



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – 28TH FEBRUARY 2008

**SUBJECT: TO INFORM THE SACRE OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND DELIBERATIONS
OF WASACRE**

REPORT BY: ESIS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report is to inform members of the discussions and deliberations of WASACRE's meeting held on 4th December 2007 in Ebbw Vale.

2. MAIN ISSUES SUMMARY

2.1 Matters arising

2.1.1 Collective Worship

A letter had been sent to Estyn to seek clarification regarding reflection and the guidance that had been issued to inspectors relating to Collective Worship. It was noted in the reply from Estyn that reference has been made to inspecting collective worship in training and in newsletters published for inspectors. It was agreed to write again to Estyn asking them to review the current guidance on Collective worship (especially in relation to comments on 'reverence and tone') and to request that inspectors add an explanation why a school has not met statutory requirements. It was also agreed to request the executive committee to discuss issues relating to collective worship and RE in 10/94.

During a meeting with the Minister it was confirmed that the Education and Inspection Act of 2006 allows Post 16 pupils to withdraw for acts of collective worship in England as from 1st September. WAG will definitely be communicating with WASACRE in the advance of enabling legislation in Wales.

2.1.2 'Stretch and Challenge –The Key Concepts of the new RS A level for Introduction in 2008'

Members received a presentation for Tudor Thomas, RS subject officer at WJEC, about changes to the RS A level. The main changes were outlined:

- Reduction from 6 to 4 units. Pupils to study 2 modules at AS (Discovering Religious Studies) and 2 modules at A2 (Studies in Religion and Religion and human experience).
- The following options are available to schools:
 - Introduction to / Studies in religion in contemporary society
 - Introduction to / Studies in religion and ethics
 - Introduction to / Studies in Philosophy of Religion
 - Introduction to / Studies in Biblical Studies (either OT or NT)
 - Introduction to / Studies in Christianity
 - Introduction to / Studies in Eastern Religions (either Buddhism or Hinduism or Sikhism).
 - Introduction to / Studies in Western Religions (either Islam or Judaism)

- Information was provided on a new module available in 2008 - Introduction to / Studies in Religion in Contemporary Society. At AS level the students will study Medical and Environmental issues (euthanasia and animal rights), religion and TV: How religious themes are portrayed through television (religion in the soaps, The Simpsons and religious specific broadcasting), religion and community – (secularisation and responses of Fundamentalism or new religious movement) and religion and the individual (Freud and Jung's theories of religion). At A2 pupils will study religions and contemporary issues, religion in film, religion and the community and religion and the individual,
- A* grade to be introduced.

2.2 Correspondence

2.2.1 National Exemplar Framework for RE

It was noted that DCELLS will be providing SACRE's with the final version of the National Exemplar Framework for RE in advance of the final publication in order to support with the development of Agreed Syllabuses. Advance copy of the Foundation Phase guidance will also be provided to SACRE's.

2.2.2 Croeso Project

A letter had been sent to Rev Aled Edwards regarding the Croeso project outlining concerns about the lack of delivery in Welsh. It was explained that they will be advertising a position in April and that it will be a requirement for the candidate to speak Welsh.

2.3 Meeting with the Minister on 26th November 2007

Feedback was received by Gavin Craigen regarding the meeting between a delegation of WASACRE and NAPfRE with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning on 26th November 2007. The delegation discussed issues relating to:

- The most relevant questions that RE in Wales in the 21st Century should be tackling
- Post 16 RE – raising profile and the development of resources
- Collective worship– training for teachers and changes in the law
- Potential of vocational or applied qualifications in RE.

2.4 Post 16 RE conference

A proposal for a Post 16 Conference to be held in the Autumn term 2008 was presented to members. The conference would be organised jointly between WASACRE and DECELLS. The purpose of the conference would be to suggest innovative ways RE might be delivered in the curriculum and the benefits and value of RE in the world or work, in everyday life and in society. The conference would include:

- Key note speech by the minister
- Post 16 Guidance materials for the National Exemplar Framework for RE
- Materials prepared by the National Advisers' Panel for RE
- BBC e-clips project materials
- Copies of the Spiritual Engagement Pack published by RE Today
- Report for young people and their views (through Funky Dragon)
- Reference to a pending application for European Funding for a larger scale project
- Presentations by Dyfed/Powys Police on their programme of a day's training for officers on religious issues and a Cardiff University lecturer in regard to the 'essential' value of RE qualifications for people considering a career in medicine

Members accepted the proposal and provided suggestions of further support.

2.5 Election of Officers

Nominations are sought for two members of the WASACRE Executive and a vice Chair and need to be submitted by 1st March 2008.

2.6 **Feedback from Estyn: School and Early Years Forum**

Feedback was received from the Estyn Schools and Early Years forum. It was noted that the inspection guidance handbooks were being revised in order to take account of legislative changes. It was explained that the revised guidance would be available on the Estyn website in the spring term. It was also noted that in 2010 Estyn will be introducing a new cycle of inspections and that there is a questionnaire on the Estyn website for individuals to complete in order to state their views on the issue. It was agreed to write to Estyn to seek clarification on how RE would be inspected in the Foundation Phase.

2.7 **Date of next meetings**

- 14th March 2008 – Carmarthen
- 26th June 2008 – Mold (Flintshire)

3. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Members are asked to note the discussions and deliberations of WASACRE.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Draft copy of minutes of WASACRE meeting held on 4th December 2007.