



# A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools

Lincolnshire SACRE meeting 24.11.15



*Westminster*  
**FAITH DEBATES**

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# **A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools**

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**CHARLES CLARKE AND LINDA WOODHEAD**

# Swineshead St Mary's



# A New Settlement - Religion and Belief in Schools

In June 2015 Charles Clarke and Linda Woodhead published 'A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools'. Their proposals have been widely recognised as adding to the important debate on the law as it relates to RE.

The full report can be found here:  
<http://tinyurl.com/q7x7pbz>

# Recommendations

Clarke & Woodhead's paper contains 18 policy recommendations. One recommendation is related to collective worship, eleven to the curriculum for RE and six to faith schools.

**The focus today is on those recommendations which relate to RE and collective worship. NASACRE has asked for responses.**

# Acts of collective Worship

- The current requirement for a daily act of collective worship should be abolished.
- Decisions about assemblies should be left to governors – assemblies would form part of the whole school strategy for SMSC.

# Recent paper on ACWs

'Collective Worship and Religious Observance in Schools: An Evaluation of Law and Policy in the UK' (AHRC), November 2015

Sets out 3 options:

1. Maintain the status quo
2. Abolish the duty
3. Reform the duty

<http://collectiveschoolworship.com>

# National rather than local syllabus (1)

The Religious Education syllabus in county and voluntary controlled schools should no longer be set by a system of agreed local syllabuses, but by an agreed national syllabus which would have a similar legal status to the requirements of other subjects in the National Curriculum.



## National rather than local syllabus (2)

- The nationally agreed syllabus would be determined by the Secretary of State in agreement with a newly created 'National Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (NASACRE-comprised of experts on religion and education).
- The new syllabus would be drawn up after formal consultation and input from the relevant established professional bodies and representatives of religions, humanism and other belief systems. This nationally-agreed syllabus should be reviewed every 5/7 years.

# Prompts

1. What is your reaction to this recommendation? Would you prefer to continue to have a locally agreed syllabus? Why? Why not?
2. Would becoming a National Curriculum subject help RE have parity with other subjects?
3. Do you think an 'agreed national syllabus' would help raise standards in RE?
4. What would be the potential benefits and risks of such a change?

# SACREs

Local SACREs to be given a new role which includes participating in the consultations about the content of the national RE curriculum, helping local implementation of the national RE syllabus, promoting community cohesion and educating for diversity, and advising on local availability of religious instruction.

# Prompts

1. What is your reaction to this recommendation?
2. Are there things that current SACREs do that would be lost within these changes? If there are share examples.
3. Are there other roles that SACREs could fulfill?

# Right of withdrawal

If the recommendations are accepted, there is a proposal is to remove the parental right of withdrawal.

What is not clear is what would happen to schools NOT following the national RE curriculum.

- **Even if the recommendations are not accepted, should the right of withdrawal be abolished?**
- **If they are accepted, should all parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE (and collective worship)?**

# Caring, Affirming Religious Education

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# British Values video



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