



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – 14TH JUNE 2011

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CAERPHILLY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

REPORT BY: ESIS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide SACRE with a review of Religious Education in Caerphilly Secondary Schools.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 REVIEW OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CAERPHILLY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

ACADEMIC YEAR 2010 – 2011

- 14/16 schools reviewed.
- 20 lessons were observed with a focus upon Teaching and Learning and Assessment for Learning.
- 85% of lessons were graded Excellent or Good for Teaching and Learning
- 85% of lessons were graded Excellent/ Good for Assessment for Learning
- Breakdown of lesson grades

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory
Teaching & Learning	9 (45%)	8 (40%)	3 (15%)	
Assessment for Learning	11 (55%)	6 (30%)	2 (10%)	1 (5%)

Grade Criteria

Excellent - Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice

Good - Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement

Adequate - Strengths outweigh areas for improvement

Unsatisfactory - Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

THE RANGE AND QUALITY OF TEACHING APPROACHES AND THE IMPACT ON LEARNING

Outstanding features

- Excellent **planning and preparation** of lessons using high quality stimulus materials and resources.
- Lesson objectives focus appropriately on **skills development** as well as subject content.
- The range of active learning and thinking skills strategies in use are well **embedded** into learning.
- Exceptional level of **challenge** with well thought out tasks offering ample opportunities for pupils to think, reflect and respond.
- Excellent **questioning technique** with teachers asking open and challenging questions and probing for understanding and justification of answers.
- **Excellent relationships** with pupils where teachers know pupils well, raise self-esteem and encourage them to succeed.
- Teachers are **reflective practitioners** who put in place strategies that improve lessons and address the needs of pupils.

Good Features

- Good subject knowledge with pitch and pace being appropriate.
- Starter activities engage pupils from the outset and they remain on task throughout the lesson.
- Good balance between individual and collaborative working.
- A good range of thinking strategies in use with well thought out activities that provide opportunities for pupils to use higher order skills.
- High expectations are made of all learners.
- Good coverage of exam specifications and ample opportunities to practice examination techniques.
- Emotional climate created that allows pupils to respond with confidence.
- Well-organised plenary sessions which are effective – summarising main messages, review and reflect on learning and recap on skills developed.
- Classroom environment that is conducive to learning e.g. display, key words, and examples of pupils' work.
- Classroom management is good.
- Good relationships exist between teachers and pupils.

Areas for Development

- Improve the classroom learning environment by use of display/ word walls/ examples of pupils' work.
- Develop a wider range of strategies to keep attention and focus.
- Share lesson objectives from the outset and relate clearly to skills to be developed during the lesson.
- Ensure there is sufficient reference to religious content when discussing fundamental questions and moral issues.
- Make more use of collaborative working - especially as starter activities - to engage pupils from the outset.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Outstanding features

- AfL strategies are consistently in use and **embedded** into learning.
- Classroom environment used effectively as an 'aid to learning'.
- **Excellent questioning technique** with open and challenging questions asked and teachers probe for understanding. Time is provided for pupils to think and reflect before responding.

- Pupils understand what they are doing, know how to do it well and reflect on how they can improve.

Good Features

- A range of AfL strategies are in use including peer marking and criteria referenced marking.
- Pupils provided with clear subject specific targets that help them to improve their work.
- Strong emphasis with examination classes on the demands of the syllabus, the skills to be developed and the assessment criteria to be used.

Unsatisfactory features

- Marking and feedback needs some attention. When books are unmarked with no written feedback pupils are unaware of what is good in their work and how to improve their performance.
- Insufficient time is given for pupils to think about, respond to and reflect on matters raised.
- Questioning technique needs improvement e.g. asking more open questions.
- Plenary sessions are not used effectively to review and reflect on the lesson and the skills developed.

Areas for Development

- Ensure plenary sessions are effective by reviewing and recapping lesson objectives and learning outcomes and making explicit the skills that have been developed.
- Develop further opportunities to peer assess using the 'two stars and a wish' strategy.
- Marking and feedback needs attention - marking should be regular and comments in books more closely related to assessment criteria.

Priorities for development

- To make KS3 moderation a priority- revisiting the KS3 data and the portfolio in the light of the WJEC /DCELLS moderation process.
- Ensure departmental book monitoring systems are well established and effective.
- Support non - specialist teachers of RE by sharing good AfL practices.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 SACRE note and discuss the report.

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