



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – 8TH JUNE 2009

SUBJECT: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION GUIDANCE FOR 14 TO 19 YEAR OLDS - DCELLS

REPORT BY: ESIS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform the SACRE of the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) guidance for Religious Education 14-19 year olds in Wales.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The purpose of the guidance is to support the implementation of the National Exemplar Framework for Religious Education for 3-19 year olds in Wales and the locally Agreed Syllabuses. Religious education is a statutory requirement for 14-19 year olds and must be implemented as required by the locally agreed syllabus.

2.2 The document provides guidance on HOW high quality provision of Religious Education might be delivered at 14-19. It emphasises the relevance and benefit of skills and knowledge that young people might acquire through religious education 14-19 and contains case studies of possible delivery models.

3. PURPOSE OF RE 14-19

3.1 Religious education 14-19 provides exciting opportunities for young people to engage with relevant, contemporary and challenging questions that impact on all our lives.

3.2 Religious Education can:

1. Engage with questions about:

- Spirituality
- Meaning and purpose in life
- Equality and diversity
- Authority
- Global citizenship
- Sustainability

2. Informs learners about the major world religions to be more informed about the traditions, practices and values of religious adherents in our society and in culture across the globe, thus encouraging better understanding and greater community cohesion

3. It provides, through a study of the major world religions, a theological, philosophical and ethical basis for reflection and response that shows respect and compassion.

4. DELIVERY MODELS

- 4.1 The document exemplifies possible delivery models with case studies drawn from a variety of schools across Wales. It shows that RE can be delivered in a very flexible way to suit the arrangements of individual schools. (See Page 14 diagram).
- 4.2 **Statutory Religious Education delivered through examination options** such as GCSE (short and full course). This can be delivered to 14-16 year olds but also to 16-19 year old learners if the 'top up' short course were delivered. The case study shows learners studying issues about personal relationships and marriage; capital punishment.
- 4.3 **Timetabled lessons for statutory RE at KS4** - this model shows a carefully planned course using regular timetabled lessons. The case studies show pupils investigating ethical business practices- businesses influenced by religious teachings and beliefs e.g. companies with a Christian foundation and various fair trade organisation.
- 4.4 **Timetabled lessons for statutory RE at Post 16** - this model shows a carefully planned course using regular timetabled lessons. The case studies show learners investigating fundamental questions about ideas of God and whether belief in God is relevant in the 21st century. They engage and challenge the subtleties of popular culture and the nuances behind films that contain religious imagery or religious themes.
- 4.5 **Cross curricular week** - traditional timetables lessons are suspended and learners carry out active learning through the medium of RE. It will include, research activities, interpreting statistics, using guest speakers, contacting charities and organisations. Some popular topics include suffering, medicine, conflict and justice. By the end of the week learners are required to give a presentation of their work and organise fund raising activities for a charity of their choice.
- 4.6 **Cross curriculum enrichment programme** - this model looks at the contribution RE can make to enrich other areas of the curriculum. The case study shows learners investigating ethical tourism - they conduct research to identify important sensitivities when visiting certain countries (dress, food, behaviour and customs) they examine the manufacture of tourist goods that may have harmful effects on the environment, the working conditions of the poor in these countries.
- 4.7 **Wider curriculum enrichment programme** - in this model RE lessons are supplemented by sessions that relate directly to RE, PSE, careers and the world of work. It includes community awareness activities such as delivery of meals on wheels for senior citizens, fund raising, guest speakers to talk about an RE related topic e.g. Christian Aid on the global economy and fair trade.
- 4.8 **Learning Core timetabled tutorial lessons** - this model demonstrates how tutorial sessions (35 minutes) are used at Post 16. A two year programme includes topics such as poverty, suffering, abortion and sanctity of life, racism and religion. This also implements parts of the PSE and Key Skills agenda resulting in an accredited course in Key Skills.
- 4.9 **Annual (termly) day conferences** - several schools use this model as a way of motivating learners. They sometimes work on a consortium or collaborative basis. They are often used to supplement the RE provided. They usually focus on a central theme that relates to a fundamental question e.g. Can the world be fair? Why are we here? Why do people suffer? Guest speakers are often invited or presenters who access particular resources such as Damaris ICT package "President for a Day".

- 4.10 **Day conferences to support GCSE or A Level work** - this model supplements timetabled RE lessons. The case study took an innovative approach to the A level synoptic unit by exploring the requirements of the unit and revising work covered and providing an information pack for learners to use to research such as a bibliography and website addresses. The afternoon session was an opportunity for learners to research the task and to prepare for a presentation to be delivered at a later date.
- 4.11 **Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification** - this model can provide a supplementary enrichment programme for the Welsh Baccalaureate or could use a selection of the WB components to fulfil some statutory RE. Case Study 1 looks at RE as part of the PSE element of the WB. The learners examine the topic of Challenges in Society Today by playing a game of beliefs and values that challenges their own beliefs and values but can also examines the beliefs and values of different religious traditions. Case Study 2 looks at RE as part of the Individual Investigation element of the WB where learners investigate a topic of their choice and provide written evidence and an oral presentation. The pupils investigated the question “Is Christianity on the decrease in Wales?”
- 4.12 **Key Skills** - this model looks at RE delivering some of the requirement of the Key Skills Qualification namely Communication and ICT. The Communication unit provided opportunities to analyse, debate and evaluate the topic “Which is more important - the Buddha or his teachings?” Another example shows RE being included in a student’s ICT portfolio with a magazine article on Buddhist monasticism. This demonstrated subject knowledge and competency in ICT skills.
- 4.13 **ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network)** - this case study used part of its RE lessons to help learners work on aspects of the ASDAN award and other parts of the curriculum contributed to other aspects of the award. This school linked their RE to the Active Citizenship unit in the ASDAN specification. Learners organised charity events, and used fundraising to benefit their local community.
- 4.14 **Retreats and Conferences** - this case study was a Roman Catholic school that regularly arranges a four day retreat for its learners. The purpose is to provide the opportunity to explore elements of the religious, moral and spiritual dimensions to life and to raise self - esteem and the sense of the school as a social community. In addition the school provides Sixth Form conferences looking at Catholic teaching on social justice and the outworking of the Christian ethos promoted by the school. Students become involved in various local initiatives such as Operation Christmas Child and the Mr X appeal.
- 4.15 **Charity work and visits** - in this case study RE lessons provide support for additional enrichment activities. The school is linked to a school and orphanage in Uganda in conjunction with a Christian relief organisation. They actively raise funds to provide textbooks, free milk, and improved educational equipment /resources. Some sixth formers are given the opportunity to visit the schools in Uganda.
- 4.16 **Using BBC e-clips “Religious Education: Revitalising Education “** - the BBC has made available to schools a range of stimulating materials from their archive. They are accompanied with lessons plans and activity sheets that can be used in RE lessons. This case study shows a school using BBC e-clips alongside timetabled lessons. Students discuss and evaluate what they consider the most relevant values in society today. They explore values such as honesty, faithfulness, trust, integrity and respect. They watch e-clips of the programme Pobol y Cwm where such values are called into question and relate them to religious beliefs, teachings, practices and attitudes. These are debated in the context of society today.
- 4.17 All case studies are supplemented by examples of pupils’ work and quotes.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Members are invited to consider and discuss the DCELLS Religious Education Guidance for 14 to 19 year olds.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Letter from DCELLS dated April 2009

Appendix 2 Religious Education Guidance for 14-19 year olds (*to be distributed at the meeting*)