

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

Minutes of a meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held in Council Chamber, Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn LL19 9LG on Friday, 14 February 2014 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Representing Denbighshire County Council

Councillors Bill Tasker, Dewi Owens, Margaret McCarroll, Arwel Roberts, Joe Welch and Ann Davies

Representing Religious Denominations

Mr. Dominic Oakes, Rev. Martin Evans-Jones and Ms S Harris

Representing Teacher Associations

Mrs C Harmsworth

Co-opted Members

Mr G Craigen

ALSO PRESENT

Systems Leader for GwE (PL) and Committee Administrator (SLW)

SILENT REFLECTION

The meeting began with a few minutes silent reflection.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Carys Guy, Rev. Brian Huw Jones and Lt. Sian Radford.

2 ELECTION OF NEW VICE-CHAIR - FROM THE LEA REPRESENTATIVES

In accordance with Denbighshire SACRE's constitution, nominations had been invited for the appointment of Vice-Chair from the LEA representatives.

Councillor Arwel Roberts was nominated and seconded as Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED that Councillor Arwel Roberts be appointed as Vice-Chair of SACRE.

3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of personal or prejudicial interest had been raised.

4 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters had been raised for consideration.

5 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held on 11 October 2013 (previously circulated) were submitted.

Matters Arising – Page 9, Item No. 9 Estyn Report on Religious Education in Secondary Schools. The short GCSE course was worth half a GCSE and schools tended to opt for the course as it could be carried out in the time set aside to cover the legal requirement for RE. The short course covered two religions during the study. The full GCSE course had been proven to be the most popular between the two courses.

Page 10, Item No. 9 – the Systems Leader for GwE (SL) confirmed a letter had been sent to Denbighshire's Head of Education as requested in the previous meeting, but to date, no response had been received.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 11 October 2013 be received and approved as a correct record.

6 ANALYSIS OF INSPECTION REPORTS

The Systems Leader for GwE (SL) submitted a report (previously circulated) analysing the results of the recent Estyn Inspections in terms of RE provision and collective worship in two schools in October 2013.

Inspections had been carried out at Ysgol Cefn Meiriadog and Ysgol Trefnant Voluntary Aided Church in Wales Primary School.

The SL provided Members with a brief resume of the findings relating to each school and Members were pleased to note the positive comments.

The issue of school links to churches had been raised by SACRE Members. It was agreed a Survey would be sent out to all schools requesting information such as:

- How many pupils see a Minister and how often?
- How many pupils have been inside a church or chapel?

An introductory letter would also accompany the survey explaining information needed to be collated to improve links with the community and to develop guidance.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) *The report be received and noted.*
- (b) *A letter be sent to each of the schools informing them that their Inspection Report had been considered, congratulating them for good features identified.*
- (c) *To request the Local Authority to distribute the letters to the schools involved.*

7 EXAMINATION RESULTS 2013

The Systems Leader for GwE (SL) submitted the Examination Results 2013 Report (previously circulated).

The report contained the detailed results for examinations at GCSE and Advance Level Religious Studies for the year 2012 and 2013, together with an analysis of the differences and trends.

The report was for Members to be able to exercise their functions in relation to their statutory duty to monitor provision for RE in schools, and to be fully informed as to results for the year.

The national results for the RE short course had not been published on completion of the report. Therefore, comparison figures could not be included. It had been agreed by SACRE Members that a letter be sent to the Welsh Government expressing concern regarding the late publication of statistics.

It was clarified that A* - G were classed as qualification grades.

Schools and the Local Authority were using “Fischer Family Trust” to be able to further analyse the data within and across schools.

RESOLVED that *subject to the above, the report be received and noted.*

8 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION QUALITY MARK (REQM)

The Systems Leader for GwE (SL) submitted a presentation (previously circulated) which had been shown to WASACRE previously. The Religious Education Quality Mark (REQM) would be available to all schools as a way of good practice to be validated. Recently, the materials had been adapted and translated so it could be accessed by schools in Wales.

It had been discussed and agreed that the criteria be promoted amongst schools. The criteria would be freely available to download from the REQM website in both Welsh and English. Questionnaires were also available from the website. It would promote good practice to work through the criteria even if not taking on the Quality Mark itself.

The SL confirmed he would be contacting all schools to promote the REQM.

The Chair and Committee Members offered their thanks to the SL for all his hard work regarding the REQM.

RESOLVED that the presentation be received and noted.

9 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION QUALITY MARK (REQM) ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The Systems Leader for GwE (SL) submitted a report (previously circulated) for Members to be aware of the practices that make a good RE Department.

The Religious Education Quality Mark would be available to all schools as a way of validating good practice. Recently, material had been adapted and translated so that it could be accessed by schools in Wales. WASACRE recommended that the materials be used by SACRE's to support, monitor and identify good practice in RE.

RESOLVED that SACRE recommend to local schools the use of the REQM awarding criteria as a basis.

10 WALES ASSOCIATION OF SACRE (WASCRE)

- (a) Minutes of the Wales Association of SACRE (WASACRE) meeting, Cardiff, 10 October 2013 (previously circulated) were submitted for Members information.

RESOLVED that minutes of WASACRE held on 10 October 2013 be received and noted.

(b) WASACRE meeting 27 March 2014 in Caerphilly.

Members discussed attendance at the next meeting and considered the candidates for the Executive Committee and it was –

RESOLVED that:

- Gavin Craigen attend the next WASACRE meeting on 27 March 2014
- Phil Lord and Gavin Craigan were already members of the Executive Committee.

Mr Dominic Oakes requested it be noted within the minutes that he could not be nominated on to the Executive Committee as there were no funds available for payment of loss of income, due to him being self-employed.

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed.

Meeting concluded at 12.10 p.m.