

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT TIRYBERTH PRIMARY SCHOOL ON MONDAY, 7TH JUNE 2004 AT 9.30 AM

PRESENT:

Councillors:

D.M. Gray, J. Taylor

Together with:

B. Howells (Head of School Effectiveness), Mrs. V. Thomas (ESIS Religious Education Adviser), Ms. C. Thomas (Associate Religious Education Adviser) and Mrs. K. Wall (Committee Services Officer)

Representing Teacher Associations

Mrs. N. Boardman and P. Sass

Representing Religious Organisations

D. Brooks

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. K.R. Baker, Mrs. A. Collins, R.W. Gough, K.R. Snell, Mrs. E. Hawthorn (VALRETTA), Mrs. S. John, Miss H. Bartley, Mr. S. Davies, Mrs. J. Jones (Church in Wales), Captain J. Jepson (Salvation Army) and Mrs. M. Wade.

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 a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Minutes of the meeting of Caerphilly SACRE held on 17th March 2004

3. MATTER ARISING

(a) Correspondence

Mr. Brooks reported on the constructive meeting of the ACCAC Working Party established to examine the content of SACRE Annual Reports. It was also noted that a further meeting would be held in July and both Mrs. Thomas (ESIS Religious

Education Adviser) and Ms Thomas (Associate Religious Education Adviser) indicated their intention to attend that meeting.

4. UPDATE ON MEMBERSHIP

The Chairman introduced and welcomed Mr Paul Sass, the newly appointed NASUWT representative to the meeting.

The Clerk also reported that she had written to the secretary of the NAHT in respect of that union's vacancy on SACRE following Mrs Anthony's retirement, and was awaiting a response. SACRE members commented that a number of the teacher representatives serving on SACRE were from the secondary sector and that it would be helpful to appoint a representative from the primary sector. It was therefore agreed that enquiries would be made with primary Headteachers to ascertain interest in serving on SACRE.

5. ANALYSIS OF INSPECTION REPORTS FOR SPRING 2003 – SPRING 2004

Consideration was given to the report that provided details of the outcomes of inspection reports for Spring 2003 – Spring 2004 in respect of eleven primary schools and two secondary schools.

Miss Thomas then outlined the main findings in respect of Religious Education and collective worship for both the primary and secondary sectors as follows –

Primary Sector – Main Findings

- Spiritual development was satisfactory or better in every school
- The majority of schools complied with the legal requirement of daily collective worship. The need to comply with the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship had been identified as a key issue for action for Twyn Primary School
- Standards of Religious Education were satisfactory in the majority of schools
- Standards of Religious Education were very good at Twyn Primary School (KS2)
- Standards of Religious Education were good at Plas y Felin Infants, Blackwood Primary, Derwendeg Primary, Glyn-gaer Primary, Tynewydd Primary (KS1), Twyn School (KS1) and Cwmfelinfach Primary (KS2)
- Standards of Religious Education were satisfactory at Abertysswg Primary, Coed-y-Brain Primary, Cwmfelinfach Primary (KS1) and Tynewydd Primary (KS2)
- Standards of Religious Education were unsatisfactory at Ty'n y Wern Primary and it was a key issue for the school to improve standards of achievement in religious education at both key stages

Miss Thomas also highlighted the good features and shortcomings identified in the inspection reports.

SACRE members were pleased to note the overall high standards in the primary sector and it was agreed that a letter congratulating achievement should be sent to schools whose standards were good or better. It was also agreed that a letter would be sent to Twyn Primary School and Ty'n y Wern Primary School requesting a copy of their Post Inspection Action Plans and offering SACRE's help in addressing the key issues identified for action.

Secondary Sector – Main Findings

SACRE was informed that two secondary schools had been inspected during the period Spring 2003 – Spring 2004 and consideration was given to the report that provided a summary of the findings in respect of the standards of achievement, teaching, spiritual and

moral development and collective worship. Relevant extracts from the schools' inspection reports and the key issues for action were also included in the report.

Blackwood Comprehensive School – Main Findings

- Standards: KS3 – Good
 KS4 RE – Satisfactory
 KS4 RS – Very Good
- At Key Stage 4 there was a shortage of time for the delivery of the religious education short course so that the agreed syllabus was not covered and the school did not meet the statutory requirements for religious education
- A significant amount of very good teaching was seen in Religious Education
- Pupils' spiritual development was satisfactory
- Pupils' moral development was good
- The school did not provide a daily act of collective worship for all classes and this provision did not therefore meet statutory requirements
- Key issue for action - to meet the statutory requirements with regard to the daily act of collective worship and coverage of the Agreed Syllabus at KS4 in Religious Education

Lewis Girls' Comprehensive School – Main Findings

- Standards: KS3 – Good
 KS4 RE – Good
 KS4 RS – Very Good
 KS5 RE - No judgement
 KS5 RS – Very Good
- Pupils' spiritual development was good
- Pupils' moral development was very good
- Although the school had adopted a published scheme, 'Moments of Reflection' to assist tutors to involve pupils in a daily act of collective worship, this was not used consistently across tutor groups and the school therefore did not fully comply with the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship
- Key issue for action – to meet the statutory requirements for the daily act of collective worship and to implement plans to meet the statutory requirements in Religious Education at KS5

SACRE members noted that the inspection reports had highlighted the fact that both schools had not met the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship. The practical problems experienced by schools in accommodating acts of collective worship were acknowledged, but it was also noted that SACRE had a duty to monitor inspection reports and compliance with legal requirements and to offer help and support to schools in addressing the issues identified for action.

It was therefore agreed that a letter would be sent to the schools, requesting a copy of their Post Inspection Action Plans and offering SACRE's support and assistance.

6. THE REVIEW OF THE AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Mrs Thomas reported that it was a legal requirement for a SACRE to review its agreed syllabus every five years. The current syllabus came into force in the Autumn term 2000 and therefore a process of review needed to be undertaken. In accordance with this requirement, all infant, junior, primary, special and secondary schools had been sent a questionnaire to complete during the Autumn term 2003. A working party had been established during the Spring term 2004 and members took account of the recommendations arising from the review.

The outcome of the working party's deliberations was a draft agreed syllabus that would now be sent, subject to SACRE approval to schools for teachers to comment upon.

Consideration was given to the report that highlighted the main proposed amendments to the agreed syllabus in respect of the following sections –

- Programmes of Study
- Religious Education at Key Stage 3
- Religious Education at Key Stage 4
- Religious Education at Post 16
- Assessing, Recording and Reporting Religious Education

and Mrs Thomas expanded on the information provided.

Following discussion, SACRE agreed to send out the draft agreed syllabus to schools for comment and to send a letter of thanks to the members of the working party for their contribution to the review.

7. DISCUSSIONS AND DELIBERATIONS OF WASACRE

Consideration was given to the report that provided a synopsis of the issues discussed at the last meeting of WASACRE held at Aberaeron on 5th March.

AS and A2 Level Religious Studies

At that meeting, one of the delegates had drawn attention to the fact that the revised New Testament option within the AS and A2 RS specifications appeared to require far more from candidates than the other syllabus options and that this had resulted in candidates abandoning New Testament study in favour of less demanding options. Other WASACRE members supported this view and the Assistant Secretary was asked to write to Mr Tudor Thomas to express the Association's concern. It was further agreed that a copy of the letter would be sent to all SACREs to provide the opportunity for teachers to make comments.

The Clerk reported that she had not yet received a copy of this letter and she therefore agreed to contact the secretary of WASACARE and to forward copies to schools inviting comments.

Election of Executive Members and Vice Chair

It was noted that the June WASACRE meeting in Anglesey would be the Association's Annual General Meeting and that delegates would be asked to vote for two people for the Executive Committee and one person for Vice Chair.

Details of those nominated had been circulated with the agenda papers and following due consideration and discussion, it was agreed that SACRE's representatives at the June meeting would be asked to vote for the following people –

Executive Members – Councillor D.M. Gary and Mary Parry

Vice Chair – Councillor D.M. Gray

Representation at Next WASACRE Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held in Anglesey on 23rd June. Mrs Thomas, Councillors D.M. Gray and J. Taylor indicated their intention to attend the meeting and it was also agreed that a copy of the agenda papers would be forwarded to Mr Brooks.

WASACRE Meeting in November

It was noted that Caerphilly County Borough Council would be hosting the WASACRE meeting on 19th November and that all SACRE members would be invited to attend.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

The following items of correspondence were noted –

- (a) Copy of the letter sent to the WJEC regarding Religious Education and the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification and the response received from Mr Keith Davies, Project Director;
- (b) Copy of a letter received from the Mothers Union regarding its Family Fun Day to be held at Caldicot Leisure Centre on September 18th to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. To publicise the event, it was agreed that copies of the letter would be forwarded to schools and libraries within the county borough.

9. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman thanked the Headteacher of Tir-y-berth Primary School for hosting the SACRE meeting and for inviting Members to attend a school assembly.

The meeting closed at 11.15 a.m.