

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 Tuesday, 17 October 2023 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Representing Denbighshire County Council

Councillors Ellie Chard, Cheryl Williams, Delyth Jones and Emrys Wynne

Representing Religious Denominations

Jennie Downes

Representing Teacher Associations

Sarah Griffiths and Susan Williams

ALSO PRESENT

RE Adviser (PL), Principal Education Manager (JB) and Committee Administrators (SJ and SLW [Zoom Host])

SILENT REFLECTION

The meeting began with a few minutes' silent reflection.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gill German together with
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2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest raised.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

None.

4 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) meeting held on 15 June 2023 (previously circulated) were submitted.

Matters of accuracy – Page 10 - Analysis of Inspection Reports – Councillor Emrys Wynne stated on the English minutes had misspelt 'Ysgol Gynradd Carrog'.

Matters arising – Page 11 - Analysis of Inspection Reports – Members asked if letters had been issued to schools inspected. The Religious Education Advisor confirmed letters had been sent out to all schools who had been in receipt of an inspection.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education meeting held on the 15 June 2023 be received and approved as a correct record.

5 CURRICULUM FOR WALES, UPDATE

The RE Advisor introduced the report to Members. Members heard there was not much to update on since the last Committee meeting. He reminded Members the agreed syllabus had been agreed in 2022 by the Committee and that had been made available to all schools in Denbighshire. Close working between the RE Advisor and the Principal Education Manager to include all schools and teaching staff to roll out the syllabus continued.

The RE Advisor informed Members he had presented training to schools around the agreed syllabus to explain and answer and issues.

Schools had to be aware of 4 moving elements around the agreed syllabus. Once schools were used to the language and wording of the syllabus it would become more clear and schools would gain more understanding. Each time a new curriculum in Wales was introduced, it took time to become familiar with the concepts of the changes.

It was suggested the term be included on future agendas as a regular item to keep members informed of the roll out and any areas that warranted further discussion. Members heard that it was mandatory for all secondary schools to roll out the new agreed syllabus to year 8 pupils.

Members heard a humanities conference was being arranged in November for all humanities teachers to attend and share emerging practice around implementing the curriculum for Wales. Numerous presentations had been arranged for the day. It was hoped from the conference a virtual network would be created across the region for schools to connect and share good practice and humanities support.

Member Jennie Downes highlighted Ysgol Pant Pastynog, Prion, had presented through the medium of Welsh to a group of head teachers in Caernarfon about the work they had done on the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales. The presentation included work that had been done around the planning stage and how the changes would take place in the school.

Another Denbighshire school, Ysgol Borthyn in Ruthin presented through the medium of Welsh, work that had been completed including a case study of ethos of the Curriculum.

Ysgol Esgob Morgan had become the first North Wales Primary School to have been awarded the Schools of Sanctuary accreditation. The award was an important accreditation that looked at learn, embed and sharing around the importance of tolerance and recognising difference and acceptance making their school inviting and welcoming to all. It was stressed how well the pupils had spoken.

The Principal Education Manager thanked the Member for the feedback from the school's presentations and was pleased to hear how beneficial it had been. The authority had been made aware of the good work that was being offered at the schools.

He provided Members with an update on the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales in secondary schools in Denbighshire. Ysgol Glan Clwyd had begun the implementation of the curriculum with year 7, 12 months ago. All other secondary schools have begun the implementation this school year, September 2023 for all year 7 and 8 pupils.

It was clarified for Members that nurseries within schools were maintained nurseries. The non-maintained curriculum referred to the other nurseries and Meithrin. There was a non-maintained nursery setting guidance on the Welsh Curriculum for Wales website.

RESOLVED that Members note the Curriculum for Wales update.

6 SACRE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

The RE Advisor guided members through the draft Annual Report for 2022/23 (previously circulated).

Members were guided through each section of the report. Denbighshire SACRE included the Forward section of the report which included the principal roles for SACRE.

The headings within the contents page had been historically used and taken from a historic document that guided committee's in the agreed syllabus and what was required to be reported upon. Some of that previous requirements were not as relevant now as they were previously. How the RE Advisor worked with the Local Authority would have been very different when the headings were first created. He informed Members WASACRE had been lobbying Welsh Government for an update to the requirements needed in the annual report. A request for further guidance from Welsh Government had been made.

Jennie Downes, who sat on WASACRE confirmed that a lot of background work was being conducted as to how WASACRE and subsequently SACRE committees were run. It was all being reviewed to make sure it was clear to all what the role of the SACRE was and how it all fit into the bigger picture. She confirmed she would inform the committee if any further developments were disclosed.

Currently there was two work streams, the SACRE for Religious Education and a SACRE for the Religion, Values and Ethics. in his opinion the RE Advisor stated currently it was all being kept together and discussed as one, in the same forum. It was felt the two areas were kept distinctively separate in the annual report. It was stressed that there was a difference between the two subject areas.

The annual report was currently still entitled Annual Report of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education but some of the contents related to RE and some to RVE.

It was suggested the title could be amended to include the 'Standing Advisory Council'. Members were in agreement with the suggested change.

