



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT NEWBRIDGE SCHOOL, BRIDGE STREET,
NEWBRIDGE ON MONDAY 20TH MAY 2019 AT 2.00 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillor J. Taylor - Chair
Mrs J. Jones (Church in Wales) - Vice Chair

Councillors:

Mrs T. Parry

Representing Teaching Organisations: Miss H. Bartley (ATL), Ms M. Jones (UCAC),

Representing Religious Organisations: Mr M. Western (Salvation Army)

Together with:

Ms P. Webber (RE Adviser – EAS), Mrs S. Evans (Healthy Schools Practitioner), Miss R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

Also present:

Mr L. Kabza (Senior Participation Officer - CCBC Youth Forum) – part of meeting

Ms S. Fielding (Challenge Adviser – Powys ERW)

1. WELCOME

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance to Newbridge School.

Introductions were made and Caerphilly SACRE gave a warm welcome to Councillor Teresa Parry, who had replaced Councillor Margaret Sargent as a local authority representative on SACRE. Members expressed their thanks to Councillor Sargent for the many years of service she had given to the Committee.

SACRE also welcomed Mr Lee Kabza from the Caerphilly Youth Forum, together with Ms Sian Fielding, who was observing the meeting in her capacity as the new RE Advisor to Powys SACRE.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs E.M Aldworth, Mrs G.D. Oliver, J. Ridgewell and J. Simmonds, together with Mrs T. Lloyd (NAHT), Mrs E. Hawthorn

(United Reformed Church) and Mr P. Warren (CCBC Strategic Lead for School Improvement).

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

4. **MINUTES - 6TH MARCH 2019**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Caerphilly SACRE meeting held on 6th March 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. **ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Minute No. 8 (Curriculum Development Update) - Ms Paula Webber (RE Adviser to SACRE) confirmed that Caerphilly SACRE's response to the White Paper on "Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum Proposals for a new legislative framework" had been submitted to Welsh Government ahead of the closing date of 25th May 2019.

There were no other matters arising.

6. **SACRE MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the report, which summarised the details of the current Caerphilly SACRE membership as of May 2019 and highlighted any vacant positions within the Committee.

Committee A vacancies – it was noted that both Cytun (on behalf of the Free Church Council of Wales) and the Salvation Army are in the process of providing a nomination to fill the vacancy for their organisations, with the Cytun nomination expected at the end of May 2019. The Clerk to SACRE will also contact Wales Humanists and the Interfaith Network to seek nominations for these respective vacancies on Committee A.

Committee B vacancies – it was noted that Ms Laura Strange had recently stepped down from SACRE as a NASUWT teacher representative. SACRE were sorry to learn of the resignation and expressed their thanks to Ms Strange for her contributions to SACRE over the past four years.

SACRE noted the details of the four teacher representative vacancies and discussed the ongoing efforts to fill these places. It was confirmed that the Clerk to SACRE would approach the relevant teaching unions again and ask them to contact their members with a view to filling the vacancies.

Co-opted places – SACRE were reminded that at their Spring Term meeting, Members had agreed to explore the co-option of youth representatives onto the Committee, and had also discussed the logistics around enabling young people to attend SACRE meetings.

Further to these discussions, Mr Lee Kabza (Senior Participation Officer for the Caerphilly Youth Forum) had been invited to the Summer Term meeting of SACRE, to give an overview of the safeguarding procedures carried out by the Youth Service when facilitating visits and activities for its young members.

Mr Kabza explained to SACRE that all Youth Forum representatives and their families are issued with a copy of the Youth Forum handbook which sets out details of the meetings for the year ahead and allows for forward planning by all parties. Mr Kabza also tabled examples of the parental consent forms used by the Caerphilly Youth Service, together with internal department forms which collate essential details (such as transport and responsible Officers) ahead of the visit/activity taking place.

Members discussed the membership and age range of the Youth Forum and the potential for representatives from this group to sit on Caerphilly SACRE, given the safeguarding procedures already in place via the Youth Service. The RE Advisor suggested that having representatives aged 16-18 on SACRE would be the most conducive approach, given the complexity of the material being discussed at SACRE meetings and its relevance to secondary school education. It was noted that Youth Forum representatives have experience of the format for committee meetings, as they regularly attend Scrutiny Committee and Public Service Board meetings.

It was agreed that SACRE would forward details of the two co-opted vacancies to Mr Kabza, so that these can be taken back to the Youth Forum to seek nominations. The Chair offered to attend a future meeting of the Youth Forum to speak to its members about the work of SACRE, and arranged for his contact details to be exchanged with Mr Kabza following the meeting.

Having fully considered its contents, SACRE noted the membership update and the progress made to date in filling the vacancies.

Caerphilly SACRE expressed warm thanks to Mr Kabza for taking the time to attend the meeting and for the information provided. Mr Kabza thanked Members for the invitation and then left the meeting. Miss Bartley left the meeting to accompany him to Reception.

It was agreed that Item 7 (SACRE News Bulletin), Item 9 (Monitoring Provision and Standards – Caerphilly School Inspection Reports) and Item 10 (Correspondence Update) be brought forward on the agenda to allow Miss Bartley to deliver her presentation upon her return to the meeting.

7. SACRE NEWS BULLETIN

Ms Webber gave an update on this item, which is intended to be a termly news bulletin to schools to promote the work of SACRE and will highlight any potential resources or training opportunities relating to Religious Education. Ms Webber explained that she was hoping to circulate this document following the Whitsun break and invited SACRE Members to send her any articles for inclusion.

SACRE noted the details of the update from Ms Webber.

8. MONITORING PROVISION AND STANDARDS – CAERPHILLY SCHOOL INSPECTION REPORTS

The report outlined the main RE findings derived from the Estyn inspection of two Caerphilly primary schools between December 2018 and March 2019. The analysis focused on information in relation to spiritual development, collective worship and any comments made in regards to religious education in the inspection reports of the schools inspected during Spring Term 2019.

It was noted that both schools inspected met statutory requirements in relation to collective worship. The report for the one school made positive comments regarding spiritual

development, and the report for the other school highlighted the good quality of collective worship in place. Estyn made no recommendations with regards to Spiritual Development, Collective Worship or Religious Education.

Ms Webber explained that NAPfRE had raised the matter of spiritual development not being referenced in all inspection reports with Estyn representatives on the committee, and have received assurances that comments would be included in the future.

Members were very pleased with the excellent inspection results and agreed that congratulatory letters be sent out to both schools on behalf of Caerphilly SACRE.

Having considered and discussed the report, SACRE noted the update in respect of Estyn inspection reports for the Spring Term 2019.

9. CORRESPONDENCE UPDATE

Members were updated on items of correspondence circulated on behalf of SACRE. This included an email to all Caerphilly SACRE Members confirming the response to the White Paper "Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum Proposals for a new legislative framework". Information on the draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance had also been circulated to all SACRE Members, together with an invitation to the Baha'i Holy Day event being held in Newport on 9th July 2019.

SACRE noted the details of the correspondence update.

10. PRESENTATION – RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT NEWBRIDGE SCHOOL

Miss Helen Bartley, Head of Religious Studies at Newbridge School, welcomed Members to the school and to the new state of the art, nine-classroom building that had recently been completed.

With the aid of a slideshow presentation, Miss Bartley outlined the RE staff at Newbridge School and the structure of RE lessons at Key Stages 3 and 4. At Key Stage 3 (Years 7 and 8), pupils receive 1 hour of RE study per week. At Key Stage 4 (Years 9 to 11), pupils receive 1 hour of compulsory RE study per fortnight (Short Course), or if this is selected as a Full Course KS4 option, then pupils have 5 hours of lessons per fortnight.

At Key Stage 3, Christianity and Hinduism is studied in Year 7 and Judaism and Islam is studied in Year 8. Miss Bartley outlined the methods of assessment used across KS3, together with the teaching and learning aids used in the study of RE. Miss Bartley then introduced school pupils Charlotte (Year 8) and Tom (Year 9), who were in attendance to give an overview of the key RE areas of study for their year groups.

Charlotte explained that she is currently studying the Holocaust and genocide in line with the themes of "Peace and Conflict" and "Suffering and Evil" across the Year 8 programme of study. Lessons are currently one hour a week and she is intending to choose RE as a KS4 option. Charlotte explained that she enjoys studying RE and particularly enjoys learning about ethics and religion.

Tom explained that he is studying RE as a Key Stage 4 option in Year 9. The curriculum places a focus on religion and ethics, and his group are currently studying GCSE Unit 2 (Relationships). Tom outlined examples of exam preparation used by the department, such as the use of practice exam questions and undertaking relevant activities. He explained that the school offers a wide range of opportunities for its RE learners at KS4, including

educational trips to Krakow, Auschwitz and Birkenau.

Miss Bartley explained that across all year groups, the RE curriculum places significant emphasis on respect and asking challenging questions, with pupils encouraged to think about their learning and question what they can learn about.

SACRE were then provided with an overview of RE at Key Stage 4, which comprises Unit 1 at Compulsory/Short Course and Units 1 and 2 at Full Course. Unit 1 studies Christianity and Judaism and focuses on areas such as moral issues, life and death, and peace and conflict. Unit 2 is taken as the KS4 option class, where pupils look at topics such as relationships and human rights. Preparation for the lengthy examination papers includes the practice of essay questions. The RE department also encourages pupil thinking around the "Iceberg Illusion" which shows how success is the tip of the iceberg (what people see above water) but demonstrates that people don't see what is below the surface (such as hard work, discipline and persistence).

Miss Bartley outlined the next steps for the RE department and Newbridge School, including the appointment of a new headteacher for September 2019, the continuation of a positive learning environment, the introduction of the Successful Futures curriculum and the development of creativity in the classroom. The school is looking to make links with a charity ahead of Interfaith Week in November 2019, and also works with local food banks. The school is also preparing for the Digital Competence Framework and is reviewing the delivery of its Short Course Compulsory Religious Studies programme.

SACRE discussed the presentation from Miss Bartley and in response to a query regarding A Levels, Miss Bartley explained that the school does not have a 6th Form but has connections to tertiary RE Studies at local colleges. In referring to the school's intention to build links with charities, Ms Webber outlined the work of the Interfaith Network in the area and offered to share details of her Interfaith contacts with Miss Bartley.

SACRE noted the details of the presentation and thanked Miss Bartley for the work that had gone into its content. Members were also very pleased to receive the presentations from Charlotte and Tom, and thanked them for their insightful delivery and for taking the time to attend the meeting. The pupils then left the meeting.

11. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT UPDATE AND WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT CURRICULUM FOR WALES

Ms Webber presented the report, which updated SACRE on the progress made in the Humanities AoLE and the draft Curriculum for Wales with a focus on Religious Education.

SACRE were advised that Welsh Government have now produced the draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 and are currently conducting a consultation on its content. All SACREs have been asked to contribute to the consultation and give their views on the draft Curriculum for Wales by the closing date of 19th July 2019.

Ms Webber displayed the website for this consultation on a screen at the meeting, and in drawing SACRE's attention to a number of key areas, she explained that the WG guidance contains information on the structure and components of the Curriculum for Wales, the approach to progression, and how the curriculum must be inclusive for all learners. It also includes information on elements of learning that span the whole curriculum. This is part of Welsh Government's national mission to raise standards, reduce the attainment gap, and deliver an education system that is a source of national pride and public confidence. At the heart of the Curriculum are the four purposes which set out the aspirations for all children and young people by the age of 16.

Religious Education will be placed within the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE). Schools will still be expected to deliver the agreed syllabus. Voluntary aided schools with a religious character will continue to be able to deliver their denomination syllabi and parents/carers of learners attending voluntary controlled schools can continue to request that their child studies the denominational syllabus rather than the locally agreed syllabus if they wish.

A new supporting framework is being developed to provide further detail about the relationship between religious education, the agreed syllabus, and the areas of learning and experience. This is being developed by a group of religious education practitioners (including Ms Webber) curriculum pioneers, academics, and representatives from Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs) and the National Advisory Panel for Religious Education (NAPfRE).

Ms Webber gave a detailed overview of the curriculum proposals and explained that the four purposes of the curriculum will underpin a more holistic way of working and integrated approach across subjects. The curriculum will place an emphasis on a concept-driven approach and content will be decided by schools. The new Humanities curriculum will balance skills, knowledge and authentic learning, and place a new focus on disciplines such as business studies, sustainable business and ecology. RE will be retained as a statutory subject and will incorporate new concepts such as looking at spiritual connections, looking outwards from the world and surroundings, and looking at the meaning of life. Ms Webber explained that it is vital to consider the narrative that sits below the five “What Matters” statements and to view their interconnectivity with other subjects, and it is important to identify the links and interdependencies between the Humanities “What Matters” Statements and the other AoLEs.

Ms Webber referred to the extent of the WG consultation and the areas requiring consideration, and explained that several of her other SACREs had expressed an interest in forming a collaborative working party to produce a collective response on behalf of all SACREs in the SE Wales EAS consortium. This would comprise an all-day workshop to consider the draft Curriculum for Wales and unpick the key elements in detail.

Caerphilly SACRE unanimously agreed that this would be a sensible approach which would avoid duplication of responses across individual SACREs. It was noted that where there are differing views held between SACREs then these would also be recorded in the collaborative response.

Ms Webber confirmed that she would look at suitable dates in early July and circulate the details to her SACREs once confirmed. Members discussed representation at this working party and were of the view that at least one representative from each of the committee groups for Caerphilly SACRE should be in attendance, and that teacher voice would be particularly vital to this workshop. A number of Members indicated that they might be able to attend, and it was confirmed that further details would be circulated once the arrangements have been made.

Having agreed the way forward regarding a response to the draft Curriculum for Wales, SACRE thanked Ms Webber for the update on the new Curriculum for Wales and the RE supporting framework and for the work being carried out in these areas.

12. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2019

SACRE noted the details of the Autumn Term meeting arranged for 23rd October 2019 (2.00pm) at Penallta House Council Offices, Ystrad Mynach. Proposed meeting dates for 2020 will be brought to the Autumn Term meeting of SACRE.

13. FEEDBACK FROM THE WASACRE MEETING IN CARDIFF ON 26TH MARCH 2019

SACRE were updated on the discussions and deliberations of WASACRE at its meeting in Cardiff on 26th March 2019. Amongst other items, WASACRE received a presentation from Nicky Hagendyk at NAPfRE (Chair of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience) who spoke of the challenges in achieving balance across the new approaches, and emphasised experience as being an important aspect of this new curriculum.

At their meeting, WASACRE were also updated on a meeting with Dr Kevin Palmer to discuss the professional learning support needed in light of RE and the new curriculum. They have been invited to produce a document outlining the areas of training required to support the implementation of the new curriculum. NAPfRE will be considering this and presenting a paper to Dr Palmer.

Ms Webber also referred to an attendance query received immediately prior to the start of the WASACRE meeting and reminded Caerphilly SACRE that as per its constitution, WASACRE meetings are not open to members of the public.

Caerphilly SACRE noted the details of the update.

14. WASACRE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

SACRE were informed of the correspondence received from WASACRE in respect of nominations for the Executive Committee and position of Vice Chair.

Caerphilly SACRE considered the five nominations for the three positions on the Executive Committee and the one nomination for the position of Vice Chair on WASACRE.

Having fully considered the pen portraits of the nominated individuals as included in the meeting papers, Caerphilly SACRE fully endorsed the nomination of Rachel Samuel as Vice Chair to the Executive Committee, and unanimously agreed that Mark Prevett, Andrew Jones and Mathew Maidment be put forward as Caerphilly SACRE's preferred nominations to the WASACRE Executive Committee at the meeting on 28th June 2019.

15. REPRESENTATION AT THE FORTHCOMING WASACRE MEETING IN COLWYN BAY, CONWY, ON 28TH JUNE 2019

Caerphilly SACRE noted the date of the next WASACRE meeting in Conwy on 28th June 2019. The Clerk to SACRE will email all SACRE Members nearer the date to seek nominations for attendance and will circulate the agenda papers when received.

The Chair thanked Members for their attendance and contributions and expressed his thanks to Newbridge School for hosting the meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.29 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 23rd October 2019, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR