



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT HENDRE JUNIOR SCHOOL, CAERPHILLY
ON WEDNESDAY, 10TH DECEMBER 2008 AT 2.20 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillor D.M. Gray - Chairman

Councillors:

Councillors:

Mrs. R. Potter

Representing Teacher Organisations:

Miss H. Bartley (ATL), Ms. C. Cook (NASUWT), Ms. K. Mathias (VALRETA),
Mrs. C. Thompson (NAHT)

Representing Religious Organisations:

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

Together with:

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

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D.G. Carter, G.G. Hibbert,
Mrs. D. Price, J. Taylor. Mrs. N. Boardman (NUT), Captain R. Waters (Salvation Army)

1. OBSERVATION OF AN ACT OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT HENDRE JUNIOR SCHOOL, CAERPHILLY

Members received a warm welcome from staff and children at the school. Those present were invited to observe a service by the newly formed choir, followed by an assembly performed by Class 6, on the traditions of Christmas from around the world and the true meaning of Christmas.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Thompson, Headteacher, for arranging for the Committee to meet at Hendre Junior School and for the hospitality received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the meeting.

3. MINUTES

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

Caerphilly SACRE held on 25th September 2008 (minute nos. 1-15 on page nos. 1-5).

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Minute No. 6, Membership Update

It was noted a replacement Association of School and College Leaders representative was still outstanding. Mrs J. Lawrence advised she would liaise with Mike Pickard, Head of Blackwood Comprehensive School who acted on behalf of Caerphilly Secondary Heads group.

Additionally, a lack of communication from Caerphilly SACRE's Roman Catholic representative was noted. Mrs J. Lawrence advised she would contact the Headteacher of the school to make enquiries.

5. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY 2009 – UPDATE

The report informed Members of holocaust issues and action taken since the last meeting of the committee.

Members were advised of the following:

- Primary schools have been informed of the availability of Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) packs of resources and advised to contact the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT);
- Secondary schools have been sent these packs;
- All schools have been sent a letter reminding them of HMD and asking them to commemorate it in some way;
- WASACRE included a question on Holocaust Education in their meeting with the Minister for Education in November. Jane Hutt agreed to contact the HMDT regarding the automatic issue of information packs to Welsh schools, to bring this in line with the practice in England. She also agreed to look into the need for funding to enable six formers to visit Auschwitz; and
- Pupils who have visited Auschwitz have been invited to attend the Committee's next meeting (in February). Details are yet to be finalised.

Members noted the recent action taken by Officers.

6. ANALYSIS OF EXAMINATION RESULTS 2008

Details of the results on a 'school by school' basis were circulated at the meeting.

Members reviewed the analysis of examination results for 2008. The main findings of each document were discussed and placed in the context of percentage of Cohort entered for GCSE and A-AS level.

A trend of increased exam entries for GCSE Short Course with improved standards, at all grade boundaries were noted, in addition to the following:

- A trend of very good performance at GCSE full course that is comparable with the All Wales figures.
- A Level results are excellent at all grade boundaries with 100% pass rate for the last three years.
- AS results are good at all grade boundaries and at A-C and A-E are better than previous performance and the All Wales figures.

Members raised a concern that the numbers entering for the A level exam had fallen for the last two years. Officers advised these figures did fluctuate on a year-to-year basis and presently Religious Studies was one of the most popular subject uptakes.

Members noted the examination results and agreed to write to congratulate schools on their performance. A special mention was to be sent to St Martins and Cwmcarn Comprehensive with regard to cohort entries policies. In addition, Members acknowledged Mrs V. Thomas' influence and hard work.

7. RE AND RS IN WALES – REPORT FROM ESTYN

The report and attached appendix, informed Members of Estyn's findings regarding Religious Education and Religious Studies (and collective worship) in Wales 2006-2007. The evidence was mainly taken from examinations data and inspection reports for the period 2006-2007.

Members were advised once a year Estyn gave an overview of performance and the report gave a Welsh perspective. In the context of the report, Caerphilly results were good.

Members discussed the report at length and commented that when secondary schools failed to meet the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship, this was often due to a lack of accommodation. Members also highlighted there may be a need to monitor inspections in non-denominational schools in the future.

Members noted the report.

8. TEACHER ASSESSMENT IN LEVELS AT KEY STAGE 3 (2008)

Members reviewed the 2008 key stage 3 (KS3) teacher assessment analysis, and were reminded that there were no national levels for KS3 and therefore no RE comparisons were available. However four local education authorities (Caerphilly, Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taff), did collate data for comparative purposes.

Members discussed the report and noted the gap in performance between boys and girls at L5+ and L6+ had narrowed this year. In closing they acknowledged it was a credit to teachers that all schools in the LEA had responded.

Members noted the report.

9. SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE ON INSPECTING COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN NON-DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS – ESTYN

The report and attached appendix, informed Members of Estyn's Supplementary Guidance On Collective Worship and Officers advised Members of its purpose to support inspectors in inspecting collective worship in schools. It takes effect from June 2008.

It was noted that while the document was well written, it now required updating (for example, point 11 on page 1). This did not however, diminish the document's usefulness; in particular the section that contained frequently asked questions (pages 4 and 5).

Officers confirmed Headteachers had already been advised of the documents value.

Members discussed and noted the report.

10. WASACRE - FEEDBACK FROM MEETING ON 7TH NOVEMBER 2008 AT CWMBRAN

Members reviewed a summary of the meeting of WASACRE held on 7th November 2008 at Cwmbran, whilst Mrs V. Thomas gave a verbal report on particular items of interest to the Committee. She highlighted three main presentations that were given, in particular Pam Kelly's, Detective Chief Inspector of Dyfed Powys Police. She agreed a copy of this presentation would be sent to Mrs J. Lawrence.

Teacher representatives from Caerphilly SACRE, who had attended the meeting for the first time, confirmed the meeting was very informative and interesting.

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

11. WASACRE - REPRESENTATION AT NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 13th March 2009 at Bryngarw House, Bridgend. Caerphilly SACRE's representatives were agreed as Mrs V. Thomas, Councillor D.M. Gray, Mr D. Brooks and Mrs C. Thompson.

Other Members interested in attending were requested to contact Mrs R. Thomas after the meeting to confirm their availability.

12. CORRESPONDENCE

- (1) Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, October 2008. Members noted the correspondence received;
- (2) AQA Religious Studies, November 2008. Members noted the correspondence received;
- (3) Please Convince Me, November 2008. Members noted the correspondence received and it was agreed that in future Members would access the website individually. (www.pleaseconvinceme.com)

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs V. Thomas advised Members of a new CD Rom entitled "Jewish Way of Life". Members agreed this should be distributed to all schools.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at Newbridge Comprehensive (subject to confirmation) at 2.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 24th February 2009.

The meeting closed at 3.35 p.m. and the Chairman wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Approved as a correct record, and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 24th February 2009, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN