

## **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)**

Minutes of a meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), held in the Council Chamber, Russell House, Rhyl on Tuesday 4th July 2000 at 10.00 a.m.

### **PRESENT**

#### **Representing Denbighshire County Council**

Councillors S. Drew, K.N. Hawkins, M.M. Jones, E.A. Owens, T.M. Parry, K.P. Stevens and R.LI. Williams.

#### **Representing Religious Denominations**

Miss H. Ellis, Ms.S. Harris (Chair), Mrs. S Flavell, Ms. J. Gibson, Mr. J Kirkham, Mrs. M. Colbert.

#### **Representing Denbighshire Teachers' Joint Negotiating Committee**

Mrs. P. Bryer.

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Inspector/Adviser R.E., Head of Curricular Services and Administration Officer (Mrs. J.V. Pring).

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE WERE RECEIVED FROM**

Mrs. M. Evans, Mrs. C. Thomas, R. Brocklehurst, Councillor D. Jones and Sister Elizabeth.

#### **192. WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed Councillor K.P Stevens to his first meeting of the Denbighshire SACRE and also Ieuan Lloyd Roberts, Denbighshire's Head of Curricular Services who was attending in place of the Director of Education.

#### **193. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2000, as approved by County Council on 4th April 2000, were submitted.

***RESOLVED*** that the minutes be received.

#### **194. WASACRE**

The Chair informed the Panel that she had attended her first meeting of WASACRE on 17th March 2000, at Carmarthen. She was particularly impressed by two presentations, one on 'Key Skills and Religious Education' for which an excellent booklet had been produced, and the other on the use of artefacts in Religious Education.

The Chair also referred to the approval of the Collective Worship working group's recommendations but she was not aware of any documents for collective worship having been published by ACCAC. The Panel concurred with her view that none had been published.

Concern had been expressed at the meeting that the new subject criteria for RE and RS had been introduced very hastily. The changes would overlap with major amendments to A and AS level syllabuses already in the pipeline. In view of this, and the fact that there had been no consultation, a decision had been taken to protest strongly to the appropriate bodies.

***RESOLVED*** that the report be received.

**195. DENBIGHSHIRE MILLENNIUM SERVICES**

The Inspector/Adviser RE reported that the services held at St Asaph Cathedral had been very successful with the service for primary children being particularly well attended. There had been an excellent response with many people expressing their enjoyment of a very memorable occasion.

Mrs S Flavell informed the Panel that she had been privileged to be present at one of the services and referred to the warm welcome and excellent organisation. She expressed her appreciation for all the hard work put in by everyone involved.

At this point the Chair presented a gift to the Inspector/Adviser RE in appreciation for his role in organising the services. Mr Craigen thanked members of the Panel for their kindness and said that the gift was a lovely addition to what had been a very rewarding and enjoyable experience.

The Inspector/Adviser RE had brought with him to the meeting the collection of pupils' prayers and hopes for the Millennium which, it had been agreed, would be published in booklet form. In view of the number of items, he suggested that Panel members help to choose an appropriate selection for reproduction. It was intended to display the booklet at the Cathedral, hopefully by the end of the year. He asked for the final selections to be forwarded to him as soon as possible so that publication could be processed for the Autumn term.

***RESOLVED** that members of the Panel assist with the selection of pupils' Millennium hopes and prayers for inclusion in a published document.*

**196. ANALYSIS OF INSPECTION REPORTS**

The Inspector/Adviser RE presented a report, previously circulated, which informed members of the positive and negative comments concerning the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and religious education at two schools inspected between 4th October and 23rd November 1999.

The Inspector/Adviser RE expressed surprise that one of the schools had been criticised for a lack of multicultural experience as the scheme of work included what was needed in the syllabus.

Councillor Parry referred to the difficulties some of the smaller schools had regarding expertise in certain areas.

***RESOLVED** that the Inspector/Adviser's report be accepted.*

**197. NEW SPECIFICATIONS IN AS AND ADVANCED RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

The Inspector/Adviser RE presented a report, previously circulated, to inform members of the panel of changes in specifications which would have an impact on resources and timetabling. Details of the new criteria were contained in an appendix to the report and the Inspector/Adviser RE explained the changes in respect of the qualifications and assessments.

It was considered that the new modules would offer extensive scope for contributing to an understanding of moral, ethical, social and cultural issues and would enable candidates to demonstrate their abilities in fulfilling the aspects of the various key skills.

The Inspector/Adviser RE informed the Panel that the specification for the new syllabus and the full teachers' guide was now available, in bi-lingual format.

Councillor Parry and the Head of Curricular Services referred to the changes taking place within the Authority at Director level. A new Corporate Director for Lifelong Learning was shortly to be appointed whose remit would be widened to incorporate the educational needs from pre-school age through to adulthood.

***RESOLVED** that the information provided in the Inspector/Adviser's report be noted.*

**198. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

The Inspector/Adviser RE presented a report, previously circulated, on the proposed development of GCSE Religious Studies to meet the criteria published for the Government by ACCAC and ASQ. He explained that, after many years of trying to establish an understanding of Religious Education and exam work, the criteria was now being merged.

ACCAC and ASQ had been persuaded to introduce a short GCSE course in Religious Education and details of the study units were contained in the report. The proposal would present some decisions for schools in relation to the specifications to be offered and there would be implications such as costs, resources and staffing. There would also be a possible effect on AS/Advanced Level take-up.

There was also a need for Panel members to consider what advice and support should be given to schools. When a final response from ACCAC was known, a decision would need to be taken by the Panel, possibly at the next meeting.

In response to questions from the Panel, the Inspector/Adviser RE confirmed that:-

- (i) introduction of the new courses was expected to be in 2001, with examinations in 2003, and
- (ii) it may be possible to supplement one course with the other, although certain restrictions would need to be applied, such as using the same centre and Examining Board.

***RESOLVED*** that the report be received and that consideration of advice to schools be discussed at a future meeting of the Panel when the final response from ACCAC was available.

**199. WASACRE - NEXT MEETING**

The Chair reported that she would be attending the next meeting of WASACRE at Bridgend on 13th July. Unfortunately, due to other commitments, neither the vice-chair or the Inspector/Adviser RE would be able to be present. It was suggested that, if any member of the Panel was available on that date and wished to represent Denbighshire SACRE, they would be welcome to attend. In response to the Chair's request for guidance as to how the Panel wished her to proceed in the voting of a new Executive Committee, Councillor Hawkins commented that Mr C. Tucker was known to him and, in his view, was considered worthy of support for election to the Committee.

***RESOLVED ACCORDINGLY.***

**200. TRAINING/INSET FOR SACRE MEMBERS**

Mrs. Flavell referred to the training for SACRE members which was discussed at the last meeting. The Inspector/Adviser RE said that he was hoping that arrangements would be in place in time for the next meeting in October. He also confirmed that the bilingual booklet produced by the Churches Joint Education Policy Committee was now available.

***RESOLVED*** that the position regarding training be noted.

The meeting ended at 11.20 a.m.

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