



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT CWMABER INFANTS SCHOOL, ABERTRIDWR
ON THURSDAY 28TH FEBRUARY 2013 AT 1:30 PM**

PRESENT:

Councillor D.M Gray (Chairman)
Councillor J. Taylor (Vice Chairman)

Councillors:

Mrs M.E. Sargent

Representing Teaching Organisations: Mrs B. Davies (UCAC), Miss H. Bartley (ATL) and Miss D. Pascoe

Representing Religious Organisations: Mr M. Western (Cardiff ROC Archdiocesan) and Lieutenant C. D. Palma (Salvation Army)

Together with:

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

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Carter, W. David and Mrs G.D. Oliver, Mrs N. Boardman (NUT) and Mrs H. Marsh (ASCL)

ACT OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND WELCOME BY THE PUPILS OF CWMABER INFANTS SCHOOL

Mrs J. Price (Headteacher) welcomed SACRE Members to Cwmaber Infants School and to their Act of Collective Worship celebrating the story of Maundy Thursday. Members were pleased to see the enthusiastic way the children participated in all the singing and storytelling elements of the assembly.

SACRE requested that a formal letter of thanks be forwarded to Mrs Price to express their appreciation for the warm welcome they received at the school.

CHAIRMAN ADDRESS

Councillor D.M. Gray opened proceedings with a moment of quiet reflection and read from a poem by Helena Steiner Rice entitled 'Spring Awakens What Autumn Puts To Sleep'.

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 the 12th December 2012 (minute nos. 1-10 on page nos. 1-5) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Minute No. 5 - Page 3: Mrs Thomas confirmed that a pro-forma had been circulated to schools offering AS and A Level RE in order to gauge the demand for the subject going forward. Members noted the responses received and were pleased that an upward trend had been evidenced, as this meant that the drop in entries identified during the examination analysis had been a one off dip.

4. SACRE MONITORING THROUGH SELF-EVALUATION

The report informed Members of the outcomes of the review of schools self-evaluation reports for those schools being inspected in the Spring and Summer terms 2013.

Fourteen schools including nine primary schools, three infant schools, one junior school and one secondary school were originally sent the self-evaluation proforma, however two primary schools had subsequently been excluded as the analysis period would have been too late to support them in an inspection. This meant that the total possible number of returns for the inspection period was 12. The review looked at standards and provision of religious education and collective worship and identified areas for developments as well as good features.

In terms of RE, the analysis of the primary schools self-evaluation identified that 82% of those that responded graded standards in religious education as 'good' and all primary schools had fulfilled their syllabus requirements. A good attitude to learning was noted and most pupils showed a knowledge and understanding of the religions they studied. Members were pleased to note that visits to places of worship had been incorporated and that reference was made to the use of the SEAL programme in some schools. The areas for development identified by primary schools expressed similar themes, referencing the need to further develop reflection skills and the spiritual element of RE.

With regard to provision, 82% of those that responded also graded standards as 'good' and Members were pleased to note that RE appeared to be firmly embedded at the core of the curriculum. Areas for developments again noted the need to expand the range of strategies and resources to develop pupil's reflection skills and Mrs Thomas confirmed that SACRE would be able to assist in this area.

The analysis of the secondary school self-evaluation showed that standards at Key Stages 3 and 4 were good. At KS3 the data showed that at L5+ year on year pupils performed better than the LA figures for RE and at L6+ were only slightly below LA figures from the last two

years. Members noted the improved results at KS4 at grades A*-A and A*-C. Increasing the number of pupils achieving L6+ and reducing the number of pupils achieving borderline grades were noted as areas for development.

With regard to provision, the analysis showed that all statutory requirements had been met with RE provided at Key Stages 3-5, furthermore in the school review programme of 2011 all lessons were graded at good or excellent. Areas for development were noted and Members were pleased to see that consideration had been being given to developing links with the local community in order to enhance the sixth form conferences.

In terms of Collective Worship, the analysis of the primary schools self-evaluation identified that 82% of those that responded graded provision and quality as 'good' and 100% of the secondary schools that responded also graded standards as 'good'. Members were pleased to note that most schools planned well for collective worship and achieved a good balance between those that were moral in nature and those that were more religious or spiritual in nature. Areas for development were noted and here 33% of schools mentioned that they needed to ensure that pupils had more time to reflect

The Chair thanked Mrs Thomas for her report and Members questions were welcomed.

Clarification was sought in relation to the 'good' award criteria and its accuracy. Mrs Thomas confirmed that this was based on the Estyn inspection criteria.

SACRE having fully considered its content noted the report.

5. KEY STAGE 3 TRAINING

The report sought to inform SACRE of the forthcoming Key Stage 3 training, designed to improve the understanding of standards and facilitate departments to enhance their internal moderation processes.

Members noted the details of the one-day course and thanked Mrs Cole for agreeing to cover the costs of the venue and WASACRE for funding the costs of the trainer.

6. TEACHING: A NQT PERSPECTIVE BY MISS DANIELLE PASCOE OF NEWBRIDGE SCHOOL

Miss Danielle Pascoe of Newbridge School gave a presentation on her perspective of teaching RE as a newly qualified teacher.

Miss Pascoe shared her inspirations, experiences, and insights from her first year as a teacher as well as her work placements teaching RE at Bedwas and Cwncarn High Schools. Although she was currently teaching English, the skills required in both subjects were interchangeable they required debate, literacy, grammar, listening and communication skills. The use of thinking maps, dictionary banks and drafting work books used during English classes she felt would readily transfer to the teaching of RE and it was this kind of shared good practice and new teaching ideas that made the new teacher perspective a valuable one. Miss Pascoe highlighted the more challenging aspects of being a newly qualified teacher and emphasised the importance of developing good time management skills, keeping calm and being actively involved in school life. Most importantly a newly qualified teacher should not be afraid to admit that they don't know the answer to a pupil's question and come back to them with the correct information later on.

The Chair thanked Miss Pascoe for her presentation and Member's questions were welcomed.

Clarification was sought as to how a newly qualified teacher could best get pupils to engage in the subject. Miss Pascoe found that providing variety within the lesson plan, keeping the teaching fast paced so that pupil interest was maintained and they stayed engaged throughout.

7. WASACRE MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 23RD 2012 AT MERTHYR TYDFIL

The report informed Members of the discussions and deliberations of the WASACRE meeting held on the 23rd November 2012 at Merthyr Tydfil.

Members noted the discussions on the Estyn Thematic Review and Mrs Thomas confirmed that WASACRE had been invited to send a delegation to discuss the review with the Lead Inspector. The review was comprised of 3 Estyn Inspectors and involved a one-day visit to 20 secondary schools and 20 schools completing a questionnaire. The outcomes would then be reported to the Minister in March 2013 and then to WASACRE and a wider audience in the Summer Term.

Members were advised that there would be a change to the way in which the WASACRE meeting papers would be distributed. Due to inconsistencies in the current distribution list, documents would now be sent electronically to SACRE Clerks, who would then forward them onto the individual SACRE members.

SACRE noted the revised distribution process and the discussions and deliberations of WASACRE.

9. WASACRE - REPRESENTATION AT NEXT MEETING ON MARCH 22ND 2013 AT NEWPORT

Nominations were sought with regard to attendance at the next WASACRE meeting on the 22nd of March 2012 at Newport.

Mrs V. Thomas, Mrs E. Hawthorn, Mrs J. Jones, Mr M. Western and Councillor D.M. Gray agreed to attend the meeting.

10. NOMINATION TO THE WASACRE EXECUTIVE

The report advised Members of the current vacancies on the WASACRE Executive and sought nominations to take forward.

Councillor D.M. Gray was nominated to represent Caerphilly SACRE on the WASACRE Executive. Members requested that this nomination be forwarded to the Clerk to WASACRE.

SACRE fully endorsed the nomination of Councillor D.M. Gray to the WASACRE Executive.

11. CORRESPONDENCE - RE NEWS - ISSUE NO. 92 - WINTER 2013

Members were advised that in the future RE News would only be published in an electronic/e format to subscribing authorities. The decision had been taken as result of increased production costs and a new website would be launched in readiness for this year's summer edition. Password access would be granted to contributing Local Authorities and further information with regards to accessing the site would be forwarded in due course.

SACRE noted the correspondence.

The meeting closed at 3.00 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, 10th June 2013, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN