

To: Members of the Standing Advisory  
Council for Religious Education  
(SACRE)

Date: 1 February 2023

Direct Dial: 01824 712568

e-mail: [democratic@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@denbighshire.gov.uk)

Dear Sir / Madam

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)** to be held at **10.00 am** on **WEDNESDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2023 BY VIDEO CONFERENCE.**

Yours sincerely

Gary Williams  
Monitoring Officer

## **AGENDA**

### **SILENT REFLECTION**

#### **1 APOLOGIES**

#### **2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (Pages 3 - 4)**

Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at this meeting.

#### **3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

Notice of items 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 LAST MEETING (Pages 5 - 10)**

To receive and approve the minutes of the Denbighshire SACRE meeting held on 19 October 2022 (copy enclosed).

## **5 CURRICULUM FOR WALES** (Pages 11 - 12)

To receive a presentation regarding the Religion, Values and Ethics Guidance.

## **6 WASACRE** (Pages 13 - 26)

To receive the minutes of the last meeting of the Association held on 16 November 2022 (copy enclosed).

## **7 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

- Summer – 15 June 2023
- Autumn – 17 October 2023

## **MEMBERSHIP**

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

Ellie Chard  
Cheryl Williams  
Ann Davies  
Gill German

Merfyn Parry  
Huw Williams  
Delyth Jones  
Emrys Wynne

### **Representing Religious Denominations and Non-Religious Philosophical Convictions**

Suzy Sturley  
Mr. Dominic Oakes  
Rev. B H Jones

Rev. Martin Evans-Jones  
Jennie Downes  
Collette Owen

### **Representing Teacher Associations**

Mrs C Harmsworth  
Leah Crimes

Sarah Griffiths  
Katie Mason

### **Co-opted Members**

Ms. Tania Ap Siôn

## **COPIES TO:**

All Councillors for information  
Press and Libraries  
Town and Community Councils

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

---

### Code of Conduct for Members

### DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, *(name)*

a \*member/co-opted member of  
*(\*please delete as appropriate)*

**Denbighshire County Council**

**CONFIRM** that I have declared a \***personal / personal and prejudicial** interest not previously declared in accordance with the provisions of Part III of the Council's Code of Conduct for Members, in respect of the following:-  
*(\*please delete as appropriate)*

Date of Disclosure:

Committee *(please specify)*:

Agenda Item No.

Subject Matter:

Nature of Interest:

*(See the note below)\**

Signed

Date

\*Note: Please provide sufficient detail e.g. 'I am the owner of land adjacent to the application for planning permission made by Mr Jones', or 'My husband / wife is an employee of the company which has made an application for financial assistance'.

This page is intentionally left blank

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

Minutes of a meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held in by video conference on Wednesday, 19 October 2022 at 10.00 am.

### **PRESENT**

Councillors Ellie Chard, Cheryl Williams, Ann Davies, Gill German, Merfyn Parry, Huw Williams, Delyth Jones and Emrys Wynne

### **Representing Religious Denominations and Non-Religious Philosophical Convictions**

Jennie Downes (Vice Chair)

### **Representing Teacher Associations**

Leah Crimes, Sarah Griffiths

### **ALSO PRESENT**

RE Adviser (PL), Principal Education Manager (JB) and Committee Administrators (RTJ & SW [Zoom Host])

#### **1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received by Collette Owen and Reverend Brian Jones.

#### **2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No declarations of interest had been raised.

#### **3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

No urgent matters had been raised.

#### **4 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 were presented (previously circulated)

Matter of accuracy –

- Councillor Huw Williams highlighted his attendance was not recorded; he wanted his attendance to be noted.
- Councillor Gill German noted she had sent apologies for the meeting however, they were not noted.

Matters arising –

- The RE advisor informed the committee that children in the current year 7 would have the choice to ask for RVE when they reached year 12/13 rather than not having the choice as it was currently statutory.
- The committee were reminded that the agreed syllabus had been circulated to the committee, which allowed members to comment on the process.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 23 June 2022 be received and approved as a correct record.

## **5 DENBIGHSHIRE SUMMER 2022 NEWSLETTER**

The RE advisor introduced the newsletter; the name would continue as it was, which was Reach and Agored. The edition members were discussing was the second edition of the newsletter. The newsletter aimed to have religious education information circulated to schools. The RE advisor also informed the committee that another aim of the newsletter was to make the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) committee more visible to the general public.

The articles within the newsletter were –

- Agored Exploring Worldviews – Agored Cymru has developed ‘Exploring Worldviews’, a suite of level 1 and 2 qualifications supporting an understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews. The qualification meets the three core skills set out in the exemplar framework (current curriculum), and it provides opportunities for exploring the concepts for RVE through the statements of what matters in the Humanities area of learning and experience in the Curriculum for Wales (new curriculum).
- HwB - RVE Professional Development - The Welsh Association of SACREs have partnered to develop a suite of Professional Learning modules on RVE in the new curriculum. Ten playlists will be made available during the 2022 Autumn Term. The Re advisor was awaiting the playlist to be available; once available, they would be circulated to SACRE members.
- 16+ Challenging Religious Issues - Challenging Religious Issues is a journal for students and teachers of AS and A-level Religious Studies. It is also a helpful resource for anyone who wants to develop or refresh their subject knowledge. Over 65 open-access journal articles have been published in the journal so far, including articles written by leading scholars and practitioners
- St Giles’ Centre - situated in the heart of Wrexham in North East Wales within the grounds of the impressive St Giles’ Parish Church. It is a centre that provides specialist RVE and collective worship support for teachers in Wrexham working in partnership with the Local Authority.

Members discussed the following further –

- Members thanked the RE advisor for guiding them through the newsletter. They also raised how valuable the information was for seasoned and newer teachers.

- Committee members highlighted to the RE advisor that the links on the Welsh newsletter weren't working.

***RESOLVED** that the verbal update from the RE Adviser regarding the summer newsletter be received and noted.*

## **6 CURRICULUM FOR WALES, THE DENBIGHSHIRE AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RVE AND SUPPORTING GUIDANCE**

The RE advisor introduced the agreed syllabus; Following queries about further changes to the RVE guidance on Hwb, the RE advisor clarified if there were significant changes, this would impact the Denbighshire Agreed Syllabus and SACRE may ask the LA to hold another Agreed Syllabus conference to agree the new changes.

The Curriculum for Wales became statutory for primary schools and some secondary schools (for year 7) Sept 2022. The content of the agreed syllabus for RVE was approved summer of 2022, the final version of the syllabus has been completed and sent to schools. Supporting guidance has also been published and sent to schools.

As RVE was a locally determined subject, the agreed syllabus specifies what should be taught in RVE within each of the 22 local authorities in Wales for LA and voluntary controlled schools that teach the agreed syllabus.

Members would bring any concerns from school governor meetings to the RE advisor.

The committee discussed the following further –

The committee praised the breakdown within the agreed syllabus as it made navigation of the matter much more accessible.

- Responding to queries regarding schools being allowed to discuss the syllabus. The RE advisor works for GWE and is an independent RE advisor. GWE has made it clear they want teachers to help themselves through empowerment. The RE advisor did provide some communication with schools to discuss the matters with staff. GWE has provided support wanted to help schools with developing example mandatory statements schools can include in the Curriculum for Wales rationales. it the development plan of the school. There were many different challenges for schools, the syllabus would be low on the development plan for schools, and this was a significant challenge. Schools are facing a range of challenges at present of which implementing the Curriculum for Wales is one.
- Leah Crimes highlighted that support for schools was challenging. If each area were selected and needed individual help, it would cause a sizeable unmanageable workload. As a faith school, we have to hit the tenets of the RVE and need to hit the catholic schools requirements needs. The RE

advisor informed the committee that some documents were being produced to support with Catholic RVE.

- The committee raised the possibility of producing a questionnaire to see whether schools found the agreed syllabus and the helpful guidance. The Principal Education Manager highlighted it was something which could be worked upon.

**RESOLVED** that the verbal update from the RE Adviser regarding Curriculum For Wales, The Denbighshire Agreed Syllabus for RVE and Supporting Guidance be received and noted.

## **7 SACRE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21**

The RE advisor introduced the SACRE draft Annual report 2020/21 and advised the committee that it was a statutory requirement on the SACRE to produce an Annual Report of its work and that this Annual Report be made available to DfES by December

There are no subject judgments in the current Estyn inspection framework. Instead, members receive information from the reports relating to Estyn's comments on a school's provision of SMSC. See part c Collective Worship - Monitoring provision - Inspection reports. Estyn paused the inspection of schools due to the pandemic. Estyn restarted inspections during the summer of 2022. No inspection reports were presented to SACRE members. This would continue from 2022-23.

SACRE members met three times during the academic year. All three meets were held virtually.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference meeting was held virtually.

Conwy and Denbighshire published its second newsletter. It provides schools with news related to RE/RVE and is especially important during the preparation for the new curriculum. The second edition contains information about the Curriculum for Wales. It also includes helpful information regarding the Agored level 1 and 2 qualifications, links to Wrexham's St Giles centre for RVE, information about up-and-coming Welsh Government professional development resources for RVE and information about a post 16 RE E-Journal called 'Challenging Religious Issues'. See Appendix A. The LA has distributed the newsletter to all schools, and it is hosted on the North Wales Religious Education Hwb Network. The SACRE received no complaints.

The membership of the SACRE would need to be updated to reflect the new councillors.

The committee queried the RE advisor whether there was a representative from the Welsh Humanists on the committee, and the RE Advisor informed the committee there was a representative nominated.

**RESOLVED** that the report by the RE Adviser regarding the Sacre Draft Annual Report 2020-21 be noted.



## **8 WASACRE**

The RE Adviser reported that the minutes of the last meeting had not yet been made available for circulation, once they've been received they'd be circulated they would be passed onto the Committee members.

## **9 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

The next SACRE meetings were organised for –

- Spring '23 – 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023
- Summer '23 – 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023
- Autumn '23 – 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**The meeting concluded at 11:37am.**

This page is intentionally left blank

<b>Denbighshire County Council Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)</b>		
Date of Meeting:		8th February 2023
Agenda Item:	<b>5</b>	CURRICULUM FOR WALES
<u><i>Background to the Report:</i></u>		
Primary and Secondary Teachers in Conwy have recently received training on RVE and the new Agreed Syllabus.		
<u><i>Purpose of the Report:</i></u>		
To receive training material that teachers can use to help understand and plan an appropriate and effective RVE curriculum based on the Denbighshire Agreed Syllabus.		
<u><i>Recommendations:</i></u>		
To receive the presentation.		

This page is intentionally left blank

<p><b>Denbighshire County Council</b>  <b>Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education</b>  <b>(SACRE)</b></p>		
Date of Meeting:		8th February 2023
Agenda Item:	<b>6</b>	WASACRE
<p><u><i>Background to the Report:</i></u></p> <p>SACRE continues to be a member of the Wales Association of SACREs, and receives reports on meetings from members attending, copies of minutes of meetings and any other reports from the Association.</p>		
<p><u><i>Purpose of the Report:</i></u></p> <p>For members to be informed as to the focus and main outcomes of the previous meeting.</p>		
<p><u><i>Recommendations:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To receive the minutes of the last meeting of the Association on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022.</li> </ul>		

This page is intentionally left blank

**Attendance**

<p><b>Ynys Môn / Anglesey</b> Gwynedd Hughes (GH) Non Dafydd (ND)</p> <p><b>Blaenau Gwent</b> Chris Abbas (CA) Sue Edmonds (SE) Michelle Jones (MJ)</p> <p><b>Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr / Bridgend</b> Alice Parry (AP) Edward Evans (EE)</p> <p><b>Caerffili/ Caerphilly</b> Marina Chacon - Dawson (MCD) Janet Jones (JJ)</p> <p><b>Caerdydd / Cardiff</b></p> <p><b>Sir Gaerfyrddin / Carmarthenshire</b> Howard Jones (HJ)</p> <p><b>Ceredigion</b> Mary Davies (MD) Keith Henson (KH)</p> <p><b>Conwy</b> Roger Boon (RB) Collette Owen (CO) Phil Lord (PL)</p>	<p><b>Sir Ddinbych / Denbighshire</b> Collete Owen (CO) Ellie Chard (EC) Phil Lord (PL)</p> <p><b>Sir y Fflint / Flintshire</b> Jane Borthwick (JB)</p> <p><b>Gwynedd</b> Sibani Roy Paul Rowlinson (PR) Eurfren Davies (ED)</p> <p><b>Merthyr Tudful / Merthyr Tydfil</b></p> <p><b>Sir Fynwy / Monmouthshire</b> Louise Brown (LB)</p> <p><b>Castell-nedd Port Talbot / Neath and Port Talbot</b> Fiona Thomas (FT) Rachel Samuel (RS)</p> <p><b>Casnewydd / Newport</b> Hayley Jones (HJ)</p> <p><b>Sir Benfro / Pembrokeshire</b> Clare Campbell (CG)</p>	<p><b>Powys</b> John Mitson (JM) Mike Head (MH) Fiona Thomas (FT)</p> <p><b>Rhondda Cynon Taf</b> Donna Graves (DG) Matthew Maidment (MM)</p> <p><b>Abertawe / Swansea</b> Jennifer Harding-Richards (JHR)</p> <p><b>Torfaen</b></p> <p><b>Bro Morgannwg / Vale of Glamorgan</b></p> <p><b>Wrecsam / Wrexham</b> Tania ap Siôn (TaS) Libby Jones (LJ)</p> <p><b>NAPfRE</b> Rachel Samuel (RS)</p> <p><b>EFTRE</b> Phil Lord (PL)</p>	<p><b>Observers:</b></p> <p><b>REMW</b> Paul Morgan (PM)</p> <p><b>WJEC</b></p> <p><b>ESTYN</b></p> <p><b>Welsh Government</b></p> <p><b>REC</b></p> <p><b>Church in Wales</b></p> <p><b>Catholic Education Service</b> Angela Keller (AK)</p> <p><b>Qualification Wales</b> Kate Russell (KR)</p> <p><b>Interfaith Network</b></p> <p><b>ADEW</b> University Of Wales Elin Stock (ES)</p> <p><b>Minutes (from recording)</b> Jo Nicholls (JNI)</p>
---	---	--	---

## **Minutes of the meeting**

### **1. Introduction and welcome**

TaS welcomed everyone to the Autumn meeting and thanked Blaenau Gwent SACRE for hosting the meeting. TaS introduced Councillor Sue Edmonds, Cabinet Member for People and Education and Chair of Blaenau Gwent SACRE. Sue Edmonds welcomed everyone as the hosting SACRE and stated that this is a new role for her, since the May local elections. SE mentioned that she is enjoying getting to know the schools and the learning environments in the borough and, like all this group, looking to raise educational standards and opportunities for young people.

SE commented that it was an honour to host the WASACRE meeting during this exciting time for Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) in Wales. SE acknowledged the hard work and dedication of everyone involved to ensure that the agreed syllabus is completed. SE stated that we are all on a journey to deliver the new curriculum working to see our learners become ambitiously capable, enterprising, and creative contributors, ethical and informed citizens of Wales and the World and healthy and confident individuals.

RVE makes a huge contribution in the journey and will continue to take a key role in the broad education of young people in Wales. SE thanked all those involved in education across Wales for their ongoing dedication towards young children in the midst of these significant changes. SE noted that with the recovery from Covid19 and now a cost-of-living crisis, there is a unique set of challenges for schools and the staff and the children and families they support. School staff have proved what we all knew that they are remarkable, resilient, and inspiring. SE shared her confidence that everyone in education will pull together once again to see our children through this period.

TaS thanked SE for her pertinent words.

### **2. Quiet reflection**

TaS led a quiet reflection.

The last few years have been both crucial and formative for religious education now RVE. So many of us at a local and national have given so much time and energy to be in this exciting place, a place full of opportunity.

We are now in an important new phase; September marked the official introduction for the new curriculum for Wales in all our primary schools and some secondary schools. This new phase will be marked as a time of real responsibility and real dangers. In Wales, we have set ourselves an enormous task to do things differently for the sake of our young people. This means being open to change, open to learning from and with one another and having the courage to be creatively independent. In this new phase there is a real temptation for short cuts. The world is looking at us right now and young people are looking to us.

Are we up to the challenge, and is it something that really matters enough to us in our various locations around Wales and in our various roles?

### **3. Apologies**

Apologies from Kathy Riddick, Paula Webber and Vicky Barlow from the Executive Committee. Christopher Owens WJEC, Philip Blaker Qualification Wales, Councillor Sam Skirme-Blackhall Pembrokeshire, Councillor Menna Baines Gwynedd SACRE and Councillor Michael Williams Powys SACRE.



#### **4. Minutes of the last meeting Microsoft Teams held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

RS to be added to the attendance list under Neath Port Talbot.

With the above amendment, the minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022. RS proposed to accept the minutes and EE seconded.

TaS will sign the final minutes and AP will file the minutes.

#### **5. Matters arising from minutes of the last WASACRE meeting**

Any matters arising from the meeting will be discussed or considered within our meeting today.

#### **6. Professional learning**

LJ provided the following update:

We have been eagerly awaiting the PL resources and had hoped that the resources would have been published on Hwb by now. Welsh Government have stated that all 5 modules from the first batch of resources have been through a quality assurance (QA) process. The QA was undertaken by policy colleagues, the curriculum team and Hwb colleagues and has taken longer than expected due to the general volume of Welsh Government curriculum-related work at this time. All 5 modules are now with Welsh translation and will need to be quality checked once translated. We are waiting to hear from the Hwb team regarding a publication date. It is expected to be early in the new year.

It is disappointing that this first batch is still to be published however the quality of these resources is very high. When they are available to schools and practitioners, we are confident that they will be invaluable. Even though there has been a regrettable delay, we are very pleased with the quality.

LJ shared a video of a case study of one of the resources - *'What's changed within the secondary setting; Session 5 - Taking a concept - based approach to planning'*.

The recording showed a practical example from AP, Llanishen High School, Cardiff. AP demonstrated how the RVE guidance, the Statements of What Matters, the RVE sub lenses and the RVE concepts have been integrated into the school's overarching theme to create a practical planning module for year 8 lessons.

LJ thanked AP for the excellent case study.

LJ mentioned that for all the resources there is an opportunity to critically engage with the resource. At the end it lists questions such as - What was particularly helpful? What RVE concepts would you choose to look at?

LB: Thanked AP and LJ for the presentation, I am a little concerned on the origins side, that the scientific theories may undermine faith teaching. Need to ensure that what is being taught has a deeper level of understanding.

LJ: Faith is still an important part of the exploration of the origins, both science and faith are looked at critically. Teachers are professional and are aware of their subject and what it entails and the questions around faith will be explored and there are many areas of AP's planning where faith can be incorporated. Lots of schools are linking science and religion. They are talking about religious scientists and how there is a connection and that they are not two distinct areas.

AP: In developing the PL tool for teachers it does not oversimplify the science and the faith views and shows both the complementary and critical elements. This scheme of work is still a work in progress.

TaS: This conversation now demonstrates exactly the kind of engagement with practitioners that these case studies initiate. We encourage this interaction.

RB: This issue outlines how important it is in selecting the appropriate materials and opening students' minds rather than providing them with closed views. Teachers need to be aware to be critical themselves when choosing the right materials. AP's presentation was inspiring. My big concern is that there is a short supply of RVE teaching specialists. Those with limited background will be asked to teach this. Will they have appropriate levels of support in teaching the curriculum? A concern that it is shared by others.

MCD: Do you give the students a chance to explore new religions which are less represented in the community? The Vedic tradition is worded as '*It is the revealing science of God,*' which is interesting in relation to LB comments.

AP: Yes, the next scheme of work would include those faith groups less represented within the local community.

MD: How many modules are there in total? Is there a consideration for releasing the English version of the 5 modules before the Welsh translations? They are much needed.

LJ: Another 5 modules will go out shortly after this first release. This is an ongoing suite of resources and will be created as and when there is a need. The policy on Hwb is that all publications are to be bilingual, but I will go back to Hwb with that suggestion.

SR: Hindu origins of creation we say it is eternal and an evolution of God, we do not put any years on it.

PM: I commend AP on a very impressive planning exercise. I wonder whether there was any collaboration with the science depts when addressing the scientific aspects of this type of planning on that particular unit. Did science teachers address the origins theme in their planning in a way that it dovetailed the RVE approach?

AP: We are working as Humanities and trialling this approach to planning. We did not work with the science dept for this current piece of planning, but we are looking to do this in the future, as the theme we are given is a 'whole school' approach.

TaS thanked LJ and AP and for the contributions from the group.

**ACTION:** LJ to ask Hwb whether the first 5 modules can be released before the Welsh translations.

## 7. Welsh Government Matters:

### i) Meetings

TaS provided an update from the last meeting which was held on 13<sup>th</sup> Sept 2022. TaS and LJ represented WASACRE, and RS attended as the NAPFRE representative. The Welsh Government representatives were John Pugsley (JP) and Kerry Davies (KD).

- WASACRE requested updates to the legal summary on Hwb as some of the previous change requests had not been made. We also noted that a new section had been added. These change requests are to simply add clarification to the legal summary. WASACRE requested a annotated version of the legal summary and Welsh Government will address this. KD will inform us on the next update on Hwb.

- There was an agenda item regarding communication on Dysg. It was noted that there was an RVE update in the July 2022 issue. For future editions they would like to include case studies. We understand this is early days for case studies. LJ has communicated with KD to ask for more details as to how these case studies should look. We are working with NAPfRE and the advisors within NAPfRE to acquire and quality assure case studies.
- We spoke about the status of Circular 10/94, Welsh Government re-confirmed that Circular 10/94 is still relevant for collective worship but recommends referring to Hwb for RVE for the curriculum for Wales. Welsh Government confirmed they will not be sharing this more widely with SACREs and LAs. Also confirmed that they are looking at ways of taking this forward and will be in touch with WASACRE. EE's document on collective worship has been emailed to KD for their reference.
- We asked about guidance on progression. Welsh Government confirmed there is no new guidance on progression for the legacy curriculum and that all guidance on progression is on Hwb. KD will ask if there is anything specific that would be helpful to us and will send a link. We have requested a meeting with Estyn colleagues to discuss progression. A date is currently being agreed. Our Teacher Executive Members will be involved in this meeting.
- We asked about the potential impact of the parental challenge to RSE on RVE and is there any impact for RVE? Welsh Government didn't expect any impact.
- We agreed to continue our meetings every two months.

DG: In terms of advising our local SACREs, the issue of monitoring standards for RVE has not been addressed and solutions have yet to be offered.

TaS: We have to take this to the next meeting.

LB: With regards to the Circular 10/94 – it is still relevant for the religion side and includes how voting takes place, although it needs updating it is still an important document to the SACREs.

RB: I endorse the point about monitoring standards. It was a dominant feature of the last Conwy SACRE meeting. Pleased to see that it will be taken forward.