The executive summary was presented prior to the annual report in the pack. There was a lot of detail around the agreed syllabus was included with the agreed syllabus for RE and RVE clearly separated.

As previously done, examination results had been included. If schools requested any support with RE or RVE both the principal Education Manager and RE Advisor were happy to be contacted and support as appropriate.

There was no subject judgement within the Estyn inspection reports. Comments had been made in respect of the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural aspects which was included in the report.

The recommendations suggested by Estyn were still relevant, those recommendations were towards schools, local authority and Welsh Government. The report highlighted the resources that had been made available to schools. This included a video that discussed the agreed syllabus and how RVE sat within the new curriculum along with links to supporting guidance looking at concepts, lenses and the journeys.

GwE had arranged events entitled 'Unpacking the humanities for the AoLE'. There had been 2 sessions arranged, the first one focused on the understanding of the mandatory elements and second looked at approaches to planning and assessments. The report provided links to those presentations and documents. All of the resources that had been made available for schools previously to support RE in schools was still available on the network that had been created. Members heard although some of the language had been changed the context of the guide still provided schools with a vast amount of information and support to offer schools. Links to the document RE and the foundation phase had also been included for to support those schools offering foundation learning.

All the links to support and activities for all the resources available had been included in the annual report, it was hoped schools would use the annual report to guide them to the resources to support delivery of RE and RVE.

Members were provided with details of the Religious Education Quality Mark. The RE Quality Mark recognised, celebrates and publicised outstanding religious education in all primary and secondary schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland through its three levels of award, bronze, silver and gold. Ysgol Frongoch and Ysgol y Parc have previously applied for the bronze award.

Details of the HWB networks were included. Denbighshire had its own network which included around 80 teachers but there was also a HWB network available for staff to utilise. A number of resources was available within the HWB for support. As a Member of SACRE you were entitled to have access to that HWB.

The report provided the reader with information and links to the alternative qualifications in the RE and RVE field.

The European Forum for Teachers of Religious Education was an organisation that brought representatives from across European countries together to compare and contrast the different methods and teachings of RE across Europe.

The following section of the annual report focused on the Estyn reports that had been reported to SACRE. It highlighted the number of comments that related to the different sections of the report. 12 inspection reports had been reviewed.

The Chair thanked the RE Advisor for the detailed run through of all the aspects of the report. She stated the report contained numerous valuable links to a variety of resources that were available for schools and staff but also to SACRE Members. She stressed a lot of work had gone into compiling the paper and thanked the RE Advisor for the papers.

Officers encouraged Members to contact the support service to support access to the HWB. Details of the support were available online, alternatively contact the provider of the HWB account to support access to the information.

The Chair highlighted that no presentations of the provisions of ITT had been made during the last 12 months. She requested that enquiries be made to include a presentation to the committee be made for a future meeting. The RE Advisor confirmed he could make some enquires for a presentation to be delivered to the committee in a future meeting.

RESOLVED that Members approve the report subject to the amendments noted above and request the LA to translate the report and make available to all schools and colleges in Denbighshire, and other recipients as required by law and as identified in the report.

7 RVE AND RE OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

The Chair introduced the item to members and emphasised the majority of resources had been discussed during the previous item discussion.

The RE Advisor confirmed the item had been included during the discussion of agenda item 6. In addition to what had previously been discussed, he added the Welsh Government Professional Learning Modules had been released. At the previous meeting a presentation was provided to Members on the module materials. The material provided many examples of how to include in the classroom and how to present subjects to pupils. In his opinion the theory and practice was balanced in the material provided.

The RE Advisor confirmed he would include detail on the resources around the professional learning modules in the annual report.

The RE advisor asked if Members were aware of any additional material that schools were using to support RVE and RE in schools. If Members were aware of any resources he asked if they could be shared with the committee.

RESOLVED that Members note the presentation and Members share any additional materials or opportunities they are aware of, to feedback to Denbighshire schools.

8 WASACRE

- **Minutes of WASACRE – 19 June 2023**

The minutes of the Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE) held via Microsoft Teams on 19 June 2023 (previously circulated) were submitted.

Jennie Downes had been in attendance at the WASACRE meeting.

The RE Advisor advised previously this agenda item allowed the representative at the WASACRE to report to the committee any matters arising from the minutes they felt members needed to be aware of.

Members heard that WASACRE were very conscious of promoting the value and benefit that it brought to RVE and culture within education. The role of SACRE and the work they contributed was seen as vital.

A small group of WASACRE members were meeting to discuss how to promote the work of SACRE and WASACRE online.

A WASACRE conference was being arranged for educationalists including the Education Minister and schools to discuss the good practice with implementing RVE.

The RE Advisor asked members at the next meeting, with regards the Curriculum for Wales update would Members provide the Committee with the working going on in the schools they had connections with. The Chair agreed that would be beneficial to the discussions in this subject area.

RESOLVED that minutes of WASACRE held on 19 June 2023 be received.

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next meeting of Denbighshire SACRE would be held on 22 February 2024.
The meeting concluded at 11.05 am.