



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT NEWBRIDGE SCHOOL, CAERPHILLY
ON MONDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY 2009 AT 2.00 PM**

PRESENT:

Councillor D.M. Gray - Chairman
Councillor J. Taylor - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

Mrs R. Potter

Representing Teacher Organisations:

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

Representing Religious Organisations:

Mr D. Brooks (Independent), Mrs E. Hawthorn (United Reformed Church), Captain R. Waters (Salvation Army)

Together with:

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

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D.G. Carter, G.G. Hibbert, Mrs. D. Price. Mrs N. Boardman (NUT), Mrs S. John (UCAC),

1. CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Sue Rivers to her first meeting of the Caerphilly SACRE.

The Chairman sent the Committee's best wishes to Councillor G.G. Hibbert, who was currently unwell. It was agreed a card would be sent, to let him know the group's thoughts were with him at this time.

The Chairman sent the Committee's regards to Mrs Siân John, following the sad news that her father had recently passed away.

The Chairman thanked Miss Helen Bartley for the hospitality and warm welcome received by the school and for allowing the Committee to meet at Newbridge School.

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 10th December 2008 (minute nos. 1 - 14 on page nos. 1 - 5).

MATTERS ARISING

4. Minute No. 4.1 - Membership Update

It was noted Mrs Sue Rivers, Deputy Headteacher at Bedwas High School was the new Association of School and College Leaders representative on the Committee. Jill Lawrence was still to liaise with St Helen's Roman Catholic Primary School. This had been delayed due to Estyn's inspection of the school.

5. VISIT TO AUSCHWITZ - PRESENTATIONS

The Chairman welcomed Ellie Lane, Jamie Torrance and Kyle Short, year 11 pupils from Newbridge School, who were to give a short presentation to convey to Members the impact upon them, following a visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

The pupils visited Auschwitz-Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camps with Helen Bartley and other pupils in October 2005. They also spent three nights in Germany and visited Berlin and Kraków. The pupils all expressed a greater appreciation of Hitler's Germany and a better understanding of other cultures, following the visit. They felt very emotional when standing in the camps and found that seeing first hand the remnants of what remains of that camp and the horrors inflicted there, was a very sobering experience.

Members thanked the pupils for their presentations and a general discussion followed, together with a question and answer session. The pupils confirmed that although the visit could be described as harrowing, they believed children should not be sheltered from the facts, as they were necessary to fully appreciate the horrors that had occurred. In closing they confirmed the trip had changed their views on the holocaust, it had helped with history and religious education lessons and they were optimistic that the world had learnt from the past and that human nature had changed for the better.

It was noted that Rachel Thomas, Head of RE at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni, was also due to attend, to give a presentation on the work her school is doing to commemorate HMD and to raise awareness of holocaust issues, but she was unwell.

Members acknowledged the efforts and hard work of teachers in arranging the visits to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Helen Bartley confirmed she was currently arranging a further visit in 2010.

6. PROGRESS IN LEARNING IN RE AT KS3: PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT - PRESENTATION

Vicky Thomas gave a presentation to accompany the report on the new learning file. These files have been developed for all subject areas and are delivered to schools through training, with support from four local authorities: Caerphilly, Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Officers advised the learning file was designed to help departments to develop their understanding of progression, with each piece of work illustrating particular standards characteristics within a level. Although not designed as an exemplar portfolio for the WJEC moderation exercise, the illustrative materials should support departments in the development of their own portfolios.

Training on the learning file is ongoing, with copies of the CD Rom being distributed to attending teachers, once completed. Currently over 20 secondary schools had received the learning file and although not offered to primary schools, Officers reminded Members there were other initiatives available.

Jill Lawrence, Assistant Director, Learning, Education and Inclusion, referred to the hard work by ESIS officers in compiling the learning file and gave an acknowledgment that it had taken 2½ years to assemble, with input from 15 schools.

Members discussed and noted the progress in learning in religious education at KS3.

7. JEWISH WAY OF LIFE FROM THE PEARS FOUNDATION - PRESENTATION

The report and accompanying presentation by Vicky Thomas, illustrated to Members a new resource for schools. The resource, a CD Rom entitled "Jewish Way of Life", came from the Pears Foundation and had been distributed to all schools, as agreed at the last meeting of the Committee.

The presentation illustrated the religious aspects and day-to-day lives of Jews under three main headings: "Who we are; What we do; and What we believe"; and explored subheadings under each section.

Members thanked Vicky Thomas for her informative presentation and agreed that the CD Rom was a useful learning tool holding lots of factual information.

8. WASACRE - DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING ON 7TH NOVEMBER 2008 AT COUNTY HALL, CWMBRAN

Members of the Committee noted the draft minutes of WASACRE's meeting held on 7th November 2008 at Cwmbran.

9. WASACRE - REPRESENTATION AT NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is to 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.

10. WASACRE - EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

Members discussed the nominations required by WASACRE and agreed for the need of all SACREs to have representation on WASACRE. However they noted Caerphilly SACRE was already well represented by Councillor D.M. Gray and Mrs V. Thomas (who attended for Torfaen). No nominations were given.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

- (1) Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills – Members noted the contents of the report and appendix. A brief discussion followed;
- (2) Jerusalem Trust – Members noted the correspondence and agreed that the information be sent electronically to all primary and secondary schools.
- (3) St Mary's Centre, North Wales – Members noted the correspondence and discussed additional ways of sharing information about the Centre with all schools in the Caerphilly borough. It was agreed the correspondence would be sent to all primary and secondary schools, and Rebecca Thomas was to send any responses to Tania ap Siôn, Director of the Centre.
- (4) Religious Education Movement Wales – Members noted the contents of the report and agreed that the Rebecca Thomas would send an acknowledgement letter to REMW advising them Jill Lawrence would discuss the matter with the Director of Education and Leisure;
- (5) Faraday Institute – Members noted the contents of the report and appendix;
- (6) The Wonder Project – Members noted the contents of the report and appendix;
- (7) AQA Religious Studies – Members noted the contents of the report and appendix. It was agreed future correspondence from AQA was not required;
- (8) Torfaen SACRE Annual Report 2007-2008 – Members noted the report and that a copy of the report was available from the authority's resource centre;
- (9) Swansea SACRE Annual Report 2007-2008 – Members noted the report and that a copy of the report was available from the authority's resource centre;
- (10) Religious Education News, Winter 2008, No. 82 – Copies were distributed at the meeting. Members noted the correspondence received;
- (11) Curriculum and Assessment Update, Issue 6, Autumn – Copies were distributed at the meeting. Members noted the correspondence received.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members were advised a student, Mr Ian Braithwaite, in his final year of a religious and theological studies degree at Cardiff had shown an interest in attending the meeting to help his studies. Unfortunately the meeting had clashed with a lecture and he was unable to attend.

Mr Braithwaite had however, produced a list of questions and asked that the Committee take time to consider these. The questions were distributed at the meeting.

Members discussed and agreed a response. This would be forwarded to Mr Braithwaite via the secretariat, once collated by Vicky Thomas.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at Park Primary, Bargoed at 2.00 p.m. on Monday, 8th June 2009.

The meeting closed at 3.30 p.m.

Approved as a correct record, and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 8th June 2009, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN