



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT HANBURY ROAD BAPTIST CHAPEL, HANBURY
ROAD, BARGOED ON MONDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY 2012 AT 2:00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor D.M. Gray – Chairman

Councillors:

D. Carter, Mrs R. Potter

Representing Teacher Organisations:

Miss H. Bartley (ATL), Mrs N. Boardman (NUT), Mrs C. Thompson (NAHT)

Representing Religious Organisations:

Mrs E. Hawthorn (United Reformed Church)

Together with:

D. Ralph (VALREC), V. Thomas (ESIS Religious Education Advisor) K. Cole (Interim Manager Learning, Education and Inclusion) and E. Sullivan (Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs A. Blackman, Mrs A. Collins and J. Taylor. Miss B. Davies (UCAC), Ms K. Mathias (VALRETA), Ms S. Rivers (ASCL), Mrs D. Williams (NASUWT), Mr T. Crosse, Mrs J. Jones (Church in Wales). Captain R. Waters (Salvation Army) and Mr. P. Jones.

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

Councillor D. Carter escorted Members on a tour of the recently refurbished and integrated Library, Chapel and Community Resource at Hanbury Road. Members noted how the original fittings of the Baptist Chapel had been utilised and complemented by the modern elements of the new Library. Members were also pleased to see that the Chapel's original stained glass was still on view for everyone to enjoy.

The Chair thanked Councillor Carter for the tour and expressed his thanks to the Library staff for all their assistance and for acting as host for today's meeting. The Chair opened proceedings with a poem entitled Brighten The Corner Where You Are by Helen Steiner Rice.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the meeting.

2. MINUTES

Subject to the inclusion of Councillor Mrs R. Potter in the list of apologies it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Caerphilly SACRE meeting, held on 8th December 2011 at Bedwas Junior School (minute nos. 1 - 9 on page nos. 1 - 5) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING

Councillor Mrs R. Potter advised that although she had sent her apologies they had been omitted from the minutes of the 8th December 2011.

Mrs Thomas advised that Geraint Hopkins had replaced Rhian Linecar as the contact for SACRE and WASACRE issues on behalf of the Free Church Council of Wales. Members expressed their appreciation for all Ms Linecar's efforts and wished Mr Hopkins every success in his new role.

Mrs Thomas confirmed that Mr Phillip Jones had formally accepted co-opted membership to SACRE representing Secondary School Head Teachers.

3. HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

The report provided SACRE with an update on the Lessons from Auschwitz programme where sixth form pupils are given the opportunity to visit the Auschwitz Birkenau concentration camp.

Members noted the schools due to take part in this years programme and were advised that during the visit pupils would be able to see first hand the remnants of what remains of the camp and the events that took place there.

Mrs Thomas advised that a pupil from St Martin's Comprehensive School had attended a HMD event and also visited Auschwitz. He was so inspired by the visit and the HMD event that he used what he saw as the focus for his A Level Art Project.

The project included a short animation depicting the train journey to the camp, using iconic pictures, symbolic recreations, atmospheric music and sound effects the film establishes the mood and emotions of the journey that ends at Auschwitz.

The animation was shown to Members in both storyboard and final versions in order to illustrate the progression of the project and Members were impressed how well the imagery recreated the horror, sadness and confusion of the journey and agreed that it was well deserving of the A* grade awarded.

SACRE noted the report.

4. LITERACY AND RE

Mrs Thomas presented examples from the re-training offered to schools on literacy and RE.

Members noted that the courses on offer for RE for autumn 2011 and spring 2012 were tied into priorities of the SEG grant so that schools could access funding. The SEG priorities were confirmed as literacy, numeracy and reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment.

At Primary level the course aimed to support all teachers of RE to plan for a variety of opportunities to develop literacy skills and included practical ideas to help teachers capitalise on those opportunities through a range of activities. Mrs Thomas illustrated this with a demonstration of reading strategies to improve reading skills in an RE context. Mrs Thomas emphasised the importance of considering all aspects of the text and how best to engage pupils and assist them to get a feel for the topic. The use of flow diagrams, reading cycles, thinking maps, fortune lines, diary writing and other thinking skills strategies were discussed as ways of encouraging writing skills, reading and understanding.

At Secondary level critical literacy training aimed to address literacy issues, especially writing and also the higher order skills of critical thinking. It included strategies to equip pupils with the tools to analyse, appreciate, appraise and evaluate. This was illustrated by a 'reading images' strategy where members had an opportunity to analyse its meaning.

Members acknowledged that they could not take for granted that pupils understood what they were reading and the need for Teachers to pre-read the text was noted. It was also noted that reading ages could varied greatly within a class and this also needed to be taken into consideration.

Examples of the types of activities used in the training were distributed and the Members fully participated in the exercises.

SACRE noted the presentation.

5. KEY STAGE 3 MODERATION OF TEACHER ASSESSMENT

The report sought to update Members on the Chief Moderator's Report 2011 and inform them of the main messages for school departments that would be submitting their sample evidence in the school year 2011/2012.

Mrs Thomas summarised the report and highlighted the need for Teacher's to read the Moderator's messages and so ensure that the three core inter-related skills for RE were evidenced i.e. engaging with fundamental questions, exploring religious beliefs, teaching and practices and expressing personal responses.

Mrs Thomas emphasised that this was not about pupils but rather that teachers understand the levels enough to award them. The main messages within the report were outlined and Teacher Representatives were advised to carefully study the guidance document and make sure that they used a significant range of tasks, activities and examples to cover levels. The need to ensure that sufficient evidence of religious beliefs, religious teachings and practices and the way these inform and affect each other was stressed. It was noted to be vital that pupils understand and relate these fundamental aspects with personal expressions.

How teachers chose to annotate pupils' work was also discussed and Members noted the comments of the Moderator with regard to internal cross-moderation.

Members expressed concern that as the process had been brought forward by a year it did not allow teachers enough time to be fully conversant with the guidance, which made it very difficult for them to gauge if they were heading in the right direction particularly as there would be no opportunity for resubmission. Mrs Thomas confirmed that WASACRE had also identified the change in timescale as a concern and had written to the Minister to make this point. Members were advised that when the outcomes were made available they would be looked at and the advisory service could be used to support schools in cross- moderation.

SACRE having fully considered its content noted the report.

WASACRE

6. THE WASACRE MEETING HELD ON THE 24TH NOVEMBER 2011 IN CARDIFF

The report outlined the discussion and deliberations of the WASACRE meeting held in Cardiff on the 24th November 2011.

Councillor Gray and Mrs Enfys Hawthorn represented SACRE at the meeting and expressed their appreciation for the all the contributions from the different schools and agreed that this had been one of the best WASACRE meetings they had attended.

Mrs Thomas provided an update on the proceedings including presentations from Donna Graves of Bryntirion Comprehensive School on the REsilience Project and Jared Nolan from Usk Church in Wales Primary School on Community Cohesion.

Members noted the links that had been developed between Maesglas Primary and Maindee Primary Schools to promote community cohesion and how the use of team building games, school visits and identity projects had helped them to gain a greater understanding of each others identity and diversity.

Members noted the discussions and deliberation of WASACRE.

7. REPRESENTATION AT WASACRE ON 30TH MARCH 2011 IN ABERAERON, CEREDIGION

The report sought nominations for representatives to attend the next WASACRE meeting on the 30th March 2012 in Aberaeron, Ceredigion.

It was agreed that any Members interested in attending would advise the Committee Clerk who would then forward details of the meeting. Councillor Michael Gray and Mrs V. Thomas said they would be in attendance at Aberaeron.

8. NOMINATIONS TO THE WASACRE EXECUTIVE

Mrs Thomas advised that she was still awaiting further information from WASACRE with regard to nominations to its executive committee and would update Members on Caerphilly's position as soon as possible.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

Copies of Religious Education News No. 90 (Winter 2011-2012) were distributed for information and Members attention was drawn to an article relating to creating a faith garden.

SACRE noted the correspondence.

The meeting closed at 4:00 p.m.

Approved as a correct record, and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 21st June 2012, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN