



Cyfarfod Cymdeithas CYSAAGau Cymru, NPT, 6 Mawrth 2015 (10.30am – 3pm)

Wales Association of SACREs meeting, NPT, 6 March 2015 (10.30am – 3pm)

<p>Ynys Môn / Anglesey Bethan James Rheinallt Thomas</p> <p>Blaenau Gwent</p> <p>Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr / Bridgend Edward Evans Vicky Thomas Lowri Florence Cathryn Davies-Jones</p> <p>Caerffili/ Caerphilly Vicky Thomas</p> <p>Caerdydd / Cardiff Katherine Mayer</p> <p>Sir Gaerfyrddin / Carmarthenshire Mary Parry Meinir Wynne Loader</p> <p>Ceredigion Lyndon Lloyd</p> <p>Conwy Nicholas Richter</p>	<p>Sir Ddinbych / Denbighshire Gavin Craigen</p> <p>Sir y Fflint / Flintshire</p> <p>Gwynedd Bethan James</p> <p>Merthyr Tudful / Merthyr Tydfil Y Cyngh./ Vicky Thomas Ernie Galsworthy</p> <p>Sir Fynwy / Monmouthshire Sharon Perry- Phillips Susan Cave Neeta Singh Baicher</p> <p>Castell-nedd Port Talbot / Neath and Port Talbot Jen Malcolm Peter Rees Janice Dudley Rachel Samuel Gwilym Jones</p> <p>Casnewydd / Newport Vicky Thomas Andrew Powles Huw Stephens Neeta Singh Baicher <i>Sally Northcott</i> Amanda B. Davies Soam Sharma</p> <p>Sir Benfro / Pembrokeshire Huw George</p>	<p>Powys Margaret Evitts</p> <p>Rhondda Cynon Taf</p> <p>Abertawe / Swansea Vicky Thomas Chris Mann Rachel Bendall (SMUTSD) Claire Foley Alison Lewis Helen-Marie Davies</p> <p>Torfaen /Torfaen Vicky Thomas Marilyn Frazer Helen Bevan</p> <p>Bro Morgannwg / Vale of Glamorgan</p> <p>Wrecsam / Wrexham Tania ap Sion Libby Jones</p> <p>Sylwedyddion / Observers Leslie Francis (St Mary's Centre) Mark Champion (Estyn) Eldon Phillips (REMW)</p>
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Minutes

1. Cyflwyniad a chroeso / *Introduction and welcome*

Chair, Tania ap Siôn introduced Aled Evans, Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning for Neath Port Talbot, who gave the welcome address.

Aled Evans welcomed WASACRE to The Orangery in Margam. He commented that it is a good venue for a meeting focussed on religious education, with its 4000 years of continuous habitation which reminds us of the need to safeguard our heritage. The 850-acre estate is one of the major ancient settlements in Wales, a pre-historic site with evidence of bronze age, Celtic and Roman habitation. It also has particular religious importance as the site of a Cistercian Abbey, which was built in the Middle Ages and it has links across the whole of Wales. The Orangery itself was built in the late 18th Century. Neath Port Talbot has a pro-active SACRE, which is always searching for new ideas for monitoring standards in religious education and collective worship. SACRE has just begun a new monitoring process taking on the different approach of inviting secondary Heads of RE to present on their own departments at each meeting and sharing the plans they have put in place to ensure development, including their transition programme with feeder primary schools. Also, the Holocaust Memorial Day event is very special in Neath Port Talbot and one that the local authority and SACRE is very proud of. Aled Evans commented on the Donaldson Report which has just been published and said that it is very good to see support for religious education in the report and a recommendation to keep RE as a statutory requirement in Wales. He also commented that religious education helps to develop the important, lifelong skills that all learners need and provides them with a forum for thinking about the deep questions. He urged the need for safeguarding these skills, as they not only help to develop knowledge of different religions, but also help learners formulate ideas about the world we live in. Aled Evans described how his own daughters had benefited immensely from religious education in school and went on to say that we often underestimate the importance of religious education in helping learners to develop an understanding of different religions and promoting integration and a stronger sense of community. Wales, he explained, is good at this as we are not a country or a nation; we are a very big village or community. Mr Evans wished WASACRE a good meeting.

The Chair thanked Aled Evans for his words and welcomed Cllr Peter Rees and Cllr **Janice** Dudley (Chair of NPT SACRE), also from Neath Port Talbot to the meeting.

2. Adfyfyrion tawel / *Quiet reflection*

A reflective silence to prepare for the meeting ahead.

3. Ymddiheuriadau / *Apologies* John Mitson, Cllr Michael Gray, Tudor Thomas, Cllr Deborah Wilcox, Helen Gibbon, Gill Vaisey, Christine Abbas, Arthur Threlfall, Ams Kingra, Farida Patel, P Harris, Wyn Meredith, Louise Thomas, Steve Price.

4. Cofnodion y cyfarfod a gynhaliwyd yn Nhorfaen, 26 Tachwedd 2014 / Minutes of meeting held in Torfaen, 6 November 2014

Following one amendment to the attendance list, the minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

5. Materion yn codi / Matters arising

P4. Item 5. It is noted in the Executive report that Wales is no longer represented on the RE Council for England and Wales. In the past Wales has had a co-opted place, but no secure place. The REC is offering WASACRE the chance to nominate a representative for the Board, however, the nominee may or may not be successfully elected. The Executive Committee agreed to write to REC expressing disappointment with this situation. Libby Jones will write the letter. Past Chair, Edward Evans expressed the importance of Welsh representation on the Board which has Wales in its title.

P7. Item 7. The presentation by WJEC 'What does the data tell us?' is on the WASACRE website to be shared with SACREs.

P8. Item 7. The presentation by Monmouthshire SACRE 'Celebrating RE Transition Project' is on the WASACRE website to be shared with SACREs.

P9. Item 7. The presentation by NAPfRE members 'SACREs and consortia arrangements (feedback)' is on the WASACRE website to be shared with SACREs.

Usually all NAPfRE presentations will be uploaded to the WASACRE website and this process is now protocol. www.wasacre.org.uk

Rheinallt Thomas queried whether this takes place of the REflections that used to appear in RENews. REflections are now Canolfan Peniarth's responsibility and therefore a process needs to be agreed for the continuation of sharing this information with RENews online. Tania ap Sion responded by explaining that WASACRE has not yet looked at how this would work since RENews has moved to web-based publication only and so it needs to be raised at the Executive. Rachel Bendall is involved in supporting the new website and she also responded by explaining the current situation. Rachel offered to pass on any comments or questions to Peniarth. Tania ap Siôn reminded members that it is the responsibility of the presenter to write up a commentary for their presentation before it can be published on the website, but that WASACRE could facilitate this. The inclusion of PowerPoint presentations on WASACRE website does not take the place of written articles for presentations; these are two different kinds of resource.

A.O.B. An brief update was given on this project – that is, Professor Leslie Francis' request for 6th forms willing to participate in his current Europe-wide survey 'Religion, Values and Human Rights'. From this request two schools have responded. The survey is available in English only, there is still opportunity for participation, and it is open for 16-18 year olds, as well as year 11. In the Torfaen meeting it was described as 6th Form

only. Leslie Francis commented that through this survey he is listening to young people in order to gain an understanding of their views on religion, their values and their views on Human Rights. Part of the driver behind this survey is points of conflict between religious positions and Human Rights positions. Leslie Francis also pointed out that this is an empirical perspective and he offered some examples of survey questions for members to look at over lunch. Professor Francis said that he would welcome an opportunity to present and discuss the results of the Welsh survey in a future WASACRE meeting.

6. Diweddariadau/Up-dates:

Bagloriaeth Cymru Newydd / *New Welsh Baccalaureate*

Libby Jones gave a brief overview of the new qualification. In response to the findings of the Review of Qualifications, the Welsh Baccalaureate is changing from September 2015. The core of the revised Welsh Baccalaureate will have a clear focus on the following skills: Literacy, Numeracy, Digital Literacy, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Planning and Organisation, Creativity and Innovation, and Personal Effectiveness. These skills will be developed, applied and assessed through the completion of four 'Challenges', which are: The Individual Project Challenge (50%), Global Citizenship Challenge (15%), Enterprise and Employability Challenge (20%), and Community Challenge (15%). These challenges make up the core aspect of the Welsh Bacc and form the Skills Challenge Certificate, which is a GCSE in its own right. The Welsh Baccalaureate qualification as a whole will be the key Performance Indicator for schools from 2018. Libby explained that schools have been informed that it should not be a 'bolt on' programme and should not be delivered mainly through 'blocks' of time (e.g. at the end of term), which raises issues for schools in where they fit it into an already crowded timetable. This issue has raised concern for some Heads of RE who have experienced discussions about KS4 RE time being used for Welsh Bacc dedicated lessons in their schools. Libby urged members to be aware of this issue and to consider how individual SACREs can support RE in their Local Authorities. RE can easily contribute to the challenges within core RE time but how this is done without losing essential exam preparation needs to be thought about carefully. Vicky Thomas responded by saying that RE is still a statutory requirement, the Donaldson Report has strengthened that and schools should be reminded of this. Vicky's comments were reiterated by other members including the need for schools, especially RE departments, to be supported by SACREs at this time. Other questions were raised including where this support would come from, budgets etc, and where are the professionals to provide the support? Tania ap Sion thanked members for their important comments and raised the question of how WASACRE can help and work towards providing support for schools and SACREs. Vicky responded also by saying that Governing bodies need to provide support and this can be prompted by sending a Mailshot to them to say how RE can contribute.

Arholiadau Astudiaethau Crefyddol / *Religious Studies examinations*

Vicky Thomas gave an up-date regarding the current situation. She explained that two stakeholder meetings have taken place. One in November 2014 which Tania ap Siôn attended on behalf of WASACRE and one in December which herself, Mary Parry and Phil Lord attended as representatives of WASACRE. Members were pointed towards the information sheet included in the papers for the meeting, from which Vicky wanted members to note the following:

There will be changes to the current specifications for Wales and a number of models will go out to all schools in Wales for them to respond to. Vicky urged members to encourage schools to respond as their voice is important. Vicky told members that there is a strong feeling within WJEC that Short Course Religious Studies will continue. At GCSE the study of two different religions will be made compulsory in England and therefore most likely in Wales too. There is also a possibility that Buddhism and Sikhism will be included in the GCSE specification.

At AS and A2 level the two qualifications will stand alone in England (the AS will no longer link into the A2) and there will be no January examination and no synoptic option in England. However, in Wales students will be offered the choice of doing the synoptic option, but they will no longer be able to see the question before the exam. In Wales the AS will still link into the A2, but as in England there will also be no January exam. In Wales there will not be any prescribed content for Curriculum Cymreig, but local Curriculum Cymreig will be encouraged where appropriate.

Under Process and Timescale on the sheet Vicky pointed out that Welsh Government will be approached for accreditation of the specifications by 30 September 2015 and not the Summer as the sheet suggests, with implementation from Autumn 2016.

Following Vicky's report the following questions were raised:

Will the specification models sent to schools be in hard copy form or electronic? Vicky Thomas was not able to confirm this.

Will either of the two compulsory religions have to be Christianity? Vicky Thomas was able to confirm 'no'.

Tania ap Siôn thanked Vicky for the up-date.

Cysylltiadau Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government contacts

Regarding the request for reinstatement of the meeting with the Minister for Education and Skills, Huw Lewis. Libby Jones wrote to the Minister to secure a suitable date for the meeting and a response was received on 11 December 2014 informing WASACRE that the Minister will not consider a meeting until after the publication of the Donaldson Report. Following this letter Libby Jones and Tania ap Siôn met with John Pugsley, Head of Subject Support 7-19 and Steve Price, responsible for RE and other non-core curriculum subjects, both from Welsh Government, on 20 January 2015. Louise Thomas

was not in attendance. They discussed how Welsh Government and WASACRE can work together in a mutually advantageous relationship. Both parties agreed to meet twice a year to discuss matters relating to RE and collective worship as well as other related matters. Tania ap Siôn n commented that the meeting was positive and that WASACRE will maintain contact with Mr Pugsley and Mr Price in between the meetings. A further request for a meeting with the Minister was given at the meeting and WASACRE was advised to continue raising some specific issues directly with Huw Lewis.

Adolygiad cwricwlwm / Curriculum review

Members were informed that WASACRE has been involved from the beginning of this review process, meeting with Professor Donaldson and responding to the initial consultation questionnaire.

Chair of NAPfRE, Bethan James presented a PowerPoint which had previously been discussed at the NAPfRE meeting on 5 March 2015 and which is now available on the Welsh Government website and the WASACRE website for members to access. The PowerPoint showed some of the main points of the recently published Donaldson Report, as follows:

Four purposes of education.

Six Areas of Learning and Experience.

Three cross-curriculum responsibilities.

Progression Steps at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16 (including 'Routes').

Achievement outcomes.

A range of pedagogical approaches.

Refocusing assessment on learning, including learners' self- and peer-assessment.

Monitoring performance of the system at a national level through annual sampling.

A further questionnaire is now on the Welsh Government website which schools, other groups and individuals are being encouraged to respond to. However, before its completion these groups are also being encouraged to have the 'Great Debate' for which there are a series of resources available. These resources will act as prompts to stimulate and support the debate. E.g. film clips, questions etc.

