



CAERPHELLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT NEWBRIDGE SCHOOL, CAERPHELLY
ON THURSDAY, 9TH JUNE 2010 AT 2.00 PM**

PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

Mrs A. Collins

Representing Teacher Organisations:

Miss H. Bartley (ATL), Mrs N. Boardman (NUT), Mrs B. Davies (UCAC), Mrs S. Rivers (ASCL), Mrs C. Thompson (NAHT), Mrs D. Williams (NASUWT)

Representing Religious Organisations:

Mr D. Brooks (Independent), Mrs J. Jones (Church in Wales)

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, Mrs R. Potter and Mrs K. Mathias (VALRETA), Mrs E. Hawthorn (United Reformed Church), Captain R. Waters (Salvation Army)

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

The Chairman thanked Mrs Lesley Perry (Headteacher) and Miss Helen Bartley for allowing the Council to meet at Newbridge School and for the hospitality and warm welcome received by the school. Additional thanks were given to Miss Bartley for the making the necessary arrangements.

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Diane Williams of Ystrad Mynach Primary to her first meeting of the Caerphilly SACRE and introductions were made. It was noted this would be the last meeting of the council for Mrs R. Thomas, following a reorganisation of workload in Committee Services. Thanks were recorded to Mrs Thomas for all her excellent work in servicing the council.

The Chairman read a short poem by Helen Steiner Rice entitled "The Future is Yours".

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Caerphilly SACRE meeting, held on 24th February 2010 (minute nos. 1 - 5 on page nos. 1 - 15) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING

3. Resilience Project (Minute No. 7)

Members were reminded of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) sponsored project entitled REsilience. The project is designed to support the government's All Wales Community Cohesion Strategy. The contract for the project was secured by the RE Council and it runs from 15th June 2009 to 31st March 2011.

Offices confirmed that a pilot of the strategy is to run in 5 schools across Wales. A number of sub-groups have been set up to assist in the delivery of the project and Mrs V. Thomas was a member of the sub-group tasked to ensure appropriate resources were available.

Mrs Thomas informed the group that she had drafted a letter to advise schools of the project and it was agreed that this is to be sent to all schools, with the appropriate flyer, via the school's information bulletin system.

4. PRESENTATION ON WJEC PILOT KS3 MODERATION EXERCISE

Miss H. Bartley gave a presentation on the moderation process and her personal experiences of the project, as Newbridge School was one of the schools that had been chosen as part of the pilot scheme that began in September 2009.

She confirmed the assessment process provided feedback on progress at every stage and stressed that moderation was important for all parties concerned: the school, teachers and the pupils. It assisted in targeting areas that needed improvement and highlighted successes.

Miss Bartley advised how the school had been approached by WJEC to take part in the pilot and confirmed that as Newbridge School already completed much of the required processes, it had not impacted upon the teachers or the school, as much as first anticipated.

She demonstrated the portfolio selection and confirmed there were 5 assessments to be carried out per academic year, covering up to year 9 and containing various levels within. Teachers had to provide evidence that they understand the level descriptions and illustrate how they apply the levels to pupils' work.

Pupils will be asked to participate in the following,

- 1) engage fundamental questions;
- 2) explore religious beliefs teachings and practices; and
- 3) expressing personal responses

and each department is to provide commentary/annotation for each level description, outlining how pupils' work demonstrates the level. Although Miss Bartley had originally been concerned at the amount of paperwork involved, she reiterated that the majority of work had already been completed and an accreditation was now to be received for the hard work. The Headteacher, by giving an inset day, had assisted in the collation and completion of the paperwork.

Miss Bartley raised some concerns that as this was the first exercise of its type, there had been few reference points for teachers, but it was acknowledged this would improve in time. Similarly, there was little knowledge of what other schools were doing. She also queried the lack of level 8 in some year groups. Feedback from WJEC on the school's assessments was welcomed and it was anticipated that this would be received by the end of June.

Mrs V. Thomas advised that in order to obtain comprehensive responses from all schools only levels 4, 5, 6 and 7 had been included, however each school's own personal portfolio should demonstrate all available levels.

In closing the presentation, Mrs Perry praised Miss Bartley's professionalism and hard work.

Members thanked Miss Bartley for her informative presentation and a full discussion ensued in which one member highlighted that Blackwood Comprehensive School had originally been accepted as a pilot for the project, but had to withdraw due to cover and funding issues. Mrs V. Thomas stressed that supply cover was available, and it appeared that the school had been misinformed.

5. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2010 – 2011

Members discussed the proposed dates and venues within the report and confirmed the availability of venues for forthcoming meetings (subject to confirmation). The schedule for future meetings was agreed as follows:

- Wednesday, 29th September 2010 (2.00 pm) – Bedwas Junior School (TBC), alternatively Bedwas High School;
- Monday, 6th December 2010 (2.00 pm) – United Reform Church, Van Road, Caerphilly;
- Monday, 14th February 2011 (2.00 pm) – Cross Keys Methodist Church;
- Tuesday, 14th June 2011 (2.00 pm) – Ebbw Room, Penallta House, Tredomen Park.

6. ANALYSIS OF INSPECTION REPORTS (SPRING 2009 – 2010);

Members considered the outcomes of the analysis of inspection reports for the period Spring 2009 to Spring 2010 and were reminded of the three types of inspections (full, standard and short). Members were advised the reports would change from September with no subjects being inspected, leaving uncertainty as to how they will be analysed in the future. RE Advisers and WASACRE are currently discussing this and Caerphilly SACRE will address this issue in due course.

Members agreed to:-

- (1) note the inspection reports;
- (2) write to the schools inspected, congratulating them on their performance.

7. RE FESTIVAL, MARCH 2011

Copies of 'ideas for SACREs' and a mindmap example of events showing local authority, schools and religious communities contributions were distributed at the meeting.

The report advised Members of the forthcoming RE Festival, during March 2011 that celebrates religious education in England and Wales. The aim of the festival is to raise the profile of the subject on a local and national level. Ideas and guidance for activities will be produced by the RE Council.

Members greeted the proposals enthusiastically and discussed what role Caerphilly SACRE could play in promoting events. It was recognised that the website 'www.celebratingre.org' was a rich source of information and gave a number of ideas for schools and religious organisations to use.

Mrs V. Thomas advised she had drafted a letter to inform schools of the festival and an unlimited supply of flyers advertising the event were available.

Members noted the contents of the report and agreed to:

- (1) mailshot all schools to inform them of the RE festival taking place in March 2011 and enclose the relevant flyer;
- (2) add the RE festival as an agenda item to governor support meetings;
- (3) inform Headteachers and Head of RE departments of the RE festival at the first available meeting;
- (4) inform religious groups, via Councillors and religious representative of the council, of the RE festival and encourage communication with local schools;
- (5) reflect on additional activities that could be considered at the next meeting of Caerphilly SACRE.

8. A VISIT TO AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU, MARCH 2010

The report informed members of a visit to Auschwitz Birkenau in March 2010 as recorded by Vicky Thomas for RE News. Mrs V. Thomas commented on the attitude and maturity of the students she accompanied and advised she was very impressed their behaviour.

Members thanked Mrs Thomas for her article and noted its contents.

9. WASACRE SURVEY, SACRES AND THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITY

The report informed Caerphilly SACRE of a survey being sent to all SACREs in Wales by WASACRE and to request Members' assistance in the completion of the questionnaire. The survey aims to ascertain SACRE's involvement with local interfaith organisations and other local interfaith initiatives.

Members reviewed the questionnaire and formulated a response for WASACRE. It was acknowledged however, that despite attempts by the council to attract other religions and co-opted members, due to the composition of religious groups within Caerphilly County Borough, this had been unsuccessful. Members requested that WASACRE be informed that nearly 66% of the religious composition of the authority was Christians, with the next largest set being Muslims at 0.13%. Membership on Caerphilly SACRE by purely Christian denominations was therefore representative of the county borough.

It was agreed Mrs V. Thomas would collate the responses and reply to WASACRE by 20th July 2010.

10. FEEDBACK FROM MEETING ON 18TH MARCH 2010 AT SWANSEA

Members reviewed a summary of the meeting of WASACRE held on 18th March 2010 in Swansea, whilst Mrs V. Thomas gave a verbal report on particular items of interest to the Committee. Members were encouraged to obtain the DVD highlighting Jewish festivals, as mentioned by Norma Glass in her presentation "Learning outside the classroom: places of worship".

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

11. WASACRE - REPRESENTATION AT NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is to be held on 24th June 2010 at Wrexham. Caerphilly SACRE's representatives were agreed as Councillor D.M. Gray, Mrs V. Thomas and Mr D. Brooks. It was confirmed that they had all recently received the necessary paperwork from WASACRE's secretary.

Members were informed the following meeting of WASACRE was to take place on 26th November at Penallta House, Tredomen Park. All were welcome to attend.

12. WASACRE - EXECUTIVE VOTING FOR THE PERIOD 2010 – 2012

Members discussed the nominations for WASACRE Executive Membership, following the cessation to the terms of office for Mary Parry, Carmarthenshire and Eirian Pierce, Conwy at the end of the summer.

The Council agreed to vote for Dafydd Treharne, Vale of Glamorgan and Mary Parry, Carmarthenshire in the role of Executive Members.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

- (1) REsilience Project; Members noted the contents of the report and colour copies of the appendix were distributed at the meeting. As per minute number 4, the letter drafted by Mrs V. Thomas advising schools of the project, with the appropriate flyer would be issued via the school's information bulletin system.
- (2) St Gabriel's Teachers Conference; Members noted the correspondence received and it was agreed that this would be sent to all schools.
- (3) Wooden Crosses; Members noted the correspondence received.
- (4) The Wonder Project; Members noted the correspondence received.
- (5) Religious Education News, Spring 2010, No. 86 - Copies were distributed at the meeting. Members noted the correspondence received.

14. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED POST AGENDA DISTRIBUTION

- (1) Diversity Equality Educational Multifaiths – Copies of correspondence received on 4th June 2010 regarding a new interactive website were distributed at the meeting. Members noted the correspondence.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Subject to confirmation by the Headteacher, the next meeting is to be held at Bedwas Junior School at 2.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 29th September 2010.

The meeting closed at 3:55 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 29th September 2010, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN