



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT CWMCARN HIGH SCHOOL, CWMCARN
ON TUESDAY 2ND OCTOBER 2012 AT 2:00PM**

PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

D.G. Carter.

Representing Teaching Organisations:

Mrs Nicola Boardman (NUT)

Representing Religious Organisations:

Mrs Enfys Hawthorn (United Reform Church) and Mrs Janet Jones (Church in Wales)

Together with:

V. Thomas (RE Consultant), K. Cole (Manager Learning, Education and Inclusion) and E. Sullivan (Committee Services Officer).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors W. David, Mrs G.D. Oliver and Mrs M.E. Sargent and teacher representatives Miss H. Bartley (ATL), Ms B. Davies (UCAC), Mrs Helen Marsh (ASCL), Mrs C. Thompson (NAHT) and Mrs D. Williams (NASUWT).

WELCOME AND PRESENTATION BY THE RE DEPARTMENT, CWMCARN HIGH SCHOOL

The Head of the RE Department, Mrs Lisa Jones welcomed SACRE to Cwmcarn High School and gave a presentation on the progress made at the school at both GCSE and A Level.

Mrs Jones advised SACRE of the improvements made in the delivery of the subject over the last ten years, including changes to the curriculum that made GCSE RE a full cohort entry course and its recent introduction as an A Level subject encompassing Studies in Ethics, Philosophy of Religion and Religion and Human Experience.

Members were pleased to note the developments within the Department and the improvements noted in all the year groups as well as at GCSE and A Level and were advised that in the past four years 65% of those entered at GCSE achieved grades A-C.

Mrs Jones confirmed that the Department was now looking at literacy within RE and how to improve skills by concentrating on oracy and writing. Members noted the different methods used including text conversion, bias writing, group work and role-play and the results were clearly evidenced in the standard of the work being produced by pupils. Examples of written work by year 7 pupils were circulated for Members to view and they were pleased to see some brilliant pieces of work and noted that teachers comments and marking criteria was included on each piece, further aiding pupils with their development within the subject. Year 9 work examples were then shown and the use of level descriptors and the assessment process was defined. Members were pleased to note the different skills evidenced in the work.

Clarification was sought as to whether such good practice was being shared with other departments. Mrs Jones confirmed that she had been given this opportunity, most recently with the Science department.

SACRE congratulated Mrs Jones and her department on the excellent progress made and were appreciative of all the hard work and determination that had obviously gone into all the developments noted today.

The Chair thanked Mrs Jones for her presentation and for the warm welcome provided by Cwmcam High School. Particular reference was made to the excellent refreshments provided by the Canteen Staff and Members requested their special thanks be fed back to them.

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

The Chair opened proceedings with a poem titled 'Everyone Needs Someone' by Helen Steiner-Rice.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Caerphilly SACRE meeting held on 21st June 2012 (minute nos. 1-15, on page nos. 1-5), be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Minute No. 6 - page 3 - Mrs Vicky Thomas, RE Consultant to SACRE confirmed that the constitution was in the process of being updated and would be brought back to the next meeting for Members consideration and approval

Minute No. 7 - page 3 - Mrs Thomas confirmed that the Supplementary Guidance on Collective Worship had been circulated to all schools and the Action Plan from Heolddu Comprehensive School had been received and its actions completed.

Minute No. 14 - page 5 - Mrs Thomas confirmed that Rheinallt A. Thomas (Anglesey) and Phil Lord (Denbighshire) had been elected as Executive Members at WASACRE's meeting on the 26th June 2012.

Clarification was sought with regard to Mrs Thomas continuing role with SACRE and Members were advised that this had been secured until the end of March 2013.

4. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2012-2013

Members noted the dates of the forthcoming meetings and discussed the proposed venues for the Summer Term meeting to be held on Monday 10th June 2012.

It was agreed that the clerk to SACRE contact Lieutenant Carlo Di Palma with regard to using the Salvation Army Citadel in Risca as a possible venue for that meeting.

SACRE noted the dates and venues of the forthcoming meetings.

5. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The report updated SACRE on the current position of its Membership.

Members were advised that communication was on going with Mr Geraint Hopkins of Cytun regarding nominations from the Free Churches; unfortunately there had been no responses to date. The clerk to SACRE agreed take the matter forward and would hopefully have some good news by the next meeting.

It was with deep regret that Members received the resignation of Mrs Christine Thompson, NAHT representative to SACRE and noted that as Mrs Thompson would shortly be retiring from her current post she would be unable to continue to represent that association.

Members requested that the clerk to SACRE write to Mrs Thompson to thank her for her many years of service and wish her well in her retirement.

Members requested that the National Association of Head Teachers be contacted and nominations for representation on SACRE be sought. Mrs Keri Cole also agreed to raise this at the next Head Teachers meeting.

The lack of attendance by the representatives of the Roman Catholic Church was also noted and Members requested that Mr Crosse and Mrs Fitzgerald be contacted in this regard. Should it transpire that they no longer wished to sit on SACRE then alternative nominations from the Roman Catholic Church be sought.

SACRE noted its current Membership.

6. JOINING A LOCAL SACRE: FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES (PRESENTATION)

The presentation outlined the composition, main duties and functions of SACRE and its statutory responsibilities on matters relating to Religious Education and Collective Worship.

It was agreed that copies of the presentation and the handbook for SCARE Members in Wales be circulated to all new Members.

SACRE noted the presentation.

7. SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012

The report presented Members with the draft Annual Report for 2011-2012.

Members' attention was drawn to the Executive Summary detailed on page 5 of the report and the progress made by Caerphilly SACRE over the last 12 months was noted. The actions

taken in terms of teaching materials, training for teachers and collective worship were outlined.

Members noted the Development Plan for the academic year 2010-2013. The progress made against Aims 1-4 during 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 was detailed. Members noted that a good balance had been achieved between observations of collective worship in schools and building links with faith communities over the last academic year.

The agreed syllabus and its review process was discussed. Members noted that Advisers in Wales along with members of WASACRE were preparing a question and answer guide to assist teachers with any queries and this could be distributed as an addendum to the current syllabus. All Members agreed that they would not like to see any changes made to the existing syllabus at the present time but the agreed syllabus review and any recommendations will be brought before the committee in the new financial year.

The examination results analysis for 2011 and the analysis of KS3 Teacher Assessment 2010 and 2011 was outlined for Members information and the attendance at INSET days was confirmed.

The distribution and printing of the Annual Report was discussed at length and Members opinion was sought on whether this should now be done electronically, as this would save production, printing and postage costs.

SACRE resolved that its Annual Report should be sent electronically to all the relevant bodies and should be made available on the WASACRE website for any interested parties to download.

SACRE approved the Annual Report 2011-2012.

8. SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010-2013

SACRE noted the Development Plan as detailed within its Annual Report for 2011-2012.

9. SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2012-2015

The development plan detailed the actions required over the next 3 years to ensure that SACRE meets its 4 Aims:

Aim 1. To monitor standards of Religious Education and Religious Studies.

Aim 2. To review the agreed syllabus (as appropriate) and supports its implementation.

Aim 3. To monitor provision and provide support for Collective Worship.

Aim 4. To ensure a more informed SACRE through providing regular updates on local and national issues related to RE and Collective Worship in schools.

Mrs Thomas detailed the schedule, time, costs and outcomes proposed within the Plan and having fully discussed its content SACRE noted the Development Plan for 2012-2015.

10. INSET NEEDS AND PLANS 2012-2013 - ORAL REPORT

Mrs Thomas provided a verbal update on the INSET plans for 2012-2013.

Members were advised there was a degree of uncertainty with regard to training provision for the forthcoming year, previously scheduled through ESIS, its dissolution had left a gap that had not yet been picked up under the new consortium.

It was noted that individual subject training had not yet been considered by the EAS, which would initially be concentrating its efforts on numeracy and literacy and unfortunately the Service did not have individual subject advisors to assist.

Members were advised that Teachers would be able to buy into training provided by the Central South Consortia however there was no specific RE training offered at this point.

SACRE noted the issues relating to specific training for RE and requested that any further developments in this regard be reported at the next meeting.

11. KEY STAGE 3 MODERATION OF TEACHER ASSESSEMENT

The report informed SACRE of the outcomes of the KS3 moderation process.

Members noted the Chief Moderators Report for 2012 and the key messages for schools were outlined. Mrs Thomas confirmed that she had spoken to the moderators about the process and how best to meet its criteria. It was noted that the Chief Moderator would be speaking at next WASACRE meeting and Mrs Thomas confirmed that she would raise the issue of training for moderation with him at that event.

Training opportunities were discussed further and Mrs Cole advised that if Mrs Thomas was able to secure an offer of training from the Chief Moderator the local authority would provide a venue and cover the costs on the proviso that schools release staff to attend.

An improvement on last year's moderation was evident and the report noted that the majority of schools had successfully followed the guidelines. The importance of selecting a sufficient variety of tasks to enable all the characteristics of the level descriptors to be evidenced was emphasised. Fundamental questions were discussed at length as the report had identified the need to ensure that tasks and activities demonstrated that learners were engaging with fundamental questions. Members were advised that fundamental questions were viewed as all encompassing and would not have conclusive answers, such as 'the meaning of life or the origins of the world'. The difficulties in engaging pupils at KS3 in discussions of this nature were discussed further.

Members noted the positive comments within the report and the examples of good practice that had been evidenced.

Having fully considered its content SACRE noted the Chief Moderators Report 2012.

12. MONITORING OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP 2012-2013

The report detailed the use of school self-evaluation as a monitoring tool for Religious Education and Collective Worship.

Schools would be asked to complete the self-evaluation pro forma once during their inspection cycle and an analysis of the outcomes would then be presented to SACRE. The monitoring scheduled for 2012-2014 was outlined and Members noted the first schools to submit forms would be those being inspected during the Spring and Summer 2013.

Members noted that this monitoring would coincide with Estyn's thematic review of standards and provision of RE and advised that SACRE would be informed of the outcomes of this review as soon as the report became available. This information would then be used as a benchmark against which the outcomes of the self-evaluation process would be measured. Mrs Thomas confirmed that she would be meeting with Estyn's Lead Inspector and would ask him whether there was an intention to involve SACRE's in the process and the ways in which they could best support schools.

Mrs Cole agreed to take details of the monitoring process back to the next Head Teachers meeting in order to remind them of the need to complete and submit the forms to the clerk to SACRE.

SACRE noted the report.

13. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY 2013

The report informed SACRE of the themes and educational resources available to support Holocaust Memorial Day 2013.

Holocaust Memorial Day is an annual event that takes place on January 27th, schools are encouraged to participate and provides a framework to explore issues of morality, human reactions, individual experiences and larger questions on the role of governments and democracies.

This year's theme 'Communities Together: Build a Bridge' was defined and Members were advised that free educational resources containing material suitable for primary to post 16 students was available online at www.hmd.org.uk.

Members requested that the clerk to SACRE write to schools reminding them of Holocaust Memorial Day and ask them to commemorate it in some way.

14. WASACRE SURVEY REPORT: SACRE'S AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The report outlined the findings of the WASACRE survey of SACRE's and the Local Community.

Members noted that the response rate to the survey had been 95% and presented the range of SACRE activities that contributed to relevant aspects of community cohesion.

Attention was drawn to the summary of results and the eight main findings were detailed, opinion was sought on the appointment of a working group to feedback to SACRE on the implications of the report. Members agreed that as full and in-depth discussions took place during the scheduled SACRE meetings there would be no need to appoint a working group.

Mrs Thomas agreed that she would write to WASACRE and advise them of this decision.

Members noted their disappointment that it had taken 2½ years for the results to be analysed and presented.

SACRE having fully considered the survey and its results noted the report.

15. THE WASACRE MEETING HELD ON THE 26TH JUNE 2012 IN CONWY

The report informed Members of the discussions and deliberations of WASACRE.

Members were advised that concerns had been raised during the meeting with regard to poor attendance and WASACRE asked that this issue be fed back to individual SACREs and the importance of regular attendance was emphasised.

Members noted the concerns raised and agreed that every effort would be made to improve attendance at the next WASACRE meeting in Merthyr Tydfil.

16. WASACRE - REPRESENTATION AT NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 23RD 2012 AT MERTHYR TYDFIL

Nominations were sought and received for representation at the next meeting of WASACRE to be held on 23rd November 2012 at Merthyr Tydfil.

Councillors D.M. Gray and J. Taylor agreed to attend along with Mrs Vicky Thomas. Ms Nicola Boardman agreed to check with her school and if they agreed to release her she would attend. Mrs Enfys Hawthorne agreed that she would also check her availability and make every effort to attend.

17. CORRESPONDENCE - RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS ISSUE NO. 91

Copies of Religious Education News (Summer 2012, Issue No 91) were distributed to Members.

SACRE noted the correspondence.

The meeting closed at 3.45 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 Wednesday, 12th December 2012, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN