

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

DATE: 16TH MARCH 2017

SUBJECT: CORRESPONDENCE UPDATE

A BACKGROUND

To provide an update on the correspondence sent to schools on behalf of Caerphilly SACRE. This includes an update on a letter recently sent to all schools across the county borough to advise on Statutory Requirements for Religious Education (as agreed at the SACRE meeting of 18th October 2016).

B RECOMMENDATION

For Caerphilly SACRE to note the details of the update, including the responses arising from the Statutory Requirements letter sent to all schools.

C SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Appendix 1 Letter sent to all primary schools in relation to Statutory Requirements for Religious Education

Appendix 2 Letter sent to all secondary schools in relation to Statutory Requirements for Religious Education

Penallta House,
Tredomen Park,
Ystrad Mynach,
Hengoed CF82 7PG

Tŷ Penallta,
Parc Tredomen,
Ystrad Mynach,
Hengoed CF82 7PG

Deputy Chief Executive / Dirprwy Brif Weithredw
Nigel Barnett ICSA, CIPD, MBA



www.caerphilly.gov.uk
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ALL PRIMARY SCHOOLS

**Interim Head of
Legal Services and
Monitoring Officer
Gail Williams LL.B
Solicitor**

Our Ref/Ein Cyf:
Contact/Cysylltwch
Telephone/Ffôn:
E Mail/E Bost:
Date/Dyddiad:

**Pennaeth Gwasanaethau
Chyfreithiol a Swyddog
Monitro Dos Do
Gail Williams LL.B
Cyfreithiwr**

SACRE/RB
Rebecca Barrett
01443 864245
barrerm@caerphilly.gov.uk
11th January 2017

Dear Headteacher/Head of RE,

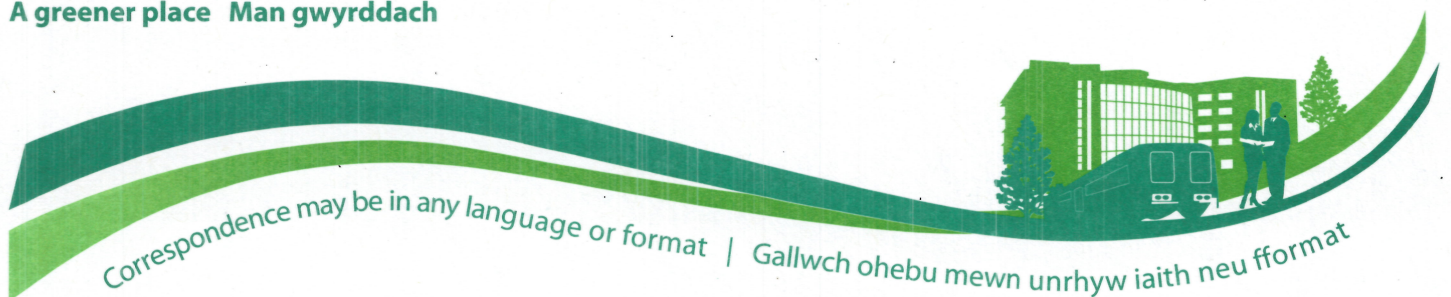
STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Caerphilly Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) has asked me to bring to your attention the statutory requirements for Religious Education in state maintained schools. As the curriculum review is getting under way it seems that some schools are confused as to the status of agreed syllabuses in schools.

As I am sure you are aware Religious Education is part of the basic curriculum and therefore sits outside the National Curriculum. The RE curriculum is locally determined by the local authority and its SACRE. This means that there is a statutory requirement for LAs to provide Religious Education according to an agreed syllabus. With regard to the position of the Caerphilly agreed syllabus it was re-adopted in 2013 and therefore the current syllabus stays in place with an understanding that the syllabus will be reviewed once the shape of the new Donaldson curriculum is defined. There would need to be a change in legislation for the delivery of RE according to an agreed syllabus to be rescinded.

Professor Donaldson report *Successful Futures - Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* recommended that *Religious education should form part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience, and should remain a statutory curriculum requirement from reception.*

A greener place Man gwyrddach



Correspondence may be in any language or format | Gallwch ohebu mewn unrhyw iaith neu fformat

SACRE is aware that the Pioneer schools are now meeting in order to shape the new curriculum. The projected time line for Strand 3, where the *defining and elaborating* of each Area of Learning and Experience (AOLE) and the in-depth subject specific details will be shaped, is from January 2017. Until such time as the detail of the AOLE are shaped and a review of the agreed syllabus takes place then SACRE wish to ensure that schools understand that **coverage of the programmes of study of the locally agreed syllabus is the main statutory requirement.**

I attach a copy of the current Caerphilly agreed syllabus for RE and the programmes of study for KS2 can be found on pages 20-21 and the detail of that worked out in Annex 3 pp37-39.

As regards the **Foundation Phase** three broad areas of People, Beliefs and Questions are studied. The detail of that is worked out in Annex 2 pp 34ff under the topic titles of Themselves, Other People and Living Things. This provides a good base for RE in the Foundation Phase.

SACRE would like schools to confirm receipt of this information by completing the attached pro forma below and returning to the Clerk to SACRE.

I hope that this information is useful to you.

Yours faithfully

**JACQUELYN ELIAS
LA REPRESENTATIVE ON CAERPHILLY SACRE**

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STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Name of School _____

Name of staff member completing pro-forma _____

Position in school _____

I have read and understood the statutory requirements for RE at Foundation Phase and KS2.

YES/ NO (please circle)

Please email the completed pro-forma slip to: Rebecca Barrett (Clerk to SACRE) at barrerm@caerphilly.gov.uk or return the completed pro-forma (via internal courier) to Rebecca Barrett, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Democratic Services, Penallta House, Tredomen Park, Ystrad Mynach CF82 7PG.

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ALL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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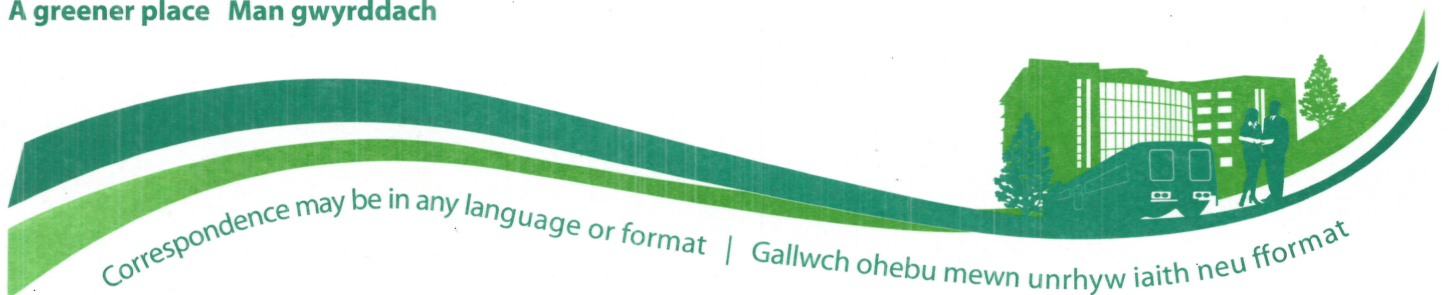
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As I am sure you are aware Religious Education is part of the basic curriculum and therefore sits outside the National Curriculum. The RE curriculum is locally determined by the local authority and its SACRE. This means that there is a statutory requirement for LAs to provide Religious Education according to an agreed syllabus and monitor that statutory requirements are being adhered to by schools. With regard to the position of the Caerphilly Agreed Syllabus for RE it was re-adopted in 2013 and therefore the current syllabus stays in place with an understanding that the syllabus will be reviewed once the shape of the new Donaldson curriculum is defined. There would need to be a change in legislation for the delivery of RE according to an agreed syllabus to be rescinded.

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I attach a copy of the current Caerphilly agreed syllabus for RE where you can see the programmes of study for all key stages in the secondary school on pages 22-31.

SACRE is particularly interested in the delivery of **Religious Education at KS4** where there appears to be some confusion regarding statutory requirements. SACRE would like to draw your attention to the statutory programme of study which can be found on pages 30-31. Many schools in Wales are providing statutory RE by following either a GCSE Short Course or a GCSE Full Course or a combination of the two courses. SACRE wish to inform you that **this would fulfil statutory requirements** as long as **all** pupils are receiving religious education whether or not they are entered for accreditation.

In 2016, the Wales Association of SACREs conducted a survey of the impact of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) on Religious Education in schools across Wales. SACRE understands that some schools are delivering RE at KS4 within the WBQ and believe that coverage of the Global Citizenship element of WBQ is sufficient to cover the RE requirements. Caerphilly SACRE would like to ensure that schools understand that the Global Citizenship unit alone would not be sufficient to cover all aspects of the agreed syllabus KS4 programme of study. The WASACRE survey showed that in some cases WBQ had some positive impact when schools increased the time allocation for RE within the WBQ so that all aspects of the agreed syllabus could be covered. However, that has to be measured against those schools who commented that the introduction of the WBQ was having a negative effect on RE such as loss of Short Course accreditation, over use of non specialists in the teaching of RE and RE subject specific skills being sacrificed to cover the more generic skills of WBQ.

SACRE would like schools to confirm receipt of this information by completing the attached pro forma below and returning to the Clerk to SACRE. The pro-forma concentrates on delivery at KS4 in particular because this is the area identified as of most concern to teachers of RE and also identified as raising issues in the WASACRE survey. Schools providing this information enables the LA and its SACRE to fulfil its monitoring role of RE in the curriculum and be assured that statutory requirements according to the agreed syllabus for RE are being met.

SACRE hope that this information is useful to you.

Yours faithfully,

**JACQUELYN ELIAS
LA REPRESENTATIVE ON CAERPHILLY SACRE**

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – SECONDARYSCHOOLS

Name of School _____

Name of staff member completing pro forma _____

Position in school _____

I have read and understood the statutory requirements for RE at all key stages.

YES/ NO (please circle)

How is RE delivered at KS4? Please include method of delivery (e.g. GCSE courses/ WBQ/other means) and a statement of whether all agreed syllabus requirements are being met.

Any further comments

Please email the completed pro-forma slip to: Rebecca Barrett (Clerk to SACRE) at barrerm@caerphilly.gov.uk or return the completed pro-forma (via internal courier) to Rebecca Barrett, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Democratic Services, Penallta House, Tredomen Park, Ystrad Mynach CF82 7PG.