



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT ST. GWLADYS JUNIOR SCHOOL, BARGOED
ON TUESDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER 2007 AT 1.30 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillor D.M. Gray - Chairman

Councillors

D.G. Carter, G.G. Hibbert

Representing Teacher Organisations

Miss H. Bartley (ATL), Mrs N.L. Boardman (NUT), Ms K. Mathias (VALRETA)

Representing Religious Organisations

Mr D. Brooks (Independent) and Mrs E. Hawthorn (United Reformed Church)

Together with:

J. Lawrence (Assistant Director, Social Inclusion), V. Thomas (ESIS Religious Education Advisor) and R. Thomas (Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs. D. Price, Mr. P. Sass (NASUWT), S. John (UCAC) and Captain B. Womersley (Salvation Army).

1. OBSERVATION OF AN ACT OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT ST. GWLADYS JUNIOR SCHOOL, BARGOED

Members received a warm welcome from both staff and children. Those present were given a brief tour of the building and were invited to observe an act of collective worship, performed by pupils of the school.

Members thanked Mrs Kathryn Evans, head teacher, for the invitation to the school and for the welcome the committee had received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 6th June 2007, be approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Inspection Reports (Spring 2006-Spring 2007) – Item No. 5

Members received confirmation that letters had been sent to all schools as requested. Responses were outstanding. The Local Education Authority confirmed that a recent meeting had taken place with Pontllanfraith Comprehensive and the school was addressing all concerns raised.

Executive Voting for the Period 2007-2010 – Item No. 10

Members were advised Councillor D.M. Gray had not been re-elected to the Executive but WASACRE had acknowledged previous contributions he had made.

5. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2007-2008

Members discussed possible venues for forthcoming meetings. A number of potential venues were proposed including two places of worship in Bargoed and a historical building in Caerphilly. Members agreed that the meeting of 28th February 2008 would be held in St. Gwladys Church, Bargoed and asked Councillor D.G. Carter to make representations on behalf of the committee.

6. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Members welcomed Ms. Jill Lawrence and Ms. Kathy Mathias to their first meeting of Caerphilly SACRE. In addition, Mrs. Enfys Hawthorn was welcomed in her new role as the United Reformed Church representative.

The Committee agreed to address the lack of head teacher trade union representation.

7. SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2006 –2007

The annual report from Caerphilly SACRE was presented, in which the activities of SACRE during the academic year 2006-2007 were outlined. It followed the guidelines laid down by the former Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DELLS). Members' attention was brought to the Executive Summary that introduced and summarised the report for the first time.

Members noted and approved the report that would now be sent to DELLS, subject to the following amendments:

- Whole Document – all references to Denise Morris be amended to Denize Morris;
- Page 14, Item No. 4.2. – denise Morris be changed to Denize Morris in the first sentence; and
- Page 16, Teachers Associations – VALRETTA be amended to VALRETA.

8. SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2005-2008

The report set out Caerphilly SACRE's Development Plan, which aims to ensure that current and future developments were identified.

The plan hopes to promote and support the following:

- The raising of the standards of pupils' attainment in religious education;
- Improvement in the provision of religious education;
- An increase in the number of pupils following external examinations in religious education and religious studies at GCSE and A/AS Level; and
- The highest quality provision of collective worship.

Members' attention was brought to Aim 2 and concerns were raised that feedback from DELLS and a final document was still outstanding following the consultation review of the agreed syllabus in light of changes to the National Curriculum. Officers had hoped a response from DELLS would be received before January 2008, but this now seemed unlikely.

A general discussion followed, and it was agreed to note the content of the Development Plan.

9. REVIEW OF THE AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RE: UPDATE

Members were advised of the legal requirement for a SACRE to review its agreed syllabus every five years and a copy of the 1st draft was distributed to those present. The document needed to be in line with National Curriculum subjects and the Skills Framework agenda, but also had to work to the National Exemplar Framework for RE.

Members were informed a handbook would be produced to go alongside the agreed syllabus, and it was anticipated that some items would be removed from the draft document to be placed in solely the handbook.

Members discussed the draft document and endorsed the draft structure of the revised agreed syllabus for Religious Education. In addition, members noted a Standing Conference would be convened to endorse the new agreed syllabus. It was likely that this would take place immediately following the SACRE meeting on 28th February 2008.

10. INSET NEEDS AND PLANS 2007-2008

The report gave details of 'in service' training provided for Caerphilly schools during the academic year 2007-2008. The aim of the training was to promote and support:

- the raising of the standards of pupils' attainment in religious education; and
- the highest quality provision of religious education.

Members noted the content of the report and were informed that the range of courses on offer had been reduced because schools were finding it difficult to access funding, all staff were limited to one course per year. The main thrust of training would take place in the summer term with courses for primary and secondary teachers, updating them on the revised syllabus for RE and its implications for schools.

11. ATTENDANCE AT INSET 2006-07

The report informed members of attendance levels at INSET courses from local authorities.

Members noted the level of attendance at various courses. Attendance figures were healthy for Inset courses.

12. WASACRE - FEEDBACK FROM AGM ON 28TH JUNE 2007 AT LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS

Members reviewed a summary of the meeting of WASACRE held on 28th June 2007 at Llandrindod Wells, Powys, whilst Mrs. Thomas gave a verbal report on particular items of interest to the Committee.

Discussions arose about the feedback on the St. Christopher's School in North Wales work on recreating a safe garden and whether a similar venue could take place in Caerphilly – if an appropriate space was available.

The Chair thanked Mrs Thomas for her feedback from the meeting.

13. WASACRE - REPRESENTATION AT NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 4th December 2007 at Ebbw Vale, Blaenau Gwent. SACRE's representatives were agreed as Mrs. V. Thomas, Cllr. D.M. Gray, Mrs. E. Hawthorn and Mr. D. Brooks.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

- Culham Institute : Letter dated Spring 2007 – Members found the pamphlet helpful and it was agreed to write to Mr Powell, Project Associate, requesting copies of the pamphlet be sent to all secondary schools with a 6th form, within the borough.
- Swansea SACRE Annual Report for 2005/2006 (Copy available in the Members' Library)
- RE News, Summer 2007 (Copies distributed during the meeting)
- Curriculum and Assessment Update, Issue 2, Summer 2007 (Copies distributed during the meeting)

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held at Tŷ Dyffryn, Ystrad Mynach on 28th November 2007 at 2.00pm.

The meeting closed at 3.05pm.

Approved as a correct record, and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 28th November 2007, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN