



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) - 2ND OCTOBER 2012

SUBJECT: THE WASACRE MEETING HELD ON THE 26TH JUNE 2012 IN CONWY

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform SACRE of the discussions and deliberations of WASACRE

2. REPORT

2.1 Introduction and Welcome

Members were welcomed to Conwy by Geraint James, Director of Education. Pupils of Ysgol Maelgwyn sang a number of songs and the Chair of WASACRE Rev Canon Edward Evans presented them with the book *Puddles Lends a Paw* written by Gill Vaisey. A presentation was received by the Head of RE, Mr Chris Noon, of Ysgol Emrys ap Iwan on the theme of the Olympic Values 2012. The department had worked in a cross curricular way with the Music and Drama departments to produce a sketch based on the modern day parable of the Good Samaritan and to demonstrate modern day examples of the Olympic Values such as excellence, determination, courage, respect, equality etc.

A moment of reflection took place. Rev Canon Edward Evans, Chair of WASACRE told a story about the two seas in Palestine – the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea- which illustrated the point that one sea gives of itself and is vibrant and the other does not and is dead - just as people of the world can be one kind or another.

2.2 Matters Arising

- **Key Stage 3 moderation:** This has been discussed by the Executive committee and it was agreed that WASACRE will work with NAPfRE to identify the type of support that can be offered to schools post moderation. Gavin Craigen, Chief Moderator, will be asked to present at the Autumn meeting of WASACRE at Merthyr Tydfil.
- **WG examination data:** RCT SACRE had corresponded with WG on this issue and the response was a link to the WG website. Member SACREs were asked to check the link to see if the information provided is sufficient and if not to inform WASACRE. NAPfRE have agreed to look at the site and if further information is needed will ask the WG link personnel to provide additional information. RT commented that WG is asking for certain data in SACRE Annual Reports yet not providing the data for SACREs to report upon.
- **REC report and RE Quality Mark.** Members were informed that this is an initiative going forward in England. It had been discussed at NAPfRE and it was recommended by NAPfRE to send a member of NAPfRE (Phil Lord) to the free training being offered to see if it has relevance to a Welsh context and address the three RE skills in Wales. WASACRE accepted the recommendation.

2.3. **Collective Worship Document** (agenda item 6)

A new updated version is now available for discussion. It has been translated and checked by Rheinallt Thomas. Members mentioned that some SACREs had discussed the distinction between corporate and collective worship and asked that a footnote be inserted into the document highlighting the distinction. Subject to this amendment the document was accepted by WASACRE. The final version will be put on the WASACRE website and electronic copies are to be sent to all SACREs in Wales and to Estyn. Case studies to accompany the document will be placed on the website. Mary Parry asked that the document not be sent to Estyn until the case studies are available because they have their own guidance but the case studies will provide an added dimension. LAs will be responsible for ensuring that all schools receive a copy of the guidance.

Rheinallt Thomas informed members that correspondence has taken place with Estyn about variation in the way that inspection teams make judgements on collective worship. Estyn have said that it will be left to inspection teams to decide what judgement will be made and the appropriate follow up. Estyn's expectation is that schools will identify any issues through their self evaluation. RT expressed the view that this could result in ambiguity in the way different teams operate and evaluate. Mary Parry commented that there is very little comment in inspection reports on CW and even when statutory requirements are not being met little is done as follow up. This was endorsed by Gill Vaisey who commented that in one secondary school collective worship was not meeting statutory requirements in the last three inspection cycles. Rheinallt Thomas commented that there had not yet been a test case where a school was deliberately flouting the law. The WG states it is a matter for the LA and their legal department. Comment was made that on occasions the LA profiling of schools is at odds with Estyn judgements. Members expressed the hope that things will improve once all teams become HMI teams.

2.4 **Survey Report: SACREs and the Local Community** (agenda item 7)

A presentation was received from Tania ap Sion on the WASACRE survey of all SACREs in Wales. There was an excellent response with 21 out of 22 SACREs responding. SACREs had been asked to comment on their representation on the committee and also about their relations with Christian and other faith groups or interfaith groups in their local community. The main message of the report and the statistical evidence was highlighted and comment was made on the recommendations made to SACREs and to WASACRE. Members were asked to bring this survey report to the attention of their SACREs for discussion at their next meeting. WASACRE will send an electronic copy of the report to all SACREs and a copy will be placed on the WASACRE website.

Discussion about membership of SACREs ensued. Some members asked whether there was any intention to update the guidance *So You're Joining your Local SACRE* which is helpful for new members. RT commented that the guidance had been updated since it was first written and John Mitson, Treasurer informed members that he has spare copies of the guidance for any interested parties.

2.5 **NAPfRE Presentation: Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity** (agenda item 8)

A presentation was received from Leslie J Francis and Tania ap Sion on the research conducted by the University of Warwick and the St Mary's Centre. This was a survey, linked to the work of Robert Jackson at Warwick University, of the four nations plus London. The survey examined the religious beliefs and attitudes of Year 9 and Year 10 pupils. The report highlights the main influences on what shapes the beliefs and attitudes of young people. It also examines young pupils views on the teaching of RE in schools, their respect for religions and their attitude towards religious plurality.

TaS presented some information and statistical data to answer the question *What is religion like in Wales?* Using census data it was noted that after Christianity the largest religion in

Wales is Islam with the heaviest concentration of the Muslim population in the cities of Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Wrexham. Members thanked Professor Leslie Francis and TaS for the very informative presentation and look forward to the final report being published.

2.6 **RE Council Report** (agenda item 9)

A feedback report was received from TaS who had attended the newly formed, House of Commons All party Parliamentary Group on RE. The report highlighted the positive public support for RE in schools. The report was received.

2.7 **Correspondence** (agenda item 10)

No correspondence beyond what has already been dealt with in the meeting. Mention was made of the overwhelming support for the retention of collective worship in schools as shown by the WG 'e' petition. Over 4,000 signatures have been received making this the highest number ever signed up to an epetition. This has prompted a response from the WG that it has no intention to change the legislation in regard to collective worship in schools.

2.8 **Report from the WASACRE Executive Committee** (agenda item 11)

The Executive Committee Report was received. GV asked if there was a publication date for the Foundation Phase Guidance from WG. TaS responded that they have written to WG but no date given yet.

2.9 **Showcase of Resources** (agenda item 12)

Books @ Press: Gill Vaisey offered a substantial discount on her books. Welsh medium books, in particular are not selling well and she offered to donate some books as prizes for LA/schools that may be offering competitions in RE. New books include Puddles and the Christening Splash and Puddles and the St Francis Play will be available soon.

REMW: Rheinallt Thomas referred to the RE Ideas materials available through REMW. Copies of this material are available for subscribing authorities and can be bought by non-subscribing LAs or schools for £1 per copy. Welsh language collective worship leaflets were distributed through SACRE representatives. A plea was made for suggestions for materials that REMW can publish with all suggestions to be forwarded to REMW.

2.10 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on November 23rd at Merthyr Tydfil.

2.11 **THE WASACRE MEETING HELD ON JUNE 26TH 2012 IN CONWY - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

2.12 **Minutes**

Accepted as an accurate record

2.13 **Matters Arising**

None

2.14 **WASACRE report 2011-12**

The WASACRE report for 2011-12 was approved for circulation to all SACREs.

2.15 **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Statements of Accounts for 2011 – 2012 was presented. It was agreed that the annual subscription per SACRE for membership of WASACRE, during the 2012 / 2013 financial year, would be set at £408, which represents an uplift of 2% on the 2011-12 subscription (£400). Comment was made that it is important to keep a healthy balance sheet because there is an intention to hold a Conference in Summer 2013 with the Minister for Education in attendance. John Mitson was reinstated as Treasurer of the Association.

2.16 **WASACRE OFFICERS**

New officers were announced:

- Libby Jones (Wrexham SACRE) current Vice Secretary will take over the role of Secretary in replacement of Tania ap Sion.
- Rheinallt Thomas (Anglesey SACRE) and Phil Lord (Denbighshire SACRE) were elected to the executive committee.

2.17 **Date of next meeting:** November 23rd 2012 at Merthyr Tydfil

2.18 **Please Note:**

Attendance at this WASACRE meeting was very poor and members were asked to return to their SACREs and raise the issue of attendance with them. It is important that member SACREs are represented at WASACRE meetings. The WASACRE Executive agreed to look at the attendance issue and suggest a way forward.

3. **LINKS TO STRATEGY**

3.1 The report links to SACRE's duty to monitor and develop the provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship and the CCBC Strategic Equality Plan 2012.

4. **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 This report is for information purposes only, so the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment process has not been applied, however Religion and Belief is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and locally is covered by section 6 (xi) of the CCBC Strategic Equality Plan 2012.

5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications attached to this report.

6. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no personnel implications attached to this report.

7. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 That SACRE note the discussions and deliberations of WASACRE.

Author: Vicky Thomas (RE Consultant to SACRE)
Consultees: Keri Cole (Manager, Education, Lifelong Learning and Inclusion)