

## **CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

#### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE SALVATION ARMY CITADEL, RISCA ON THURSDAY, 4TH DECEMBER 2003 AT 2.00 P.M.**

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PRESENT:

Councillors:

Mrs K.R. Baker, D.M. Gray and J. Taylor

#### **Representing Teacher Associations**

Mrs C. Anthony (NAHT) and Miss H. Bartley (ATL)

#### **Representing Religious Organisations**

D. Brooks (Independent) and Captain J. Jepson (Salvation Army)

Together with:

Ms. V. Thomas (ESIS Religious Education Adviser), Ms. C. Thomas (ESIS Associate Religious Education Adviser), Ms. K. Cole (Primary Adviser) and Mrs. K. Wall (Committee Services Officer).

#### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. A. Collins, K.R. Snell and R.W. Gough, Mrs. J. Jones (Church in Wales), Mrs. E. Hawthorn (VALRETTA), Mrs. N. Thomas (NUT), Miss S. John (UCAC), S. Davies (SHA) and Mrs. M. Wade (United Reform Wales).

#### **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

The Chairman thanked Captain Julie Jepson for inviting SACRE to hold its meeting at the Salvation Citadel and for the hospitality provided.

#### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made during the course of the meeting.

#### **2 MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the following minutes be approved as correct records and signed by the chairman.

Minutes of the meeting of Caerphilly SACRE held on 2nd July 2003

Minutes of the meeting of Caerphilly SACRE held on 15th October 2003

### **3 MATTER ARISING**

#### **(a) WASACRE Meeting – 27th June 2003**

It was reported that the proposed amendments to WASACRE's code of practice and constitution would be discussed at the summer Annual General Meeting.

### **4 ANALYSIS OF EXAMINATION RESULTS 2003**

The report provided an analysis of examination results for 2003 in respect of the GCSE Full Course Religious Studies, GCSE Short Course Religious Studies, 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**

It was noted that there had been 305 entries for the year and that the overall percentage of A\* – C grades was 72.1% which was significantly better than the previous two years' results and also exceeded the All Wales figure of 68.6%. The overall percentage of A\* - G grades was 97.0% and it was noted that this figure was slightly better than last year's performance and comparable with the All Wales figure of 96.6%.

The overall percentage of A\* - A grades was 30.2% and compared well with the figures of the previous two years and exceeded the All Wales figure of 27.9% and there had been a consistency in the percentage of pupils achieving these top grades over a three-year period.

#### **GCSE Short Course Religious Studies**

It was noted there had been 881 entries and that there had been a significant increase in the numbers entered over a three-year period. The overall percentage of A\* - C grades was 66.2% and exceeded the previous year's performance and the All Wales figure, the overall percentage of A\* - G grades was 97.6% and was consistent with previous performance and comparable with the All Wales figure of 96.4%. It was also noted that the overall percentage of A\* - A grades was 19.4% and was better than the All Wales figure of 13.4%.

#### **GCSE A Level Religious Studies**

It was noted that a total of 49 candidates from schools within Caerphilly County Borough had been entered for the examination and that there had been a year on year increase in numbers. Those pupils achieving A grades were 6.1% and it was noted that this was significantly lower than the previous year and the All Wales figure of 14.7%. However, the overall percentage rate for grades A – C was excellent at 83.7% and exceeded previous performance and the All Wales figure of 71.3%. The percentage pass rate for grades A – E was 95.9% and it was noted that this was comparable with the All Wales figure of 98.2%.

#### **GCSE AS Level Religious Studies**

It was noted that there had been 65 entries for the AS examination. At grades A – E, the pass rate was 84.6% compared with the All Wales figure of 99.9%. At grades A – C, the pass rate was 38.5% and significantly below the All Wales figure of 61.8% and below previous performance. At grade A there was a 4.6% pass rate and it was noted that this was below the

All Wales figure of 14.7%.

In noting the results of the AS examination, SACRE members acknowledged that there was still a very incomplete picture at AS because the grades were accumulated over a three year period.

### **Coleg Gwent Crosskeys**

#### **GCSE A Level Religious Studies**

A total of 14 candidates had been entered for the examination. Those pupils achieving grade A were 7.1% and this was lower than the All Wales figure of 14.7%. The percentage pass for grades A – C was 92.9% and exceeded the All Wales figure of 71.3%. The percentage pass for grades A – E was 100% and was better than the All Wales figure of 98.2%.

#### **GCSE AS Level Religious Studies**

Twenty-two candidates entered the AS examination. At A – E the pass rate was 100% and comparable with the All Wales figure of 99.9%. At A – C, the pass rate was 90.9% and significantly above the All Wales figure of 61.8%. At grade A there was a 4.5% pass rate and this was below the 14.7% All Wales figure.

In noting the results for the AS examination, SACRE members again acknowledged that there was a very incomplete picture because grades were accumulated over a three year period.

Following discussion, the report was noted and it was agreed that a letter would be sent to schools and Coleg Gwent Crosskeys to inform them of the examination results and of SACRE's pleasure at the increased uptake for short course and the opportunities afforded to pupils to achieve accreditation in their studies at Key Stage 4.

Members also thanked Ms Vicky Thomas and Ms Carys Thomas for the help and assistance ESIS provided to schools.

## **5 ANALYSIS OF KS3 TEACHER ASSESMENT 2003**

Consideration was given to the report that provided details of the results of the teacher assessments at KS3 for 2003. 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.

The report was noted.

## **6 WASACRE MEETING HELD ON 11TH NOVEMBER IN CARDIFF**

The report provided information in respect of the discussions and deliberations of WASACRE at its meeting held in Cardiff on 11th November 2003.

Attention was drawn to the discussion in respect of the Welsh Baccalaureate and it was noted that WASACRE had expressed its disappointment that there was no specific reference to religious education and spiritual development in the qualification. WASACRE intended to write to each SACRE asking them to contact relevant bodies to express their concern about this issue and it was noted that a report outlining the main issues would be submitted to a future SACRE meeting.

**7 REPRESENTATION AT WASACRE MEETING – 5TH MARCH 2004**

It was noted that the next WASACRE meeting would be held at Aberaeron on 5th March 2004. The Chairman and Councillor D.M. Gary indicated their intention to attend the meeting and other members were asked to contact the Clerk if they were able to attend.

**8 HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY**

SACRE members were informed that it appeared that the Welsh Assembly Government had not made specific plans to mark Wales National Holocaust Memorial Day on 27th January. In view of this, it was agreed that a letter would be sent to all schools within the county borough reminding them of National Holocaust Memorial Day and asking them to consider referring to this in acts of collective worship or in other lessons where associated issues such as prejudice or intolerance could be discussed.

It was also agreed that details of relevant websites would be sent to schools to assist them in this task.

**9 CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chairman referred to the following items of correspondence:-

- (a) Letter from Mr Hogan indicating that he was no longer secretary of SHA and that Mr Steve Davies, Headteacher at Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School would replace him on SACRE;
- (b) Letter written by Ms Thomas to Acharya Sonerao, Hindu Minister for Religion, World Council of Hindus in respect of the current situation with regard to the teaching of Religious Education and in particular, the teaching of Hinduism in LEA schools.

The meeting closed at 3.10 p.m. and was followed by a tour of the Citadel

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CHAIRMAN