum for Wales for those learners. Thereafter, the phased roll-out of the Curriculum for Wales will continue, and this Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus will supersede the other:

- year 9 learners in September 2024
- year 10 learners in September 2025
- year 11 learners in September 2026

More information for schools and settings on the process for opting in to the Curriculum for Wales in respect of year 7 learners is provided in the [‘Journey to curriculum roll-out’](#).

Further Enquiries about this document should be directed to:
Rhondda Cynon Taf Standing Advisory Council (SAC) on Religion, Values and Ethics
Eirwen.davies@rctcbc.gov.uk

Or by visiting the [Rhondda Cynon Taf Council](#) website

Related documents

- Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021
- The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

For schools that have a religious character, they have additional RVE requirements to consider, from the Church in Wales and Catholic Education Service:

<https://www.churchinwales.org.uk/en/about-us/education/>

<https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/npqh/item/1000053-wales>

The Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics

The Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Authority welcomes that Religion, Values and Ethics is a **statutory** requirement of the Curriculum for Wales and is **mandatory** for all learners from ages 3 to 16:

Mandatory

“Religion, values and ethics (RVE) is a statutory requirement of the Curriculum for Wales and is mandatory for all learners from ages 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.” [RVE Guidance](#)

The legal requirement for Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE)

It is essential that Headteachers, senior leaders and governors understand the legal requirements of RVE within the Curriculum for Wales. These can be found in the [RVE section of the Summary of legislation](#).

The RVE Legislation Guidance can be accessed via the Welsh Government's Hwb website:

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

The guidance on RVE that sits within the Humanities Area on Hwb, is statutory guidance:

“The guidance on RVE contained within the Humanities Area is statutory and published under section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 (the Act) and designed to assist those responsible under the Act for designing the RVE syllabus as part of the school curriculum.” [RVE Guidance](#)

The Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus follows the statutory Religion, Values and Ethics [Statutory Guidance](#) on Hwb and forms the basis of this Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus and is to be read in conjunction with this document.

The RVE statutory guidance can be accessed via the Welsh Government's Hwb website:

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

The statutory RVE guidance, forms the basis of this Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus for RVE and includes vital information for schools when designing their curriculum at a local level, including the following areas:

- [RVE within the Curriculum for Wales](#)
- [Spiritual development](#)
- [Cross-cutting themes](#)
- [Cross-curricular skills](#)

- Skills integral to the four purposes
- Principles of Progression within humanities
- Descriptions of learning within humanities
- Designing your curriculum for RVE
 - RVE and the four purposes
 - RVE and the statements of what matters
 - RVE concepts

 - The RVE lens (sub lenses in RVE)
 - Learner progression and learning journeys in RVE
 - Enriching learner experience in RVE
 - Key links with other Areas
 - Points to consider for schools and settings
- Ensuring inclusivity in RVE
- Education in funded non-maintained nursery settings
- Education other than at school

Rhondda Cynon Taf schools and settings supports the view that in accordance with the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 this Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus reflects that:

- 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
- the fact that a range of non-religious philosophical convictions are held in Wales. As noted in the RVE Guidance on Hwb, non-religious philosophical convictions *“include beliefs such as humanism, atheism and secularism”* RVE Guidance

Rhondda Cynon Taf schools and settings are also to take note of the following legislative changes which will have a significant impact on schools:

- There is no parental right to withdraw their children from the academic subject of RVE within the Curriculum for Wales.
- Maintained schools with nursery age children and funded non-maintained nursery settings must provide RVE for all their learners from age 3 from September 2022
- Post 16 RVE in maintained schools is optional for sixth formers from September 2027

Designing your RVE Curriculum

The starting point for any curriculum design is [Hwb](#). Any changes will also be made centrally on Hwb, so it is advised that you read and check information on the [Curriculum for Wales](#) regularly.

Each school and setting will need to decide how RVE best works within their approach to the Humanities Area. For example, curriculum design can be integrated, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary or disciplinary. Curriculum design should be evaluated regularly in line with the Curriculum for Wales Framework. All schools and settings must also have regard to this locally Agreed Syllabus for RVE when designing their curriculum.

The area on the [Humanities Area of Learning Experience \(AoLE\)](#) is also crucial for designing your RVE curriculum. Here you will find the following areas:

1. Introduction
2. Statements of what matters (mandatory)
3. Principles of progression (mandatory)
4. Descriptions of learning
5. Designing your curriculum

The section on 'designing your curriculum' has the following information that you will also find useful:

- Cross-curricular skills and integral skills
- Specific considerations for this Area
- Key links with other Areas
- Cross-cutting themes

Schools and settings must ensure that sufficient time is allocated to fulfil a meaningful, challenging and engaging learner experience with RVE. The curriculum provision for RVE does not include time and provision given to Collective Worship, they are distinct and separate. Where learners do not opt to study RVE for an external qualification at age 14-16, they are still required to have suitable and appropriate RVE provision, as the **mandatory** requirement is until 16 years.

Suggested Points to Consider for Rhondda Cynon Taf Schools and Settings

It is advised that the following questions can be used when [designing your curriculum](#) for RVE:

- Have you considered how RVE will work best within the Humanities Area?
- Have you had regard for your agreed syllabus for RVE?
- Does your curriculum design for RVE support the realisation of the four purposes?
- Have you used the statements of what matters for this Area to inform your curriculum design?
- Have you used RVE concepts in your curriculum design?
- Have you considered a range of sub lenses through which to view RVE concepts to support curriculum design?
- Have you considered learning progression in RVE, using the principles of progression and descriptions of learning in the Humanities Area?
- Have you considered the 'learning journeys' provided to support your understanding of progression in relation to RVE?
- Have you reflected on the possible learning journeys of your own learners to support curriculum design for RVE?
- Have you included opportunities in your curriculum design for enriching learner experiences in RVE?
- Have you made key links between RVE and the other areas of learning and experience?
- Have you included opportunities for learners' spiritual development in RVE?
- Does your curriculum design for RVE ensure an appropriate depth, breadth and quality of learning?

The 'Right to Withdraw' in the Curriculum for Wales

*“There is **no** parental right to request that a child is withdrawn from RVE in the Curriculum for Wales.”* [RVE Guidance](#)

In the Curriculum for Wales RVE is a statutory requirement for all learners from age 3 to 16. The timetable for these changes is as follows:

Primary aged learners – September 2022

Year 7 learners – September 2022 OR September 2023, depending on the roll out of the Curriculum for Wales into their school

Year 8 learners – September 2023

Year 9 learners – September 2024

Year 10 learners – September 2025

Year 11 learners – September 2026

This is in line with every other academic subject in the Curriculum for Wales.

Note that parents may still request that their children are withdrawn from 'collective worship' from September 2022, if they wish, as this is distinct and separate from the academic subject of RVE.

For more information regarding this, please read the [summary of legislation](#) for RVE.

There are other areas of the [Curriculum for Wales](#), [RVE Summary Legislation](#) and [RVE Guidance](#) that will advise and guide schools and settings on their provision for RVE. Here are some of the headings:

- **Religion, Values and Ethics Post 16**
- **Enriching Learner Experience in Religion, Values and Ethics**
- **Spiritual Development and Religion, Values and Ethics**
- **Ensuring Inclusivity in Religion, Values and Ethics**
- **Religion, Values and Ethics in Funded Non-maintained Nursery Settings**
- **Religion, Values and Ethics for Education other than at School**

Additional Supporting Materials for Rhondda Cynon Taf Schools and Settings

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Authority and the Rhondda Cynon Taf Standing Advisory Council for RVE (SAC) will continue to provide supporting materials, in addition to this Agreed Syllabus. These will be regularly updated and are designed to provide ongoing support for practitioners. These are intended to be 'live' and working documents, materials and resources to reflect the evolution of the Curriculum for Wales.

The local authority and Rhondda Cynon Taf SAC welcome contributions and suggestions for the additional supporting materials. Working committees may be set up to support the development of these materials. If there are any queries, please contact the Clerk to SAC at: [eirwen.davies@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:airwen.davies@rctcbc.gov.uk)



Supporting
Material for the RCT

Contact

For further guidance on the Rhondda Cynon Taf Agreed Syllabus and the RVE Curriculum, please contact:

Donna.graves@cscjes.org.uk