

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

Minutes of a meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held at Ysgol Brynhyfryd, Ruthin on Monday, 29th June, 2015 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Representing Denbighshire County Council

Councillors Arwel Roberts (Vice Chair) and Joe Welsh.

Representing Religious Denominations

Reverend M. Evans-Jones (Chair), Mr S. Cameron, Reverend B.H. Jones and Ms M. Ludenbach.

Co-opted Members

Mr G. Craigen.

ALSO PRESENT

Challenge Advisor for GwE (PL), Helen Jones (Ysgol Bryn Collen) and Committee Administrator (CIW).

SILENT REFLECTION

The meeting began with a few minutes silent reflection. The Chair invited Members of SACRE to reflect on recent tragic incidents which had recently taken place across the World.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dewi Owens, Ann Davies and Mr Dominic Oakes.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Members declared any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at the meeting.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No items were raised which in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) meeting held on the 13th February, 2015 (previously circulated) were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 13th February, 2015 be received and approved as a correct record.

5 ANALYSIS OF INSPECTION REPORTS

The Challenge Advisor GwE (CA) submitted a report (previously circulated) analysing the results of the recent Estyn inspections in terms of RE provision and collective worship in four schools between November, 2014 and January, 2015. Inspections had been carried out at Ysgol Emmanuel; Ysgol Frongoch and Ysgol Gynradd, Pentrecelyn.

The SL provided Members with a brief resume of the findings relating to each school and the positive comments and outcomes were noted by Members. The SL made particular reference to the following:-

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Wellbeing:-

- Most pupils at Ysgol Frongoch had taken part in a wide range of community activities, and had supported local and national charities well.
- Ysgol Pentrecelyn had supported charities, locally and abroad, which had a positive effect on pupils' awareness of other people's needs.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Learning experiences:-

- All classes at Ysgol Emmanuel had worthwhile links to Countries in Europe and the wider world. These highly beneficial international links supported pupils well to develop their understanding of the lives of people in different countries.
- Ysgol Frongoch had successfully broadens pupils' horizons and knowledge of the wider world. Pupils had developed a worthwhile understanding of their role as global citizens.
- Education for sustainable development and global citizenship had been promoted through curriculum work, the activity of the school council and the eco council at Ysgol Pentrecelyn.

Care, support and guidance:-

- Staff provide well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through daily acts of collective worship and an interesting range of curriculum activities at Ysgol Emmanuel, and there were very good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs, personal qualities and skills.
- At Ysgol Frongoch Learning experiences promoted pupils' personal development well, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Ysgol Pentrecelyn promoted pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Teachers enabled pupils to take a prominent role in morning assemblies, and nearly all respond positively to these opportunities.

Learning Environment:-

- There had been a clear emphasis on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity and creating an ethos that fosters care and tolerance at Ysgol Frongoch.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Leadership:-

Partnership working:-

- Ysgol Frongoch had worthwhile links with the wider community which had a positive influence on pupils' learning experiences and wellbeing, such as visits which had enhanced pupils' understanding of bible stories.
- Ysgol Pentrecelyn was an important part of the community which had a strong relationship with the school. As well as holding termly services in the church and chapel the school welcomed the community to join them on occasions such as Christmas dinners.

The CA explained that there had been a number of examples where Schools and Faith Groups had worked together and examples were provided.

RESOLVED - that the report be received and its contents noted.

6 DONALDSON REVIEW

The CA explained that curriculum review conducted by Professor Donaldson. The report 'Successful Futures: Independent Review of the Curriculum and assessment in Wales' outlined the findings and recommendations.

The CA explained that the presentation had been shared with Flintshire and Conwy SACRE's respectively. A response had been received from a faith representative in the Flintshire SACRE which had highlighted concerns regarding the immensity of the document, and the value of the presentation in summarising the requirements of the Review.

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation the following points were highlighted by the CA. He elaborated on the relevant key areas and issues within the document which could impact on the delivery of Religious Education:-

- Questions for the great debate and the content of the questionnaire.
- Purpose of the curriculum.
- Areas of learning and experience – 6 areas outlined by the CA.
- Pedagogical Principles – 9 points highlighted by the CA.
- Cross curriculum.

- Teachers having a strong role in shaping the curriculum.

In response to a question from Mr G. Craigen regarding provision by Government to assist and prepare teachers for the very different and new approach to curriculum delivery following the Review, the CA explained that full implementation would not be realised until 2020. He clarified that the Review had provided lots of recommendations but no indication as to how they would be implemented and this would be included in the next stage through the creation of a scheme of work.

The CA made particular reference to the opportunities which would be created in years 7 and 8. Councillor A. Roberts referred to the assessment process adopted in Scotland, and made reference to the success of the Rhyl cluster which he felt had not been replicated in Prestatyn. The CA explained that in future students would be assessed against skills and not levels with a consortia generating a portfolio of assessment points. Specific reference was made to the significant impact in respect of LNF testing and the need for primary and secondary schools to work closer in the future.

During the ensuing discussion the following issues were highlighted:-

- The importance of Key Stage 3 in delivering subjects with regard to a framework for examinations and student skill levels.
- The advice provided by SACRE would be relevant to agreeing the syllabus for the delivery of Religious Education. Reference was made to the continuation of an exemplar framework and a cross pillar approach.
- The agreed syllabus having a legal status in schools to provide the foundation for all Religious Education.
- Teacher representatives within SACRE to monitor the delivery Religious Education, which would provide a direct access to the classroom.

The CA outlined the present model and the use of teacher representatives on SACRE. He explained that the new model would be slightly different feeding down into groups as a line of communication. Members of SACRE agreed that the CA write to schools to progress the new approach. Teachers would be invited to become involved with small groups which they could then represent on SACRE. Mr G, Craigen highlighted the importance of complying with the requirements of Teacher Union representation if increasing teacher representation on SACRE.

RESOLVED – *that, subject to the above, the presentation on the Donaldson Review be received and noted.*

7 YSGOL BRYN COLLEN AND COMMUNITY WORKING

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation Ms Helen Jones, Ysgol Bryn Collen, outlined how Ysgol Bryn Collen worked with local faith groups, and provided an update on the schools and community working project.

Ms Jones provided a summary of the presentation which included details and information pertaining to:-

- Sharing good practice.
- The funding received through the Archbishop Rice Jones Charitable Trust Grant, and the items and resources acquired with the funding received.
- The Key Stage 2, Year 6, Holy Spirit William Booth.
- Details of the visit to the Salvation Army and the work undertaken.
- Collective Worship.
- Visit to the school by Reverend Una.
- Details of the activities held at the school including the A.J. Pingram visit, Mock Wedding and Christening and Diwali Day.

Following a brief discussion, it was:-

RESOLVED – *that SACRE receive and note the contents of the presentation.*

8 WASACRE

(a) Minutes of WASACRE – 6th March, 2015

The minutes of the meeting of the Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE) held in Neath Port Talbot on the 6th March, 2015 (previously circulated) were submitted for Members' information.

RESOLVED - *that minutes of WASACRE held on the 6th March, 2015 be received.*

The CA advised that Flintshire had hosted the WASACRE meeting held on the 25th June, 2015, and he confirmed that the minutes would be available at the next meeting.

Reference was made by Reverend B.H. Jones to the two excellent presentations provided by the CA at the WASACRE AGM. He suggested that it could be beneficial if such presentations were included on future agenda's for SACRE meetings, or copies circulated to Members of SACRE. He also made particular reference to the Wrexham schools presentation of worship.

Congratulations were extended to and Mr P. Lord (CA) on being appointed Chair and Vice Chair respectively of WASACRE for the ensuing year.

Mr G. Craigen made reference to three excellent presentations received at WASACRE which related to the curriculum, the literacy and numeracy framework and engaging boys in religious education in secondary schools.

The Chair explained that he had visited a number of primary schools in his role as Chair of SACRE. However, he expressed his disappointment at failing to receive a response to his request to visit a secondary school. Councillor A. Roberts agreed to convey the concerns expressed by the Chair, regarding the lack of a response, to the Head of Department. Ms M. Ludenbach extended an invitation for the Chair to visit Ysgol Blessed Edward Jones, Rhyl.

The CA explained that following the presentation received by a member of Wrexham SACRE the views of schools had been sought on Members of SACRE

attending and viewing an act of collective worship. SACRE agreed that the CA liaise with schools to ascertain if they would agree to Members of SACRE attending and observing a collective worship. The CA confirmed that Members of SACRE's in Wrexham and Gwynedd had received training on attending and viewing collective worship in schools.

(b) Attendance at WASACRE meeting - 25th November, 2015

Confirmation was provided that and Mr P. Lord (CA), Chair and Vice Chair of WASACRE would be attending the next WASACRE meeting to be held at Blaenau Gwent in November, 2015.

(c) Nominations for Executive Committee and Vice Chair of WASACRE

Mr G. Craigen explained that following the withdrawal of the nomination of Councillor D. Michael Gray there had been two remaining nominations for two positions on the Executive Committee. The two remaining nominations, Councillor Ernie Galsworthy of Merthyr Tudful SACRE and Ms E. Ruth Davies, had been appointed to the two vacant positions.

Confirmation was provided that Mr Phil Lord (CA) had been appointed Vice Chair of WASACRE.

9 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Denbighshire SACRE would be held at 10.00 a.m. on Wednesday, 21st October, 2015 at Ysgol Blessed Edward Jones Rhyl.

The meeting concluded at 11.20 a.m.