JHR: Received queries from schools regarding the mandatory nature of RVE 3 -16 years. Particularly impacting primary schools at this time of year with nativity plays, Christmas stories etc. A small group of representatives in the community are requesting that their children are withdrawn from these activities. We are discussing with schools how to differentiate RVE and collective worship and the ethos and culture of school. We are aware that there isn't a right to withdraw but request clarification on how we differentiate between those aspects for primary colleagues.

LJ: It is a delicate balance for some schools, and it is proving challenging. We will take this to the WG meeting and ask advice.

LB: With regard to RVE, the curriculum is still supposed to reflect the fact that the religious traditions are Christian as represented in Wales and to take into account the

other principal religions. Nativity would actually come within this area and collective worship is not affected by this change in curriculum.

**ACTION:** Add to the agenda of the next Welsh Government meeting: 1) Monitoring standards 2) How to differentiate RVE, collective workshop and the ethos of the school.

**ii) Agreed Syllabi**

TaS reminded the SACREs to send a copy of the agreed syllabus to KD and to WASCRE's Secretary AP. An email reminder has been sent by AP to SACRE Clerks.

All syllabi will be added to the WASACRE website. AP stated that 12 agreed syllabi have been received to date.

TaS asked whether there were any issues that SACREs would like to bring to WASACRE about the agreed syllabi. No issues were raised.

**iii) Annual Reports**

TaS mentioned that NAPfRE have received emails from new advisers questioning what is required in the annual reports. It has also been noted that some aspects of the annual report are outdated. This isn't a new question and there is a need to bring this back into discussion particularly in the light of the new curriculum for Wales. As a result, the WASACRE Executive Committee has agreed to put this item on the agenda for the next meeting with Welsh Government.

EE mentioned that many years ago a conference was called to discuss the annual reports. The conclusions of this conference were that the annual reports would cover 4 main points: 1) Introduction; 2) Summary of SACRE's advice to LA on religious education; 3) Summary of SACRE's advice on collective worship; and 4) Summary of other issues. This is where it was left, the conclusions were not endorsed and do not carry any authority. Now is the time with the new curriculum to assess whether these 4 areas are still relevant in today's education world.

TaS thanked NAPfRE colleagues for reminding us of this issue.

RB: Individual SACREs will develop their own formats, I have seen many and some are excellent. In Conwy we now have a 3-year management plan, an update of this will go into the annual report.

PR: Can the conclusions from the conference that EE mentioned be shared with the group?

TaS: Recommended in order to avoid confusion that this document is not widely distributed as it is an old document, and this topic is now to be reviewed. TaS suggests it is just sent to PR.

**ACTION:** EE to send a copy of the conclusions to AP for onward distribution to PR.

**iv) Other matters**

LJ mentioned that there was some confusion around SACRE and SAC, due to a sentence on the guidance on Hwb, the legislation guidance stated that SACRE will be replaced by SAC.

LJ wrote to Welsh Government for legal advice. LJ read out the following statement from Welsh Government lawyers - *“As we are phasing in the new curriculum and given the old SAC or SACRE are composed differently and have slightly different functions, they need to co-exist with the new bodies whilst we still have legacy school years on the old curriculum so until 2025, they will need to co-exist”*.

A Welsh Government colleague who requested this advice from the lawyer added that it is up to each LA to work out the details of how to manage this situation. It is possible that the membership of both SAC/ SACRE would be the same, but it could only be the same if there was an opportunity in SACRE for holders of non-religious philosophical convictions to be present on Committee A. Just as an example, Wrexham SACRE has been talking about holding joint SACRE and SAC meetings. In Wrexham the membership can be the same as there is a member of Committee A on SACRE who is a holder of a non-religious philosophical conviction. The membership and the constitution will be the same. We plan for the meetings to be joint meetings until 2025.

LJ mentioned that this information has been sent to RE and RVE Advisors but not to SACREs.

JHR: Recommends that this information is shared with SACRE clerks for onward circulation to the legal teams. Format to be short and formal.

**ACTION:** WASACRE to send a formal notification to SACREs re: SAC and SACRE

#### **8. NAPfRE presentation: Qualifications Wales Consultation: New GCSE – Religious Studies (RS).**

TaS noted that the link <https://haveyoursay.qualifications.wales> had been shared with members prior to the meeting as part of the agenda. TaS mentioned that, unfortunately PW was unable to attend today, and that RS was to provide the presentation.

RS presented the Qualification Wales Consultation on the new GSCE design proposal. The consultation ends on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022, both NAPfRE and WASACRE will provide a response to this consultation. These GSCEs are being designed considering progression steps 4 and 5 of the Curriculum for Wales. It is a design proposal; it is not a course content which the Examination Board would create.

A copy of the presentation will be circulated to SACREs after this meeting.

TaS thanked RS for this presentation and thanked the NAPfRE colleagues for their input. TaS suggested that SACREs respond individually to the consultation.

MM: This is an excellent response to the new proposal. The biggest concern is the non GSCE assessment, how do we get the mandatory RVE for pupils who don't follow the course. In terms of the assessment, I don't like the idea of the linear assessment if they can have something in year 10 that would be a bonus. The current GSCE is so content heavy; breaking up into modules will alleviate this. Concerned about the coursework and the size and content of the course. The topics should be engaging and relevant. Engaging topics in the past were the existence and nature of God, war, punishment, forgiveness, abortion, euthanasia, and medical ethics.

RB: Conwy has been concerned for some time that the GSCE is very academic and not appropriate for the needs of the whole ability range. With no short course we therefore

welcome the Agored qualification which has a possibility of a GSCE equivalence. It is designed across the ability range and is consistent with the overall aims of the national curriculum. We are in process of writing to all teachers and heads of humanity, encouraging them to look at the Agored curriculum. Secondary heads have been excited about this new qualification.

TaS confirmed that there will be new modules available on the Agored Cymru website in November. LJ will be receiving promotional material for this particular course.

TaS emphasised that if there are any additional questions, comments and observations on this consultation, please email AP. WASACRE will consider these when generating its response to the consultation.

## 9. Up-dates:

### - **REC**

KR was unable to attend meeting, there was no update.

### - **EFTRE**

TaS mentioned that is important for us in Wales to be connected and in conversation with our European colleagues.

PL: There has been no meeting since the summer meeting. EFTRE website has been rebranded and has very good resources. It is useful as a basic understanding of the different religious education systems across Europe. PL recommends reading the country reports. PL will be attending the conference in Rome next Autumn 2023. PL asked whether the Executive Committee would consider financially supporting two teachers to attend this conference to support the Welsh teaching context.

TaS will be presenting a research project at this conference that involves Wales and other European countries.

**ACTION:** Take to the Executive Committee the proposal of funding teachers to attend this conference.

### - **REMW**

PM had difficulty with the audio and will email AP with any updates.

### - **NAPfRE**

PL: NAPfRE met last week, RS has presented the NAPfRE discussion regarding the PL learning modules. We also received updates from our own members.

### - **IFN**

LJ: Interfaith week is currently running from 13<sup>th</sup> Nov to 20<sup>th</sup> Nov 2022. It has been held since 2009 and strengthens interfaith understanding and co-operation. IFN highlights the contribution of faith groups to society and also encourages dialogue between those with religious and non-religious beliefs. WASACRE has previously circulated to SACREs a link which allows schools to submit an activity on the IFN website.

### - **Estyn**

AP read out the following written report which was provided by Michaela Benjamin (MB), Estyn, with the view to be shared at this meeting.

Estyn's report: Our role is to consider the quality and standards of education and training in Wales. We also offer advice and guidance to the Welsh Government on quality and standards of education and training, [Page 22](#) through [thematic reports](#) and our [annual report](#).

Within our current inspection framework, there are several areas which refer to aspects of RVE. For example, inspectors should consider:

- **Inspection Area 2:**  
How well all pupils develop as ethical, informed citizens, for example through their awareness of fairness, equality, sustainability and children's rights
- **Inspection Area 3**  
When evaluating the provider's curriculum and the quality of learning experiences, inspectors should consider how well:
  - the broad and balanced curriculum builds systematically and coherently on pupils' existing knowledge, understanding, skills and experiences to secure progression as they move through the school
  - the curriculum provides pupils with a suitable breadth and depth of learning experiences across all disciplines and areas of learning and experience, to develop their interests and wider skills and support critical thinking and innovation.
- **Inspection Area 4**  
Inspectors should consider whether the school's culture promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development appropriately. In all schools that do not provide denominational education, inspectors should consider whether there are appropriate acts of collective worship. There are other arrangements in place to inspect this aspect in denominational schools.

Inspectors should consider how well the school or PRU:

- helps pupils to understand issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion and develops shared values such as respect, empathy, courage and compassion
  - helps pupils to understand the needs and rights of others, both locally and as members of a diverse world, and promotes human rights
  - challenges stereotypes in pupils' attitudes, choices and expectations
  - promotes principles that help pupils to distinguish between right and wrong
  - provides effective opportunities for pupils to develop secure values and to explore their spiritual and ethical beliefs
  - develops pupils' ability to reflect on fundamental questions and on their own beliefs or values
- **Inspection Area 5**
    - Inspectors should evaluate the extent to which leaders and managers have established and communicated a clear vision. They should consider whether there are appropriate aims, strategic objectives, plans and policies that focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning to meet all pupils' needs.
    - Inspectors should consider how well leaders address national and local priorities, such as keeping pupils safe, reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment, preparing for the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales
    - Inspectors should evaluate the extent to which leaders have created a positive culture and ethos to promote and support the professional learning of all staff. They should consider whether professional learning to improve teaching and develop the Curriculum for Wales has had a positive impact in developing classroom provision that meets learners' needs.

During our inspections this year, inspectors will adopt a pragmatic approach to the inspection of the curriculum. We recognise:

- that schools will continue to develop and evolve their curriculum over time as they improve their approaches.
- that schools are at different points within their journey towards rollout.
- in primary, we will think about how schools have taken steps to develop and start to evaluate their curriculum and how they have engaged with stakeholders to share and further develop their approaches.
- we will need to take into account the optional date of 2023 to implement the Curriculum for Wales when inspecting secondary schools.
- some schools are taking steps towards developing their vision for curriculum and teaching to support their design and delivery of Curriculum for Wales.

We will consider:

- Whether teaching is effective in securing high quality curriculum and learning experiences for pupils
- How well their curriculum provides a range of engaging learning experiences across all disciplines and areas
- Whether pupils being provided with sufficient opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding across the range of disciplines / subject areas
- How well the school's curriculum meets the needs of their learners
- If teachers are taking the opportunities to explore approaches to curriculum and teaching

We do not favour any preferred approaches to curriculum design or delivery. We will consider the effectiveness of a school's curriculum in securing high quality learning experiences and progress for their pupils. We recognise that there may be some misconceptions or myths about our expectations around the curriculum.

- A common misconception or myth is that we require schools to adopt a multi-disciplinary or thematic approach to their rollout of Curriculum for Wales. Whilst some schools may adopt this approach, it is not a requirement of the curriculum or our inspection framework. Where schools do take this approach, it will be important that inspectors consider how well teachers are securing pupils knowledge, skills and experiences of the specific disciplines as well as making the links between learning that takes place.
- We have heard from a number of schools, that they think we will require them to develop a vision for individual AoLEs and the wider skills. I think it is important to note that that is not our expectation. Whilst we have no preferred approach, we have seen things work well where a school as a single, whole school vision for curriculum and teaching that is well understood at all levels. This enables different subject areas to develop their teaching and learning in line with the school vision and to suit the learning in their area.

**ACTION:** AP to check with MB as to whether this report and the link can be shared directly with SACREs.

- **WJEC**

LJ gave the following update:

Page 24



Christopher Owens (CO) is the newly appointed part-time subject officer for WJEC GSCE Religious Studies. CO is highly experienced and a former head of Religious Studies in a number of schools in Wales and England. CO was a former principal examiner for GSCE religious studies for Eduqas and for WJEC at entry level GSCE and AS level.

CO has taken over from Lynda Maddock (LM). LM's focus is now as WJEC Subject Officer on the Eduqas suite of qualifications. LM's supportive relationship with WASACRE via NAPfRE spans almost 20 years. LM has represented HE, FE and WJEC. LJ thanked LM, on behalf of NAPfRE and WASACRE, for her service to RE in Wales and wished her well in the future.

The last summer exam series was very successful with candidates achieving a range of grades across all papers. There were very few requests for reviews of markings. Grade boundaries are likely to rise in the next summer series in order to align with pre-Covid19 boundaries. Information concerning advanced information for summer series GSCE examinations will be provided by the WJEC at a later date. Several WJEC CPD sessions are available in the Autumn and Spring terms:

- 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022 - South Wales, Cydag Welsh medium - in person.
- 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022 - Cardiff, English and Welsh medium - in person
- 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022 – Llandudno, English and Welsh medium - in person
- 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023 - English medium - remote
- 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023 - Welsh medium - remote. This date is to be confirmed as it is dependent on attendance numbers. WASCRE will pass on any updates

WJEC encourages teachers to engage with the Welsh Government's consultation on the proposals for the GSCE religious studies design for the start of teaching in Sept 2025. Teachers should note in the proposals the possibility of centre marked and WJEC moderated non exam assessments, all assessments completed in year 11 and that there is no short course. WJEC will begin work on the new GSCE specification in January 2023.

- **Report from the Executive Committee held on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

TaS reported that the topics from the last Executive Committee meeting have been covered in the agenda. In addition, there was a full discussion on the operational planning for future WASCRE meetings with regards to the format - online, in person or hybrid. LJ presented a discussion paper, and a working group has been appointed which will meet in December. From this meeting, proposals will be developed for the Executive Committee to discuss, central to this is the provision of a Welsh translation facility at each meeting.

**10. Correspondence**

No correspondence received.

**11. Any other business (to be agreed in advance of the meeting with the Chair)**

No other business.

**12. Date for next meeting: 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023, Pembrokeshire.**

Further details will be sent out in due course.

TaS thanked Blaenau Gwent for hosting the meeting, all the presenters and the attendees for their contributions.

This page is intentionally left blank