



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL, BARGOED
ON MONDAY, 8TH JUNE 2009 AT 2.00 PM**

PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

Mrs R. Potter, Mrs D. Price

Representing Teacher Organisations:

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

Representing Religious Organisations:

T. Crosse (St Helens RC Primary), Mrs E. Hawthorn (United Reformed Church), Captain R. Waters (Salvation Army)

Together with:

V. Thomas (ESIS Religious Education Advisor), L. Buck (Senior Secondary Adviser, Inclusion Service), R. Thomas (Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D.G. Carter, Mrs N. Boardman (NUT), Mrs C. Thompson (NAHT), Mr D. Brooks (Independent), J. Lawrence (Assistant Director, Learning, Education and Inclusion)

1. OBSERVATION OF AN ACT OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT PARKS PRIMARY SCHOOL, BARGOED

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

The Chairman thanked Mrs Evans, Headteacher, for the delightful assembly and for allowing the Committee to meet at the school; and to Ms Carolyn Cook for making the necessary arrangements.

2. CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

The Chairman advised the Committee of the sad news of Councillor G.G. Hibbert's passing. The Committee stood in silence for a moment's reflection.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

4. MINUTES

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

Caerphilly SACRE held on 24th February 2009 (minute nos. 1 - 13 on page nos. 1 - 5).

MATTERS ARISING

5. Membership Update (minute No. 4)

Mr Tim Crosse, Headteacher of St Helen's Roman Catholic Primary School was in attendance, and he was welcomed to the meeting.

Members were advised that Carolyn Cook of Park Primary School, had handed in a letter of resignation as she had gained employment outside of Caerphilly borough. The Chairman thanked Mrs Cook for her contributions to the committee and for all her assistance. There was now a vacancy for a NASUWT representative on the committee.

6. Jewish Way of Life from the Pears Foundation – Presentation (minute no. 7)

Members were reminded of the available resource and received confirmation that copies had been distributed to all schools. Spare copies were still available, should anyone wish to receive duplicates.

7. Any Other Business (minute no. 12)

A copy of the response to Mr Braithwaite, a student of Theology at Cardiff University, was distributed to Members at the meeting.

8. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2009-2010

Members discussed the dates within the report and possible venues for forthcoming meetings.

The schedule for future meetings were agreed as follows (subject to confirmation of venue availability):

- Tuesday, 29th September 2009 (2.00 pm) – Bedwas High School, Caerphilly;
- Thursday, 10th December 2009 (2.00 pm) – United Reform Church, Van Road, Caerphilly;
- Wednesday, 24th February 2010 (2.00 pm) – Twyn Primary, Caerphilly; and
- Monday, 14th June 2010 (2.00 pm) – Penallta House, Ystrad Mynach.

9. ANALYSIS OF INSPECTION REPORTS (SPRING 2008 - SPRING 2009);

Members were reminded of the two aspects of inspections, the statutory act of collective worship and that of pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The type of inspections (full, standard and short) and grade criteria was also reiterated. Extracts of the full inspection reports for Oakdale Comprehensive, Risca Comprehensive and St Martins Comprehensive Schools were distributed at the meeting.

Officers confirmed the action taken by the Local Education Authority (LEA) and Education and School Improvement Service (ESIS) to assist schools in raising their standards, where applicable. An example of recent improvements at Newbridge School was given. Mr Crosse volunteered to submit St Helen's RC Primary School's report for future consideration by the group.

Members observed that sometimes no comments relating to statutory requirements were given, however recent guidance from Estyn states a comment on whether a school fulfils statutory requirements for collective worship has to be made. The committee agreed to receive an analysis of inspection reports each term, rather than annually, to ensure more regular analysis. If comments were missing in the future, the committee would write to Estyn.

Members considered the outcomes of the analysis of inspection reports for the period Spring 2007 to Spring 2008 and the following shortcomings were noted:

- (1) that Ystrad Mynach Primary at KS1 were judged to have a shortcoming in relation to pupils being unable to use simple religious vocabulary appropriately, when describing what is special about festivals and celebrations in Christianity and other world religions. The committee agreed to write to the school, asking them how they intend to address this issue and to offer SACRE's assistance, if required;
- (2) that Oakdale Comprehensive had some shortcomings at KS4 for "most pupils". The school had however achieved a Grade 2. This seems to be an anomaly; and
- (3) that Risca Comprehensive had shortcomings but these were deemed to be in the minority and therefore the school's good features outweighed these shortcomings. The committee agreed to write to the school, asking them how they intend to address this issue and to offer SACRE's assistance, if required.

The Committee also welcomed the excellent report from St Martins Comprehensive School and the group agreed to write to the school to congratulate them.

10. UPDATE ON TRAINING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREED SYLLABUS - PHASE 2

Members were informed of the INSET attendance figures for the agreed syllabus training and they were advised the actual numbers attending were likely to be closer to 90, rather than 79 as detailed within the report.

Members noted the attendance rates and were reassured all schools within the borough had been invited. Feedback from individual schools to the training was very positive and teacher representatives on the Committee echoed this opinion.

11. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION GUIDANCE FOR 14 TO 19-YEAR-OLDS, DCELLS

Copies of DCELLS Religious Education Guidance for 14 to 19-year-olds were distributed at the meeting.

Members noted the document provided guidance on how high quality provision of Religious Education might be delivered at 14-19. It emphasised the relevance and benefit of skills and

knowledge that young people might acquire through religious education (14-19) and contained case studies of possible delivery models.

Members agreed the document was interesting and due to the number of delivery models, they were confident every school would be able to find a model appropriate to their own particular circumstances. The use of best practices within the guidance was also helpful, with different perspectives given.

Members discussed the requirements for colleges to receive and use the document. Officers advised there was no requirement for either collective worship or post 16 religious education to be delivered within a further education college.

Whilst every school had received a copy of the guidance on 14-19, the committee agreed to write to all secondary schools, with an enclosed summary, to highlight the usefulness of the document.

12. RE IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE

Copies of Caerphilly County Borough Council's "Religious Education in the Foundation Phase" were distributed at the meeting.

Members were informed of the statutory requirements for RE in the Foundation Phase and of the need for schools/teachers to demonstrate examples of planning and delivery. When planning the delivery of the Foundation Phase, schools should take account of provision of the Foundation Phase framework and of the relevant provisions of the locally agreed syllabus.

Examples of foundation phase planning and resources used to assist in teaching were demonstrated and well received by the committee.

Members of the committee from a teaching background confirmed the available materials were a very good resource as younger children required visual aids. Courses run by ESIS were praised as they not only gave teachers the essential background information but also highlighted how to use different materials to achieve the required goals. These members confirmed KS2 was challenging due to the shift in priorities. The difference between the mainstream and catholic schools was also discussed.

Members noted the requirements for Religious Education in the Foundation Phase.

13. WASACRE - FEEDBACK FROM MEETING ON 13TH MARCH 2009

Members reviewed a summary of the meeting of WASACRE held on 13th March 2009 at Bryngarw House, Bridgend, whilst Mrs V Thomas gave a verbal report on items of interest to the Committee.

Mrs V. Thomas made particular reference to the three presentations given by Tudor Thomas (New GCSE Religious Studies Specifications), Peter Privett (Godly Play) and Mike Strange (Christianity Unpacked); and the meeting with Brian Gibbons, Minister for Equality and Social Justice.

The Committee noted the draft minutes of WASACRE's meeting and the Chairman thanked Mrs Thomas for her feedback from the meeting.

14. WASACRE - REPRESENTATION AT NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is to be held on 24th June 2009 At Wild Pheasant Hotel, Llangollen.

Caerphilly SACRE's representatives were agreed as Mrs V. Thomas, Councillor D.M. Gray and Mr D. Brooks (subject to confirmation).

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

Members were also given advance notice of a future meeting of WASACRE, taking place on 13th November 2009 in Rhondda Cynon Taff.

15. WASACRE - VOTING AND NOMINATIONS, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Members were advised that when the item was placed on the agenda, there were a greater number of nominees for the executive membership, however prior to distribution of the papers, one withdrew. To keep Members informed of the nominations, the item remained on the agenda.

However the Committee noted there was no requirement for SACRE representatives to vote at the next WASACRE meeting in June 2009 because all the nominees will now automatically receive a place on the Executive.

16. WASACRE - GUIDANCE FOR POST 16 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Members were reminded of previous discussions of the committee and informed the report and appendices were tabled as an informative update.

Members agreed the WASACRE guidance was well written and they hoped that it would allow informed debate with pupils about the new legislation.

17. CORRESPONDENCE

Members noted the report and appendix detailing correspondence received from Churches Together in Wales (Cytûn). It was agreed that the subject of membership would be placed on the agenda of the next meeting to allow time for sufficient discussion.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Copies of Religious Education News, Spring 2009, No. 83 were distributed to all present.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at Bedwas High School, Caerphilly (subject to confirmation) at 2.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 29th September 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 Tuesday, 29th September 2009, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN