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Cofnodion cyfarfod y CCYSAGauC, Neuadd Cyngor,
Ceredigion, 30 Mawrth 2012, 10.30am – 3pm
Minutes of the Wales Association of SACRE meeting,
County Hall, Ceredigion, 30 March 2012, 10.30am –
3pm

<p>Ynys Môn / Anglesey Rheinallt Thomas</p> <p>Blaenau Gwent Paula Webber Gill Vaisey</p> <p>Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr / Bridgend Carys Pritchard Edward Evans</p> <p>Caerffili/ Caerphilly Vicky Thomas</p> <p>Caerdydd / Cardiff David Griffiths</p> <p>Sir Gaerfyrddin / Carmarthenshire Meinir Wynne Loader Mary Parry Aled Jones</p> <p>Ceredigion Catherine J Hughes Lyndon Lloyd Vaughan Salisbury Carys Ann Joyce Howells</p> <p>Conwy Phil Lord</p>	<p>Sir Ddinbych / Denbighshire Phil Lord Brian Huw Jones Morfudd M Jones</p> <p>Sir y Fflint / Flintshire Phil Lord</p> <p>Gwynedd W M Meredith Debbie Humphreys</p> <p>Merthyr Tudful / Merthyr Tydfil Carys Pritchard</p> <p>Sir Fynwy / Monmouthshire Gill Vaisey</p> <p>Castell-nedd Port Talbot / Neath and Port Talbot</p> <p>Casnewydd / Newport Vicky Thomas</p> <p>Sir Benfro / Pembrokeshire</p> <p>Powys John Mitson</p>	<p>Rhondda Cynon Taf Carys Pritchard</p> <p>Abertawe / Swansea Vicky Thomas Hilary Evans Carmel Reynolds</p> <p>Torfaen Vicky Thomas</p> <p>Bro Morgannwg / Vale of Glamorgan Vicky Thomas</p> <p>Wrecsam / Wrexham Libby Jones Tania ap Sion</p> <p>Sylwedyddion / Observers Leslie Francis (Canolfan y Santes Fair / St Mary's Centre) Tudor Thomas (CBAC / WJEC) Ben Wigley (MAGC / REMW) Geraint Hopkins (Cytûn)</p>
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Minutes of the Wales Association of SACRE meeting, County Hall, Ceredigion, 30 March 2012

1. Introduction and welcome: Cllr Catherine Hughes from Ceredigion County Council welcomed members to Ceredigion and introduced pupils from two schools who had prepared presentations for the meeting. The Chair thanked the two schools for their enjoyable and thought-provoking presentations.

2. Quiet reflection: The Chair led the reflection, which focused on the importance of not judging people on the way they look.

3. Apologies: Chris Abbas, Susan Allan, Mark Brown, Susan Cave, Gavin Craigen, Rameez Delpak, Michael Gray, Bethan James, Jen Malcolm, Denize Morris, Janet Neilson, Brian Rogers, John Rogers, Nigel Steele-Mortimore, Dafydd Treharne, Helen Gibbon.

4. Minutes of the last meeting: With a correction to page 1 for attendance, Meinir Wynne Loader, the minutes were accepted as a correct record of the meeting.

5. Matters arising: Page 2, point 4: KS3 Moderation. TaS highlighted key points from the response from Leighton Andrews about KS3 Moderation. It was emphasised that it was not possible to extend the time for KS3 Moderation in RE. However, there were plans for a Welsh Government review of all subjects, including RE, in the near future. Concern was raised by some members about teachers coping with the pressure of preparing their portfolios. Mary Parry echoed the concern, but pointed out that nothing further could be done because the deadline for the portfolios was 30 March. Paula Webber (Blaenau Gwent) expressed concern that when teachers level work, they normally use a 'best fit' approach, which is different to the requirements of the moderation process. The moderation process has also taken longer than has been anticipated by the moderation team. Joyce Howells (Carmarthenshire) expressed concern that time had not been given to individual staff or departments to complete the task and it is this that had largely contributed to the difficulties. Phil Lord (Flintshire) spoke about how the process had been largely positive in opening up a discussion about what is 'good' RE. Carys Pritchard spoke of the importance of Local SACREs and the support that they give to schools following the moderation outcomes. Concerns were also raised about how moderators would cope with the volume of applications that would be submitted. Phil Lord explained that WJEC were aware of the amount of applications and have arranged for an adequate number of moderators to cope with demand. Gill Vaisey and Vicky Thomas raised the concern of support for schools that do not 'pass'. Suggestions were given of 'up-skilling' those teachers/departments in the same way that some of the moderators have been 'up-skilled' in order to moderate other schools effectively.

The Chair proposed that this issue be referred to the WASACRE Executive Committee and NAPfRE for further discussion. Gill Vaisey said that NAPfRE were currently looking at the level descriptors. Tania ap Sion said that WASACRE would work with NAPfRE on the issue of teacher support following the KS3 Moderation process. Rheinallt Thomas (Anglesey) raised the point that it would be helpful for WASACRE to ask Gavin Craigen (Chief moderator) to deliver a presentation of the moderation results at a future WASACRE meeting. Meinir Wynne Loader (Carmarthenshire) spoke from a teacher perspective and expressed concern about the

stress incurred as a result of the process and associated lack of confidence and low morale. This was echoed by Joyce Howells (Ceredigion).

Page 3, point 6: the issue of representation on SACREs, with reference to the British Humanist Association correspondence. A response from the Welsh Government to WASACRE had been received; the WG was unable to advise WASACRE on this issue, but pointed to the existing legislation relating to the composition of SACREs. Tania ap Sion said that there had been no changes to current legislation, which stated clearly that Committee A was for representatives from religious faith communities; however, a representative of the BHA could be co-opted to local SACREs if this were considered appropriate.

Rheinallt Thomas spoke about the web-based collective worship petition on the Welsh Government website and asked whether all SACREs were aware of it. Tania ap Sion confirmed that all SACREs had been alerted to the petition supporting collective worship and to its context (that is, as a response to a petition placed on the site by a representative of the British Humanist Association supporting a review of the current legal requirements for collective worship).

6. Collective worship document: The Chair explained the rationale behind the creation of the doc and thanked Tania ap Sion for her work in producing it. TaS introduced the draft copy of the document and explained its importance. The document, when completed, would be circulated to all SACREs for distribution to all schools. Members spoke in support of collective worship. Carys Pritchard thanked everyone concerned in the creation of this document, including the case studies and resources that will be available on WASACRE website.

The Chair emphasised that it was a draft document but would be circulated soon to SACREs.

Ben Wigley (REMW) emphasised the need for this document being in the public domain as soon as possible, with or without the case studies and other resources. He also asked for the document to be sent to the Heads of schools, as it is their responsibility. The Chair added that it should also be sent to each school's Chair of Governors, who also carries responsibility. Vicky Thomas proposed that a copy is sent to Estyn, so that they are aware of what guidance is being given to schools. Gill Vaisey and Phil Lord emphasised the need to get the case studies available as soon as possible so that those teachers who will be working on Collective Worship over the summer will have access to them. Tania ap Sion said that the document could be put on the WASACRE website as soon as it is available. Mary Parry suggested that the document be placed on the website immediately and with case studies being added as and when completed. There were no objections to this proposal.

Related to collective worship, Rheinallt Thomas raised a concern that Estyn inspectors may be interpreting the standards and requirements for collective worship differently and this had an impact on individual schools.

7. REsilience: Tania ap Sion reminded members that it had been agreed that a summarised version of the full REsilience report from a Welsh perspective would be created. This had been done and sent to Leighton Andrews (copies of the report were included in the papers for the meeting). The Minister has thanked WASACRE for the report and recognised the success and positive outcomes from the REsilience project in Wales. The next step would be to send the summary of the report to all SACREs. Members supported this. Mary Parry said that all schools in Wales would benefit from access to the REsilience project materials and not just the 40 schools who were

involved in the process in Wales. Tania ap Sion responded by explaining that discussions were taking place in the RE Council concerning how to make these resources available. From a Welsh perspective, there were issues concerning how the resources would be updated and remain relevant to Wales and Welsh schools. As a Board member of the RE Council, Tania ap Sion would keep members up-to-date and that this was an area which would need further discussion in WASACRE and NAPfRE.

Questions were asked about how many Welsh-medium schools were involved and when the evaluation feedback would be shared. Tania ap Sion said that Welsh medium schools were involved, but could not give an exact figure without checking. There had been an attempt to retrieve evaluation forms from participating schools and more work was being done to retrieve more evaluation forms.

8. NAPfRE presentation: Changes to the GCSE RE Specification (Tudor

Thomas: TT thanked WASACRE for inviting him to give the presentation and members were given a hand out of the PowerPoint presentation. Members were informed about the changes relating to the marking of spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as changes to assessment.

The Chair thanked TT for his presentation. Paula Webber raised the issue of pupils with dyslexia being penalised for their disability. Tudor responded, saying he was aware of this and understood the concern, but explained that under the current guidelines the WJEC would not be allowed to make special arrangements for pupils with dyslexia.

Mary Parry raised a concern about the difficulties accessing examination data this year. She emphasised that one of the SACRE's responsibilities is to monitor standards in examinations. The data is needed to provide a full and accurate analysis. Carys Pritchard echoed this concern and emphasised the need to compare standards in similar schools across the country and that this included the comparative data for boys and girls. Rheinallt Thomas asked for a letter to be sent to the Welsh government about this and the problems it has caused. Carys Pritchard and Mary Parry propose the letter is sent from WASACRE on behalf of the SACREs. This was agreed by members. The Chair emphasised that individual SACREs could still write to Leighton Andrews on this issue themselves. Tudor Thomas responded that the contract was now not with WJEC, but a company in Scotland. He will take this back to WJEC and ask how this could be rectified.

9. RE Council report: Tania ap Sion referred to the WASACRE Executive meeting where it was proposed that there should be a reintroduction of the RE Council report at WASACRE meetings including items which are of relevance to Wales. This will now be a regular item on the WASACRE agenda.

REQM (RE Quality Mark): Tania ap Sion explained the purpose of the Quality Mark. It is an accreditation system, which recognises good practice in religious education in schools. Schools which gain the mark will be expected to share good practice with other schools, to support good quality provision of RE. The REQM is being developed in England this summer and autumn. WASACRE has been asked if Wales would be interested in being part of this initiative. Interest was shown by members and it was agreed that this should be explored further at the next WASACRE Executive meeting.

10. NAPfRE Presentation: Learning outside the classroom (Phil Lord, Debbie Humphreys, Owen Edwards) : The presentation was concerned with a collaborative project comprising Bangor Cathedral, CYNNAL, Conwy Local Authority and the St Mary's Centre. The project set out to explore the impact of a cathedral activity day about Advent and Christmas on participating primary school children from seventeen local primary schools. An evaluation of the impact of the experience and a research report from St Mary's Centre discussed the impact in detail. Philip Lord (Conwy LA) introduced and described the project. Tania ap Sion (St Mary's Centre) presented the research findings of the project on behalf of Owen Edwards. Debbie Humphreys (Cynnal) spoke about curriculum support material created by Cynnal for 'What is the meaning of Christmas' which complements the work which had been done in Bangor Cathedral. This support material is available on Cynnal website. They were thanked for sharing this project and the resources with members. The Chair emphasised the value of church buildings for educational purposes and the wealth of resources they hold.

11. Correspondence: Most of the correspondence received had been dealt with under other agenda items. Correspondence had also been received from Jim Stewart, who had been responsible for putting the petition on the Welsh Government website.

12. Report from the Exec committee held on 27 February 2012, Cardiff : The Chair went through the report and no points were discussed further.

13. Showcase RE resources Phil Lord drew members attention to a useful educational Facebook called Edmondo (similar to Moodle) where teachers could create a Facebook style page for students to access, with links to other relevant web pages, for example, WJEC etc.

14. A.O.B. There was no other business.

15. Date of next meeting: 26 June 2012, Llandudno Junction Business Centre. (this is in walking distance from the railway station). However, if anyone requires transportation from the station, please let the Secretary know so that arrangements can be made.

The Chair concluded the meeting by thanking Cllr Catherine Hughes for her welcome, the schools and colleagues who gave presentations, Denfer Morgan (Clerk to SACRE), the catering staff, Ceredigion Council and staff for their hospitality.