



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTAD MYNACH ON WEDNESDAY 14TH NOVEMBER 2018 AT 2.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor J. Taylor - Chair
Mrs J. Jones (Church in Wales) - Vice-Chair

Councillors:

Mrs E.M Aldworth, J. Ridgewell, J. Simmonds

Representing Teaching Organisations: Ms M. Jones (UCAC), Mrs T. Lloyd (NAHT)

Representing Religious Organisations: Mrs E. Hawthorn (United Reformed Church),

Together with:

Ms P. Webber (RE Adviser – EAS), Mrs S. Evans (Healthy Schools Practitioner) Miss R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

1. WELCOME

The Chair opened the meeting and introductions were made.

Caerphilly SACRE gave a warm welcome to Ms Paula Webber, who had recently been appointed through EAS as the new RE Adviser to SACRE.

SACRE were pleased to welcome new Teacher Association representative Ms Meinir Jones (UCAC) to her first meeting of SACRE.

Members also welcome Mrs Susan Evans (Healthy Schools Practitioner) to the meeting, who was representing the CCBC Education department on behalf of Mr Paul Warren.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs G.D. Oliver and Mrs M.E. Sargent, together with Miss H. Bartley (ATL), Mrs L. Strange (NASUWT), Mr M. Western (Roman Catholic Archdiocese) and Mr P. Warren (CCBC Strategic Lead for School Improvement).

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

4. MINUTES - 13TH JUNE 2018

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Caerphilly SACRE meeting held on 13th June 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. SACRE MEMBERSHIP UPDATE AND REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE

The report provided an update on the decision of Council on 9th October 2018 regarding a proposed increase in membership. SACRE were asked to approve the revisions to the terms of reference arising from the changes in membership (as appended to the report), and to discuss current membership in light of recent membership requests received.

With regards to SACRE membership, the Clerk to SACRE summarised the outcome of the Council meeting on 9th October 2018. At that meeting, Council unanimously approved SACRE's recommendation that the number of Committee A (faith group) places be increased by two (to comprise one place for a non-Christian faith group/religion and one place for a group who hold secular or non-religious beliefs), and that the number of Committee B places be increased by one and allocated to the NASUWT teaching union.

In view of the decision of Council, SACRE were in agreement that the Clerk contact the NASUWT teacher union to seek nominations for the second place, and also make contact with relevant organisations to seek nominations to fill the two additional Committee A places.

Reference was made to the two co-opted places on SACRE and it was noted that the one primary school representative has not attended since late 2015 and has not responded to reminder letters sent by the Clerk. In light of this, SACRE were of the view that the representative no longer wished to remain on SACRE, given their lack of contact and non-attendance, and that the position should be regarded as vacant.

Ms Webber highlighted a query raised at the meeting of Council, where a Councillor had asked whether there is scope to elect a youth representative onto SACRE. It was explained to SACRE that although there is no potential for youth representation under the three main Committee groupings, a young person could potentially sit on SACRE as a co-opted member. It was confirmed that enquiries would be made in this regard to seek potential nominations, and that the matter would be placed on the agenda for discussion at the next SACRE meeting. It was suggested that one avenue might be for Caerphilly's Education Team to set up a Youth/Junior SACRE so that the views and input of its young members could be fed into the main committee.

SACRE were also advised of the recent retirement of faith representative Reverend Eryl Williams (Baptist Union of Wales) owing to her relocation to a church in another borough. SACRE were saddened to learn of Reverend Williams' departure from the Committee but expressed their sincere thanks for her many years of service and contributions to the work of SACRE. It was agreed that Reverend Williams would be sorely missed and that a letter of thanks would be sent on behalf of SACRE to wish her well in her retirement and future endeavours. In light of the vacancy, it was noted that the Clerk would contact Cytun and seek nominations for a replacement Free Church member.

Discussion also took place regarding the terms of reference, and the Clerk drew SACRE's attention to Part 11 of the document, which cited the membership of SACRE as being for a period of 4 years, and that any outgoing members may be re-appointed. It was noted that Councillor John Taylor, Mrs Enfys Hawthorne and Mrs Janet Jones had reached this point of service, and all three Members reaffirmed that they were happy to continue to represent their respective committee group on Caerphilly SACRE.

The Chair referred to the revisions proposed to the terms of reference and suggested that 10(a) be updated to remove the term "secular", in view of its potential connotations. This was unanimously agreed by SACRE.

Having fully considered its contents, SACRE noted the membership report and details of the actions to be progressed, and agreed that subject to the amended wording as discussed at the meeting, the revised terms of reference be approved.

6. CAERPHILLY SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

Consideration was given to the draft Caerphilly SACRE Annual Report for 2017-2018 which outlined the activities of SACRE during the academic year 2017-2018. SACRE were asked to comment on its contents and check the report for accuracy.

Members noted the executive summary of advice given by SACRE as set out in the report, which highlighted specific issues and the actions taken by SACRE to ensure it met all its statutory requirements. The final version of the Annual Report will be submitted to Welsh Government by the deadline of 31st December 2018 and circulated electronically to WASACRE (who will include the Annual Report on their website), together with schools and other relevant parties.

Following consideration of its contents, Caerphilly SACRE unanimously agreed that their Annual Report for 2017-2018 be approved and circulated accordingly following its submission to Welsh Government.

7. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Ms Webber presented the report, which provided an update on Welsh Government consultation meetings carried out with SACREs in respect of the new curriculum. The Committee were also asked to consider a questionnaire relating to proposals on the draft Humanities Area of Learning and Experience and discuss a collective response on behalf of Caerphilly SACRE.

Members were reminded of the findings of Donaldson in his report "Successful Futures", which recommended that "*Religious Education should form part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience, and should remain a statutory curriculum requirement from reception*". RE is to be placed within the New Curriculum within the Humanities AoLE. It will remain statutory and will, therefore, have a special place within the curriculum.

It was noted that Welsh Government recently held consultation meetings with representatives from SACREs throughout Wales to consult on draft Humanities Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE) proposals. Representatives from Caerphilly SACRE attended the EAS consortium workshop held in Cardiff in September 2018. Ms Webber explained that WG are proposing that a Supporting Framework for Religious Education be written. It is hoped that SACREs will adopt or adapt this Framework as Agreed Syllabi in a similar way to the National Exemplar Framework. SACRE were therefore referred to the draft of the Humanities AoLE set out in the agenda papers, and were asked to consider the

proposals in order for a collective response to be submitted to WG by 16th November 2018.

Ms Webber gave a detailed overview of the draft AoLE proposals, which fit in with the “What Matters” approach and will place RE firmly inside the curriculum. The proposals will give Religious Education parity with other statutory subjects, Relationships and Sexuality Education and Welsh language provision. Ms Webber also referred to her involvement in the WG working group that has been established to produce the Supporting Framework for RE, and explained that part of her role has been to identify all sections of the proposals where RE is explicit or implicit. The implicit areas are particularly important as they will act as “hooks” on which to attach RE content for the new curriculum and pad out the Supporting Framework. It is hoped that once finalised, the Supporting Framework will be adopted as the main supporting guidance for Religious Education by all local authorities.

SACRE were referred to the WG questionnaire, which sought their views on the draft AoLE proposals by way of four specific questions, and detailed discussion took place on the points that could be included. Overall, SACRE were in favour of the proposed relationship between the agreed syllabus and the Humanities AoLE as outlined in the Welsh Government consultation meetings, with the proposals having given them reassurance that religious education will continue to have a place in the new curriculum. In summary, SACRE welcomed the consultation that had been undertaken to date and the way in which WG had actively engaged SACREs views on the proposals and how RE will be shaped in the new curriculum, and hoped that this would continue moving forward. Caerphilly SACRE members were reassured that the AoLE approach will fit in with the agreed syllabus and felt that the supporting framework would be useful. They also felt that it is very important that teachers and schools continue to be adequately supported regarding the teaching and delivery of RE, and were very appreciative of the input and support of RE specialists into the curriculum development.

Discussion also took place regarding the evolving state of Religious Education and the increasing involvement from non-religious organisations such as Humanists UK. Reference was made to the Humanist presentation given at a recent WASACRE meeting by Kathy Riddick from Wales Humanists, who now also serves on WASACRE’s Executive Committee. SACRE were of the view that it would be beneficial for them to receive a similar presentation and Ms Webber confirmed she would make arrangements to invite Mrs Riddick to the next SACRE meeting in the spring.

Following consideration of the draft AoLE proposals, it was agreed that arising from the course of the discussion on the item, Ms Webber would collate draft responses to the individual questions, and circulate them via to SACRE for approval, prior to submission to Welsh Government by the requested deadline.

8. ESTYN THEMATIC REPORT – RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT KEY STAGE 2 AND KEY STAGE 3 (JUNE 2018)

SACRE were updated in respect of the Thematic Report of Religious Education at Key Stage 2 and 3 that was published in June 2018.

The report judges standards, provision, and leadership in religious education at Key Stage 2 and 3, and participation and engagement in learning. It also considers the factors that affect standards, including curriculum planning, teaching, assessment, leadership and improving quality. The report is intended for the Welsh Government, headteachers and school staff, local authorities and regional consortia, and SACREs, and the findings will help to inform the development and implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales.

SACRE were directed to the key recommendations of the report as set out in the agenda

papers, and it was noted that Estyn have since made presentations to WASACRE and NAPfRE regarding the main findings of the Thematic Report. SACRE discussed the report and the recommendations and remarked on the usefulness of the Thematic Report. Reference was made to the focus on global citizenship through the delivery of RE and how this could be strengthened. The report also recognised the support that SACREs give to schools, and Ms Webber confirmed that this would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting to consider how this can be developed moving forward. This will also feed into SACRE's new Development Plan.

Having considered the report, SACRE noted the details of the update.

9. SACRE NEWS BULLETIN

Ms Webber provided a verbal update on this item and explained that she is intending to produce a termly SACRE news bulletin on behalf of the local authorities that she services. Ideally the bulletin will include contributions from SACRE Members and the local authorities and will highlight any potential resources or training opportunities relating to Religious Education. The bulletin could be used to promote SACREs statutory duties and will evidence to schools that SACRE are available to support the provision of RE in schools. SACRE were advised that there would be no cost implications as the newsletter will be produced in an electronic format and circulated via email to schools and SACRE Members. It could also be included as an agenda item in SACRE papers and signposted through the EAS website.

SACRE thanked Ms Webber for the update and voiced their support for the production of this news bulletin. They were of the opinion that it would be an informative and useful piece of documentation and would assist in promoting the role of SACREs to schools and other organisations.

10. MONITORING PROVISION AND STANDARDS – CAERPHILLY SCHOOL INSPECTION REPORTS

The report outlined the main RE findings derived from the Estyn inspection of thirteen Caerphilly schools between October 2017 and July 2018. The analysis focused on comments in relation to spiritual development and collective worship and whether each school met statutory legal requirements in relation to collective worship. It was noted that the report does not focus on the general inspection results of the school, which could significantly vary in other areas.

The report highlighted that the Estyn Common Inspection Framework notes that inspectors should only report on instances where the school does not comply with statutory requirements relating to collective worship. Ten schools inspected during 2017-2018 meet statutory requirements in relation to collective worship. There is reference to the quality of collective worship in seven inspection reports and good features are highlighted. Three schools are not complying with the legal requirement. Estyn has made recommendations with regards to Collective Worship in one inspection report.

Ms Webber made reference to the reporting of Estyn inspection reports to SACRE and explained that due to the cycle falling across a school academic year, some findings are not being reported to SACRE until over a year later. Therefore she suggested that it would be more conducive for inspection findings to be examined on a termly basis, in order for more proactive support to be given and timely action to be taken in respect of any schools not meeting statutory requirements. SACRE felt that this was a positive suggestion and agreed that future reporting be taken forward in this manner.

SACRE discussed the schools identified as not meeting the statutory requirements and what action should be taken and what support could be given in this regard. Ms Webber explained that she would contact Estyn to establish why no recommendation has been made for two of the schools not meeting the statutory requirements in respect of Collective Worship, and SACRE were supportive of this approach.

Having discussed and noted the report findings, SACRE agreed for Ms Webber to contact those schools not meeting the statutory requirements to establish if the situation has been addressed following their Estyn inspections (and to seek their action plan if not) and also to determine if they require any support moving forward.

SACRE were also very pleased to note the positive findings across religious education, spiritual development and collective worship in the majority of the schools inspected. They were of the view that good performance should also be recognised and requested that a letter be sent on behalf of SACRE to congratulate them on their good practice.

11. UPDATE ON THE WITHDRAWAL FROM RE SURVEY

SACRE were provided with a verbal update on this item and reminded of the WASACRE guidance document "*Managing the Right of Withdrawal from RE*" which was circulated by to all schools across the county borough. A short questionnaire was included with the document to help WASACRE gain an accurate awareness of the instances of withdrawal from Religious Education across schools in Wales.

It was explained that a number of trawls had been carried out by the Clerk to SACRE so that the responses could be collated and returned to WASACRE. As of November 2018, the response rate for Caerphilly was 47%, which was in line with other survey exercises and comparable with the rate of returns across other local authorities. Overall there were very few instances of full or partial withdrawal from RE and they have been outlined to SACRE at previous meetings. WASACRE will examine the results at its November 2018 meeting and take forward the response findings, which have also been passed onto Welsh Government.

SACRE noted the details of the update.

12. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY 2019

The report informed Members of the resources available to schools in order to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day 2019.

SACRE were advised that the theme for 2019 is "Torn from home" which encourages audiences to reflect on how the enforced loss of a safe place to call 'home' is part of the trauma faced by anyone experiencing persecution and genocide. HMD 2019 will include marking the 25th anniversary of the Genocide in Rwanda. Further information on the theme and free educational resources are available through the Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) website at www.hmd.org.uk/content/for-educators.

It was agreed that as per previous years, the Clerk to SACRE would write to all schools to make them aware of these resources and encourage them to commemorate the event. SACRE suggested that it might be more conducive to let schools know of the theme earlier in the school term, in order for teachers to maximise opportunities to include the occasion in their lesson plans. It was agreed that moving forward, details of the HMD theme could be circulated by the Clerk once the theme is known, and this action could then be reported to the Autumn Term meeting.

It was also confirmed that the Clerk would forward the details of the Council's commemorative events for HMD 2019 to SACRE Members once these are finalised. Members discussed the feedback arising from the main CCBC event held in 2018 and it was confirmed that this would be passed to the relevant Council Officers to assist them in planning for the 2019 event.

SACRE noted the details of the update.

13. THE FINAL REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ENGLAND

Consideration was given to the report, which outlined details of the Executive Summary of the Final Report from the Commission on Religious Education (CoRE) in England.

It was noted that the Final Report of the Commission on Religious Education, *Religion and Worldviews: the way forward. A national plan for RE*, has recently been published. It sets out a National Plan for RE comprising of 11 recommendations and calls on the Government in England to consider and adopt it. The National Plan is built around a National Entitlement which sets out what all pupils up to the end of Year 11, in all publicly funded schools, should be entitled to be taught. The National Entitlement reflects a new and inclusive vision for the subject, fully embracing the diversity and richness of religious and non-religious worldviews. It will ensure a strong academic basis for the subject in all schools. The National Plan provides for flexibility of approach in the translation of the National Entitlement into programmes of study in schools, ensuring that Headteachers are able to choose the approach that is most appropriate for their pupils. A copy of the Executive Summary was appended to the report and Members noted that the full report can be found on the Commission's website via <https://www.commissiononre.org.uk/>.

WASACRE have been considering the findings of the report and have sent copies of the report to WG and to the Education Secretary Kirsty Williams for consideration as some of the recommendations might equally apply to Wales. Rudi Lockhart, CEO of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales, will be giving a presentation on the CoRE report at the WASACRE meeting on 20th November 2018.

Having discussed the report, SACRE noted its contents, and Ms Webber confirmed that the situation would be monitored with interest by both WG and WASACRE.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

Members were updated on correspondence circulated on behalf of SACRE. This included details of the WG SACRE Workshop on the new curriculum that had been circulated to teacher representatives. Three items were circulated to SACRE Members following their Summer Term meeting, namely a collective SACRE response to WG on the latest curriculum developments, a link to the Estyn Thematic Review, and an update on the WASACRE Constitution (to advise them that WASACRE had accepted Caerphilly SACRE's suggested amendments). The Clerk also outlined the details of the final trawl to schools in respect of the Withdrawal from RE Survey. A very informative guidance and resource pack from Cardiff University on Diversity of Religion and Belief had also been received by the Clerk and forwarded to all primary schools and SACRE Members.

SACRE noted the details of the correspondence update.

15. DATE OF THE NEXT SACRE MEETING

It was noted that these were currently being arranged with the RE Advisor and would be circulated to SACRE Members upon finalisation of the dates.

16. WASACRE - FEEDBACK FROM THE WASACRE MEETING IN ANGLESEY ON 6TH JULY 2018

SACRE were updated on the discussions and deliberations of WASACRE at its meeting in Anglesey on 6th July 2018. The meeting included a presentation from Linda Rudge of the RE Quality Mark (REQM) organisation, which recognises and celebrates good practice in schools. This is a nationally recognised standard but there is a lack of take-up by schools in Wales, which may be due to the cost, although these are comparative with other organisations offering quality accreditation. Ms Webber explained that she may highlight the availability of this quality mark in the SACRE news bulletin. SACRE also noted the details of proposals relating to the division of WASACRE secretarial duties.

Having discussed the majority of the other matters throughout the course of the meeting, SACRE noted the contents of the WASACRE minutes as contained in the meeting papers.

17. WASACRE REVISED CONSTITUTION 2018

SACRE were referred to the revised WASACRE Constitution as set out in the meeting papers, which had been finalised at its AGM in Anglesey on 6th July 2018. The revised Constitution incorporated the amendments suggested by Caerphilly SACRE in regards to the accuracy of the minutes, and a deadline date for nominations to WASACRE in respect of the Executive Committee.

SACRE noted the details of the WASACRE Revised Constitution 2018.

18. REPRESENTATION AT THE FORTHCOMING WASACRE MEETING IN LLANTWIT MAJOR ON 20TH NOVEMBER 2018

Members were advised of the date and time of the forthcoming WASACRE meeting and sought nominations for representation from Caerphilly SACRE. Councillor John Taylor indicated that he was hoping to attend and it was confirmed that the Clerk to SACRE would email all SACRE Members to seek further nominations. Interested Members will be contacted with the agenda papers nearer to the meeting date and the Clerk to SACRE will inform WASACRE of the attendees. It was suggested to Ms Webber that it would be useful if SACRE could be provided with future dates further in advance in order to increase attendance.

The Chair thanked Members for their attendance and contributions and the meeting closed at 4.12 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 6th March 2019, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR