

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY, 4TH DECEMBER 2002 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Mrs A. Collins, D.M. Gray and J. Taylor

Representing Teachers Associations

Mrs E. Hawthorn - Valleys RE Teachers Association

Mrs C. Anthony - NAHT

Miss H. Bartley - ATL

Mrs. S. John (UCAC)

Representing Religious Organisations

Mrs M. Wade - United Reformed Church

Mr D. Brooks - Baptist Church in Wales

Together with:

Mrs V. Thomas (ESIS Religious Education Adviser) and Mrs K. Wall (Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K.R. Snell, Mrs K.R. Baker and R.W. Gough, Miss N. Thomas (NUT), Miss P. Brown (ATL), B. Hopkins (Head of School Effectiveness) and B. Pugh (Adviser for School Effectiveness).

SA1 MINUTES

Subject to the following correction, the minutes of the last meeting of Caerphilly SACRE held on 9th October 2002 were received and noted:-

Under Min No SA3 - SACRE Annual Report 2001-2002 - the first sentence of the fourth paragraph should read as follows:-

‘SACRE members were advised that Miss Helen Bartley had notified the Clerk that she had recently resigned from the **NASUWT** and was now a member of the ATL.’

SA2 HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

At the last meeting, the Chairman had reported on correspondence received from the National Assembly in respect of the Wales National Holocaust Memorial Day and ways in which SACRE could contribute to the project.

In accordance with the decision taken at that meeting, Caerphilly schools had been circulated with details of the event and of the poetry and artwork to be submitted in the primary and secondary categories.

A number of poems on the subject of 'hope for the future' had been returned by primary schools and one secondary school had submitted a number of posters based on 'prejudice and hope'.

All the pieces of work were displayed and SACRE members were asked to select their favourite poem, plus ten others in the primary school category and one poster in the secondary school category.

Consideration was given to the entries in the primary category and SACRE members commented on the very high standard of the work submitted. After a great deal of deliberation, it was agreed that the poem written by Ceri Thomas, a Year 6 pupil at Ysgol Cymraeg Caerffilli should be submitted as SACRE's first choice. SACRE members also agreed to submit poems written by Heidi Jones (Ynysddu Primary School) and Owain Howells, Lisa Woods, Christopher Hagerty, Katie Williams, Rachel Lewis, Samantha Cullen and Megan Hodson (Cefn Fforest Primary School pupils).

In the secondary school category, only St Martin's Comprehensive had submitted pieces of work. Again SACRE members commented on the quality of the artwork and after a lengthy discussion selected a poster designed by Michelle Jones as its first choice. However, members were aware of the incorrect spelling of the word 'prejudice' in the poster's main image and having regard to this, it was further agreed that a second piece of work produced by Daniel Williams should also be submitted as SACRE's second choice.

It was agreed that a letter thanking the schools for taking part in the project and commending their pupils on the high standard of their work should be sent to the schools involved.

SA3 ANALYSIS OF EXAMINATION RESULTS 2002

The report provided an analysis of examination results for 2002 in respect of the GCSE Full Course Religious Studies, GCSE Short Course Religious Education, GCSE A Level Religious Studies and GCSE AS Level Religious Studies. Members were asked to note that definitive conclusions could not be drawn because the figures represented raw scores and did not necessarily reflect the selectivity of the entry and in some cases, the numbers were too small to be statistically significant.

Consideration was given to the following examination results:-

GCSE Full Course Religious Studies

SACRE was pleased to note the increase in the number of pupils and the number of RE departments offering GCSE full course. It was also noted that the results at grades A* - A and A* - G were comparable with the All Wales figures but that the results at grades A* - C gave some cause for concern when compared with the other ESIS LEAs i.e.:-

Caerphilly	57.6%
Bridgend	73%
Merthyr	68.1%
RCT	66.7%

GCSE Short Course Religious Education

It was noted that there had been a continuing significant increase in the numbers entered for short course over the last three years and SACRE was pleased that schools offered pupils accreditation for study of RE at key Stage 4. The results at A* - A and A* - C were pleasing even though they were below the previous year's performance and the All Wales figures. At A* - G the figures showed consistency with previous years performance and were comparable with the All Wales figures and overall, the results were healthy at all grades.

GCSE A Level Religious Education

SACRE noted that the numbers had increased and the new breed of A/AS level specifications catered for a wider range of abilities and interests and that this had played its part in increasing entry numbers for both examinations and results were good at all grades.

GCSE AS Level Religious Education

It was noted that at grades A - E the pass rate was 95.2% which exceeded the All Wales figure of 91% and at A - C, the pass rate was 73.8% which exceeded the All Wales figure of 59.5%. At grade A there was a 7.1% pass rate which was below the All Wales figure of 14.4%. Although the results were pleasing, SACRE acknowledged that there was still a very incomplete picture at AS because the grades were accumulated over a three year period.

Mrs Thomas also outlined details of the examination 2002 results for Coleg Gwent College and provided the following information:-

A Level results (15 entries)

Grade A	13.3% (2)
Grades A - C	86.6% (13)
Grades A - E	100% (15)

AS Level results (26 entries)

Grade A	7.69% (2)
Grades A - C	61.5% (16)
Grades A - E	92.3% (24)

The report was noted and it was agreed to write to schools and the college to inform them of the results and of SACRE's pleasure at the increased uptake for short course and schools offering pupils' opportunities for accreditation in their study of RE at Key Stage 4.

SA4 ANALYSIS OF KS3 TEACHER ASSESSMENT 2002

Consideration was given to the report that provided details of the results of the teacher assessments at KS3 for 2002. It was noted that teacher assessments were not moderated externally and that teachers arrived at judgements for each pupil using assessment information gathered during the course of year 9. Exemplification material was also made available to schools in order to moderate standards internally against the level description contained in the agreed syllabus.

Mrs Thomas expanded on the report and drew attention to the table that highlighted the KS3 Year 9 Religious Education Figures for 2001 and the KS3 Year 9 Religious Education figures for 2002 as derived from 14 of the 16 local education authority maintained schools. The report also provided details of the KS3 Assessment Results for Pupils 2002 and the Local Education Authority Summary Table Key Stage 3 that showed the percentage of pupils achieving level 5 or above in Art, Design & Technology, Geography, History and Information Technology.

During discussion, a SACRE member enquired whether free school meals data could be provided to SACRE members to enable them to more meaningfully compare the results of schools within the

county borough. It was agreed that the Clerk would seek clarification on this request from the Director of Education and Leisure.

SA5 REPORT OF THE WASACRE MEETING HELD ON 15TH NOVEMBER

The report provided SACRE members with a summary of the issues discussed at the last WASACRE meeting held on 15th November 2002 in Rhondda Cynon Taff.

Mrs Thomas reported that Graham Davies, Melissa Davies, Mary Parry and Carys Thomas had made a presentation on developing thinking skills in RE that outlined strategies for developing thinking skills such as Odd One Out, Mysteries, Concept Mapping, Community of Enquiry, Thinking Diagrams and Fortune Lines. The paper presented to WASACRE had been included in the agenda papers and Mrs Thomas suggested that a short presentation on thinking skills could be made at the next SACRE meeting.

Members supported and welcomed this suggestion.

Mrs Thomas also drew attention to the report from the Executive Committee and reported that WASACRE had discussed a number of election and voting issues, including whether advisers were entitled to vote.

SACRE discussed this issue and agreed that Mrs Thomas should be mandated to vote on behalf of Caerphilly SACRE.

SA6 REPORT OF WASACRE SYMPOSIUM APRIL 2002

Copies of the report of the WASACRE Symposium had been circulated with the agenda papers. The report summarised the main discussion points of the Symposium on Religious Education held in Llanidloes on 27th April 2002 and asked SACREs to submit their comments by the end of July 2003.

In view of the closing date for the receipt of comments, it was agreed that consideration of the Symposium Report should be deferred to the next meeting of SACRE.

SA7 REPRESENTATION AT WASACRE SPRING MEETING

It was noted that the next WASACRE meeting would be held at the Vale of Glamorgan on 12th February 2003. Representation was then discussed and Mrs Thomas indicated that she would be unable to attend this meeting.

Councillor D.M. Gray indicated that he would be able to attend.

The Clerk also reported that she had sought clarification on whether the teacher representatives on SACRE could apply to the local education authority to fund their supply cover costs when attending SACRE meetings. The Director of Education and Leisure had indicated that there was a limited budget set aside for this purpose and the teacher representatives were asked to submit written requests to the Director.

SA8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 6th March 2003. The venue for this meeting was discussed and it was suggested that SACRE members could be invited to observe a morning assembly and hold its meeting at a local school. Miss Bartley offered to discuss this suggestion with her Head of Department at Newbridge Comprehensive School.

The meeting closed at 3.50 p.m.