

Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics

Curriculum for Wales Religion, Values and Ethics



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

FOREWORD

In 2022, Merthyr Borough Council convened an Agreed Syllabus Conference to devise the new locally determined Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) to fit the Curriculum for Wales Act 2021. With the four purposes as a shared vision and aspiration for every child and young person, we must also recognise that RVE is a statutory requirement of the Curriculum for Wales and is mandatory for all learners from ages 3 to 16. It is integral to the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE), as well as providing a unique and distinct contribution to the Curriculum for Wales.

All schools and settings must have 'regard to' their locally agreed syllabus for RVE when designing and implementing their curriculum and RVE must be clearly evidenced through school's curriculum design and planning processes. The Agreed Syllabus Conference brought a working party of teachers, representatives from faith and non-religious groups, local authority officers, experts in the field of RVE and other professionals to create the syllabus. This Agreed Syllabus is current, fluid and flexible and will support schools across the County Borough to deliver RVE. The working party ensured that the vision of the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales, as well as the principles of curriculum design, were central to the locally agreed syllabus. It is recognised that as an integral part of the Curriculum for Wales, RVE can offer a distinctive contribution to the realisation of the four purposes for all learners.

As outlined in the 'Raising Aspirations, Raising Standards' education strategy, 'everyone within Merthyr Tydfil's education community believe that all our children and young people are entitled to the best possible life chances. This can only be achieved by enhancing their access to the highest quality educational opportunities, and by supporting and encouraging them to be the best that they can be'¹The most effective method of achieving this is through a curriculum which provides extensive experiences, depth and breadth of challenge, gives real life context for learning and is localised to meet the needs of all learners within individual or cluster settings.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the creation of this document and to those who will subsequently provide support.

Sue Walker
Director of Education

¹ (Raising Aspirations, Raising Standards, 2021, p2).

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All information highlighted in 'grey' has been taken directly from the Hwb website. Links are provided at beginning of each section.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics

Audience

The Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council 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.”

<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/humanities/designing-your-curriculum/#religion,-values-and-ethics-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 schools and settings maintained by Merthyr County Borough Council. This document has been adopted as the agreed syllabus for RVE in Merthyr Tydfil, in accordance with the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council has adopted this document as the agreed syllabus for RVE in May 2022, following a formal recommendation to the Local Authority by the Agreed Syllabus Conference on July 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.” Guidance for RVE

All maintained schools in Merthyr Tydfil, 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. Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council has a duty to review the agreed syllabus every five years.

The Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council agreed syllabus recognises the approach of the Curriculum for Wales Framework, is based on the principle of **subsidiarity** and, as such, the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council agreed syllabus recognises and reflects the autonomy of each school and setting in realising its own curriculum.

Implementation

This Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council agreed syllabus will be effective from **September 2022**, for Religion, Values and Ethics for all learners, up to and including Year 6. For 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 Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council agreed syllabus will supersede the current/legacy Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council agreed syllabus. From September 2023, this agreed syllabus, for 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 Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council 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:

Miss Andrea May, Head of Achievement and Wellbeing
andrea.may@merthyr.gov.uk

Or by visiting the [Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council](#) website

Related documents

[Curriculum and Assessment \(Wales\) Act 2021](#)

[The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal \(Wales\) Act 2018](#)

The Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics

Introduction

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.”

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

Mandatory

“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.”

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

The Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council agreed syllabus follows the statutory Religion, Values and Ethics [statutory Guidance](#) on Hwb and forms the basis of this Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council 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 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](#)

Merthyr Tydfil schools and settings take note that in accordance with the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 this Merthyr Tydfil 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

Merthyr Tydfil 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 three, from September 2022

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. The area on the [Humanities Area of Learning Experience \(Area\)](#) 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](#)

Suggested points to consider for Merthyr Tydfil 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?

<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/humanities/designing-your-curriculum/>

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

In the Curriculum for Wales Religion, Values and Ethics 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: <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/summary-of-legislation/#religion,-values-and-ethics>

There are other areas of the Curriculum for Wales, RVE Summary Legislation and RVE Guidance that will advise and guide schools and settings. Here are some of those areas and links:

[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 Merthyr Tydfil schools and settings

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and the Merthyr Tydfil Standing Advisory Council for Religion, Values and Ethics (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.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and Merthyr Tydfil 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 Andrea May, Head of Achievement and Wellbeing: andrea.may@merthyr.gov.uk

[Learning in Merthyr Tydfil | Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council](#)

Contact

For further guidance on the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council agreed syllabus and the Religion, Values and Ethics Curriculum, please contact:

andrea.may@merthyr.gov.uk