Vicky Thomas informed members that there are four 'Major Debates' that they can be involved in across Wales as follows:

11 March - 16:00-18:00 - Neuadd Reichel, University of Bangor

12 March - 08:00-10:00 - Catrin Finch Centre (auditorium), Wrexham - CANCELLED

18 March - 16:00-18:00 - Liberty Stadium, Swansea

19 March - 08:00-10:00 - Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw PLUS LIVE WEBINAR.

In order to secure a place at one of the debates members will have to submit their name via the Welsh Government website and wait for confirmation.

This whole process is called 'Phase 1' and runs from 4 March to 8 May 2015. After this all the views will be considered and a statement from Welsh Government will be published in the summer.

Bethan James assured members that the material is very current and most relevant to WASACRE. The questions for the 'Great Debate' are as follows:

Q1. In what ways do you agree or disagree that the existing national curriculum is no longer suitable for the needs of children and young people in Wales?

Q2. What are your views on the four broad purposes set out in the Report? Overall, do you think these provide the right basis for the future curriculum for children and young people in Wales? And, if not, why not?

Q3. Combining subjects and other aspects of learning into six Areas of Learning and Experience reaffirms the importance of subjects – and also recognises aspects of learning that are also important such as health and well-being. In what ways do you agree or disagree with this approach?

Q4. The Review recommends an approach to assessment that is primarily concerned with supporting children and young people's educational progression, and distinguishes between assessment to help progression and assessment to provide evidence for accountability. In what ways do you agree or disagree with this approach?

Q5. What is your initial response to the pedagogical principles outlined in Professor Donaldson's Report?

Q6. Professor Donaldson's Report proposes a significantly stronger role for schools/settings and teachers in shaping the curriculum. In what ways do you agree or disagree that this is desirable?

(This is very relevant. Teachers and schools have the freedom to develop a curriculum that is relevant to their own pupils. This question needs more discussion from SACREs)

Q7. How best can this process of involvement be continued and how would your school/setting like to be involved? Surveys, conferences, workshops, locally organised debates, social media, other (please specify).

Bethan James proposed that NAPfRE will respond as a group and because WASACRE and most SACREs will not meet before the deadline of 8 May the NAPfRE group (which will also contain WASACRE Executive members) will respond on behalf of WASACRE also, if members are in agreement. Members present agreed to this proposal. Rheinallt

Thomas asked for the response to be circulated to all members through SACREs and the Executive before it is sent to Welsh Government so that it may inform their responses as appropriate. This was also agreed at the meeting. Bethan urged individuals and SACREs to respond to the questionnaire so that RE was well represented.

Edward Evans asked for clarification on the statutory nature of RE being up to 16 and not further. Mary Parry responded by saying that the review was commissioned for the up to 16 age group only.

7. Cyflwyniad NAPfRE / NAPfRE presentation:

Fframwaith Llythrennedd a Rhifedd ac Addysg Grefyddol / *The Literacy and Numeracy Framework and RE* Rachel Bendall

Rachel Bendall, Senior Lecturer Secondary PGCE Religious Education from University of Wales Trinity Saint David presented a PowerPoint showing the work her students have done to incorporate the LNF in their teaching of religious education. Rachel showed members a variety of example tasks that the students had successfully trialled during their placements.

The resources have been shared on the new RENews website. The correct address for this website is <http://www.religious-education-wales.org/> and also on the Hwb website <https://hwb.wales.gov.uk/>. The PowerPoint presentation will also be available on the WASACRE website.

Ennyn diddordeb bechgyn mewn AG a chodi eu safonau / *Engaging boys in RE and raising their standards* Mary Parry

Mary Parry explained that this specific issue is one that has been raised by Estyn across the curriculum but also in the 2012 Thematic Review of Religious Education and so it is very current. Mary shared a scheme of work for KS3 pupils that she has developed called 'Muslim Footballers in the Premier league'. The scheme aims to engage and motivate boys, raise standards, implement the LNF, develop religious education skills and to develop thinking skills.

Members were shown a PowerPoint presentation that could be used with pupils in class and were given copies of the tasks that accompany the PowerPoint to take back to their SACREs.

Members carried out one of the tasks in groups and fed back their responses and discussion ensued.

Meinir Loader said that she had trialled these tasks and has seen first-hand the benefits to her pupils and the high standard of the extended writing task among boys and girls.

Professor Leslie Francis welcomed the presentation. He commented that it is a good way in which male images can be used within RE and that men too can be religious. Leslie

Francis explained that current research indicates that religion has become feminised in that it appeals to those who have a particular disposition ('feeling types') and that it is important to widen the appeal of religious education to respond to the interests of 'thinking types' also. 'Thinking types' and 'feeling types' are not determined by sex (male and female) but research in many countries show that proportionally more males tend to be 'thinking types' and more females tend to be 'feeling types'. It is important to do some research which looks into this further.

Sharon Perry-Phillips commented that schools and especially RE departments have little or no funding to resource religious education and that as a teacher she is grateful to Mary Parry and WASACRE for sharing something that members can take back to their schools for free.

Unfortunately, due to copyright issues the resources will not be more widely available and will not be shared on the WASACRE website.

Neeta Baicher also shared information about a useful resource from the BBC called 'India's daughter' which is on iPlayer now.

8. Adroddiad ar gyfarfod y Pwyllgor Gwaith a gynhaliwyd ar 2 Chwefror 2015 / *Report from the Executive Committee held on 2 February 2015*

P2 Item 8. Estyn reports. Vicky Thomas updated members on what Caerphilly SACRE had done with regard to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) comments in Estyn reports. The contents of Anne Keene's letter from Estyn was shared and members were very pleased with the response that inspectors would be reminded about the requirement to report on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils in their next e-shot to them. The WASACRE Executive Committee agreed to continue checking reports and to write again to Anne Keane to update her on any progress. Bethan James thanked Caerphilly SACRE for flagging it up and Mark Campion from Estyn reiterated this and asked WASACRE to contact him in the autumn term if there are any gaps relating to this in Estyn reports. Rheinallt Thomas reminded members that Anne Keene has been very supportive of RE and is retiring soon. He proposed that WASACRE send a letter of thanks to Anne for her support and also a letter to make contact with the current Strategic Director. Libby Jones will write and send both letters.

P3 Item 14. Phil Lord is at the EFTRE meeting in Dublin at present, but in his absence Tania ap Siôn informed members of the significant role he has played in developing the Wales REQM. He now feels that he has completed this important aspect of his work and that a link role is now needed, which will be filled by Libby Jones. Tania ap Siôn formally thanked Phil for his contribution to REQM Wales.

9. Gohebiaeth /Correspondence

Two items have already been covered elsewhere on the agenda. One under Item 6. Updates. Welsh Government contacts and the reinstatement of the meeting with the Minister

and the second under Item 8. The executive report from 2 February 2015. Estyn reports and the letter from Anne Keene.

A letter was received from Wrexham SACRE regarding the possibility of Estyn including a comment on collective worship in future reports. Vicky Thomas informed members that this was also included in Caerphilly SACRE's letter to Estyn.

Mark Champion (Estyn) informed the meeting that it is at the discretion of the reporting officer whether or not to include a comment about the quality of collective worship. It may appear to be inconsistent, however, if it does not appear the inspector is complying with Estyn guidance. Mark Champion read out an example from Newport High School which explicitly commented on collective worship and mentioned other schools like Ysgol Rhiwabon where positive comments had been included in the report. He explained that there was no appetite to change the current guidance from Estyn. During the inspection week inspectors will discuss with schools things that do not appear in the report, as they cannot include everything they would like to in it and therefore it is important for them to continue this dialogue. Gavin Craigen thanked Mark Champion for his clear explanation of Estyn's position and proposed that there would be no purpose in taking this forward. Members present agreed.

Libby Jones will inform Wrexham SACRE of this response.

Some members commented on the difficulty SACREs have in monitoring collective worship when Estyn reports do not include specific comments on it. The debate on this issue continues at NAPfRE meetings and in individual SACRE meetings and a presentation on the monitoring of collective worship and its provision in schools will be part of the WASACRE programme at the next meeting.

Christine Abbas sent members of WASACRE New Year greetings from the Baha'i community in Wales. (this email was received after the event due to problems with internet access at the time)

10. U.F.A. / A.O.B.

Chris Mann from Swansea SACRE offered leaflets from the Buddhist Centre in Swansea and Llandudno both of which welcome school visits. Members were invited to take a leaflet back to their own SACRE if they wished to. Chris Mann thanked WASACRE for drawing attention to the Centre and for an interesting meeting.

11. Dyddiad y cyfarfod nesaf / Date for next meeting: 25 Mehefin 2015, Sir y Fflint yn cynnwys AGM / 25 June 2015, Flintshire including AGM.

Dyddiadau cyfarfodydd yn y dyfodol / *Future meeting dates: 25 Tachwedd 2015 (Blaenau Gwent) / 25 November 2015 (Blaenau Gwent).*

Tania ap Siôn thanked all persons involved with the organisation and running of the meeting, with special thanks to SACRE Clerk Mary Mills, Systems Leader Jen Malcolm, the translation team, and the staff at the Orangery in Margam.

DRAFT