



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN
ON WEDNESDAY, 8TH JUNE 2005 AT 2.00 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillors:

D. Carter, D.M. Gray, G.G. Hibbert, Mrs R. Passmore and J. Taylor

Together with:

Mrs V. Thomas (ESIS Religious Education Adviser), Ms C. Thomas (ESIS Associate Religious Education Adviser), Mrs J. Davies (Principal Officer – Raising Standards) and Mrs K. Wall (Committee Services Officer)

Representing Teacher Organisations

P. Sass (NASUWT) and Mrs E. Hawthorn (VALRETTA)

Representing Religious Organisations

Captain Mrs J. Jepson (Salvation Army) and Mrs M. Wade (United Reform Church)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs D. Price, Mrs N. Boardman (NUT), Mrs S. John (UCAC), Miss H. Bartley (ATL), Mrs A. Stevens (SHA), Mrs J. Jones (Church in Wales), D. Brooks (Independent) and B. Howells (Head of School Effectiveness).

Members were informed that Mrs John was recovering after a spell in hospital and it was agreed that a card would be sent on behalf of SACRE wishing her a speedy recovery.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

Councillor D.M. Gray was appointed as Chairman and Councillor J. Taylor as Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the following minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman -

Minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 9th February 2005.

4. ANALYSIS OF INSPECTION REPORTS – SPRING 2004 – SPRING 2005

Miss C. Thomas (ESIS Associate Religious Education Adviser) attended the meeting and circulated copies of a report that provided details of the outcomes of inspection reports for Spring 2004 – Spring 2005, in respect of fourteen primary schools and two secondary schools.

She outlined the main findings in respect of Religious Education and collective worship in both the primary and secondary sectors as follows –

Primary Sector – Main Findings

- Spiritual development was satisfactory or better in the majority of schools. It was also noted that the inspection report of Nant y Parc Primary made no judgment for pupils' spiritual development but had stated that learning experiences to develop pupils' spiritual and cultural development were under-developed
- The majority of schools complied with the legal requirements of daily collective worship
- Standards in Religious Education were satisfactory or better in every school where the subject had been inspected. It was also noted that Lansbury Park Junior, Plas y Felin Junior and Nant y Parc Primary School had received standard inspections where RE had not been one of the six subjects inspected
- Standards of Religious Education were very good at Ysgol Bro Allta (KS2)
- Standards of Religious Education were good at Hendre Junior, St Gwladys Junior, Cwmcarn Primary, Cwm Ifor Primary (KS2), Park Primary, Penllwyn Primary, Pentwynmawr Primary (KS2), Pontllytyn Primary, Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Allta (KS1) and Ysgol y Castell
- Standards of Religious Education were satisfactory at Cwm Ifor Primary (KS1), Lower Rhymney Primary and Pentwynmawr Primary (KS1) and it was noted that a key issue for action was for these schools to raise standards in those subjects and aspects that were only satisfactory
- Standards in Religious Education had improved at St Gwladys Junior and Cwm Ifor Primary since the previous inspections. Schemes of work had also been completed in Ysgol Bro Allta since the last inspection

Miss Thomas also highlighted the good features and shortcomings identified in the inspection reports and it was noted that at Pontllytyn Primary School the inspection report had stated that pupils' understanding of other faiths was limited because they had insufficient opportunities to handle artefacts from other religions.

Members were reminded that some time ago, the LEA had provided funding to purchase religious artefacts, which were available for schools to have on loan via the Schools Library Service. Members were concerned that staff at Pontllytyn Primary School might not be aware of this service and it was therefore agreed that details would be forwarded to the school.

During discussion, reference was also made to the transition between the primary sector and secondary sector and a member suggested that SACRE could liaise with Transition Co-ordinators to determine what artefacts and resources were held by schools, so that they could be shared by schools in individual cluster areas.

Members supported this suggestion and it was agreed that the general issue of the sharing of resources between cluster schools could be raised as an issue for further discussion at a future Primary and Secondary Headteachers meeting.

Mrs Thomas also drew attention to the findings in respect of Cwm Ifor Primary and to the fact that the inspection report had stated that at KS1 pupils did not study religions other than Christianity. She referred to the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus and agreed to clarify the situation with the Headteacher and offer SACRE's support and advice if required.

Following consideration of the report, SACRE members were pleased to note the overall high standards in the primary sector and it was agreed that a letter congratulating this achievement should be sent to schools where standards had been classed as 'good' or better.

Secondary Sector – Main Findings

SACRE members were informed that two secondary schools had been inspected during the period Spring 2004 – Spring 2005 and consideration was given to the report that provided a summary of the findings in respect of the standards of achievement, 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.

Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymini – Main Findings

- Standards
 - KS3 – Good
 - KS4 RE – Satisfactory
 - KS4 RS – Very Good
 - KS5 RE – Good
 - KS5 RS – Very Good
- Pupils' spiritual development was good
- Pupils' moral development was very good
- Collective worship contributed well to pupils' spiritual and moral development and were in general, satisfactory

Lewis Girls' Comprehensive School – Main Findings

- Standards
 - KS3 – Good
 - KS4 RE – Good
 - KS4 RS – Very Good
 - KS5 RE – No Judgement
 - KS4 RS – Very Good
- Pupils' spiritual development was good
- Pupils' moral development was very good
- Fortnightly whole school assemblies of a Christian nature, made a satisfactory contribution to the development of spiritual awareness. On the days when pupils did not attend an assembly, they remained in their tutor groups or had a year group assembly. The school had also adopted a published scheme, 'Moments of Reflection' to assist tutors in involving pupils in a daily act of collective worship but the inspection report had indicated that this was not being used consistently across tutor groups. In a number of cases, pupils were given little opportunity to reflect on spiritual matters or to engage in collective worship. The school did not therefore fully comply with the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship
- Key issues 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 the high standards in Religious Education being achieved in both schools and agreed that a letter of congratulations should be sent to the Headteachers. Consideration was also given to the Key Issues for Action identified in respect of Lewis Girls' Comprehensive School and it was agreed that a letter be sent to the Headteacher requesting a copy of the Post Inspection Action Plan and offering SACRE's support and assistance in

addressing the issues raised.

5. UPDATE ON TRAINING FOR THE REVISED AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Members were reminded that SACRE had a legal duty to review its Agreed Syllabus every five years. The syllabus had now been reviewed and Mrs Thomas (ESIS Religious Education Adviser) reported that the revised version would be implemented in schools in Autumn 2005. To assist this process, a training programme had been devised for all primary, secondary and special schools and the report provided information on the take up from schools.

SACRE members were pleased to note that Caerphilly County Borough Council had been very well represented at both the primary sector and secondary sector courses. Mrs Thomas also indicated that the training had been well received by schools and that evaluation reports had been very positive.

6. UPDATE ON LEA REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (AFL)

Mrs Thomas reported that the LEA review and development focus for the academic year 2004/2005 in secondary schools was 'assessment for learning', the purpose of the exercise being to ascertain the assessment for learning practices used by schools, to share good practice and to support schools in their development.

The report outlined details of the five key factors identified to improve learning through assessment and examples of best practice being displayed in schools. Members were also informed that all schools had received a CRIS judgement on their assessment for learning practices.

Members were pleased to note the examples of good practice being shown in relation to assessment for learning and thanked Mrs Thomas for presenting the report.

7. WASACRE

Feedback from meeting held on 7th February 2005 at Merthyr

Members noted the report that provided a summary of the discussions and deliberations that had taken place at the above WASACRE meeting in respect of the following subjects –

- Teaching about the Holocaust
- Report from the Executive Committee
- Free Church Education Work in England and Wales
- WASACRE Special Conference
- SACRE mailing lists
- Inspecting RE and RS
- Meeting with Jane Davidson AM to discuss issues relating to religious education and collective worship

Executive Voting

Members were informed that SACREs had been asked to vote at the next WASACRE meeting being held in Llandudno on 22nd June on the following issues –

- WASACRE Executive

- Amendments to the WASACRE Constitution

The Chairman reported that SACREs could place two votes for members of the Executive. Consideration was given to the details of the six nominations received, which had been included with the agenda papers, and members agreed to nominate Mrs Vicky Thomas (Torfaen SACRE) and Reverend Eldon Phillips (Swansea SACRE).

The Chairman agreed to place SACRE's vote at the June WASACRE meeting.

Members also considered a copy of WASACRE's Constitution and Mrs Thomas drew attention to Paragraph 4(iii) and outlined the amended wording in respect of Executive membership.

SACRE members accepted the proposed amendments as outlined.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

Members were reminded that Mr Rheinallt Thomas, Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Wales had written to SACREs regarding the monitoring of ESTYN inspection reports for standards in Religious Education and collective worship in light of the new inspection arrangements.

A response had been forwarded to Mr Thomas stating that SACRE members believed that the guidance and advice given by ESTYN that SACREs should use the self-evaluation reports written by schools, was very practical and helpful.

A further letter had now been received from Mr Thomas addressed to the Clerk of Caerphilly SACRE stating that Caerphilly's monitoring was 'adequate'. Mrs Thomas indicated that at secondary level, monitoring was more than adequate and raised the question of whether the letter received had been confused with the letter sent to the Clerk of Newport SACRE.

It was agreed that Mr Thomas would be notified of this error and that further details would be submitted to the next meeting.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following schedule of meetings was agreed –

Tuesday, 27th September 2005 at the Council Offices, Tredomen at 2.00 p.m.

Thursday, 8th December 2005 at a venue and time to be agreed

The meeting closed at 3.25 p.m.