

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

Minutes of a meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held in Ysgol Dinas Bran, Llangollen on Monday, 20 June 2016 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Representing Denbighshire County Council

Councillors A. Roberts (Chair) and J.S. Welsh.

Representing Religious Denominations

S. Cameron, Ms S. Harris, Reverend Martin Evans-Jones and M.J. Lundenbach.

ALSO PRESENT

Challenge Advisor for GwE (PL) and Committee Administrator (CIW).

Mr D. Miller (Observer from the Diocese), Ms C. Hannaby and Ms S. Couison (Representatives of Ysgol Dinas Bran, Llangollen).

SILENT REFLECTION

The meeting began with a few minutes silent reflection. The Chair invited Members of SACRE to reflect on the loss of loved ones and close relatives who were sadly missed, and he made reference to the recent sad and tragic death of Joe Cox the Labour MP for Batley and Spen.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ann Davies, Bill Tasker and Mr. Dominic Oakes, Rev. B H Jones, Ms. Ali Ballantyne.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

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

4 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) meeting held on the 12th February, 2016 (previously circulated) were submitted.

5. Examination Results 2015 – The CA confirmed that letters of congratulations from SACRE had been sent to Rhyl High School, Prestatyn High School and St Brig, Denbigh acknowledging their respective achievements.

7. WASACRE Questionnaire to Schools – Members were informed that the completed surveys had been passed to WASACRE as agreed.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above, the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on the 12th February, 2016 be received and approved as a correct record.

5 ANALYSIS OF INSPECTION REPORTS

The Challenge Advisor GwE (CA) submitted a report (previously circulated) which provided an analysis of Estyn Inspections Reports published in the Autumn term, in relation to the provision and collective worship, in three schools between November, 2014 and January, 2015.

Inspections had been carried out at Ysgol Gynradd Bro Elwern, Gwyddelwern near Corwen; Ysgol Bryn Collen, Llangollen; Ysgol Clawdd Offa, Prestatyn; Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd; Ysgol Mair Catholic Primary School, Rhyl, and details pertaining to each of the respective schools had been incorporated in the report and were summarised by the CA.

The CA provided Members with a brief resume of the findings relating to each school, and the positive comments and outcomes were noted by Members. The CA explained that the comments received had been brief and he made particular reference to the following:-

Positive Comments - Current Performance:-

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Standards

- Year 6 pupils, for example, used their skills effectively in a science investigation to record their predictions and their findings. In history, they used the style of a diary to discuss actions taken by the suffragettes and in religious education they record aspects of Pentecost. (Bryn Collen). The CA commented that it had been a considerable length of time since reference had been made to religious education in an Estyn Report.

Wellbeing:-

- Many pupils had contributed appropriately to the local community by taking part in assemblies, concerts and activities to celebrate the story of the former Prince of Wales, Owain Glyndŵr. This had raised awareness of their community responsibilities. (Bro Elwern)

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Learning experiences:-

- The school provided a wide range of interesting learning experiences that gain pupils' interest well. It meets the requirements of the Foundation Phase, the National Curriculum and the agreed syllabus for religious education. (Bro Elwern)
- The curriculum provided suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about global citizenship, there were good links with schools in Lesotho and Nepal, which raised their awareness of the life of children in areas that were very different from Wales. (Bro Elwern)
- Staff developed pupils' awareness of global citizenship successfully through work on fair trade, links with schools in Italy and Nepal, and through work during the International Eisteddfod. (Bryn Collen)
- The school promoted global citizenship successfully through topic work on other countries around the world. (Clawdd Offa)
- The school provided rich experiences through continuous planning that met the requirements of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework, the National Curriculum, principles of the Foundation Phase and religious education successfully. (Llanfair DC)
- The school provided a valuable range of experiences for pupils to expand their knowledge and understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship. This included studying countries such as Ethiopia, holding a Chinese week and forest school activities. As a result, pupils' understanding of environmental issues and global issues had developed well. (Llanfair DC)
- Arrangements to develop pupils as global citizens were a strong feature of the school which took every opportunity to celebrate diversity within the school community and wider world successfully, for example through studies of other cultures and links with a school in Ethiopia. (Ysgol Mair)

Care, support and guidance:-

- The school promoted pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development successfully by providing collective worship services and through wider curriculum activities. Visitors were invited to lead the worship and there were opportunities for pupils to reflect on contemporary topics, such as caring for the environment and considering children and people who were less fortunate than themselves. This was reflected in the efforts to raise money for the people of Nepal after the earthquake in 2014. (Bro Elwern)
- Pupils had many opportunities to develop their understanding of moral and social issues. The school promoted pupils' cultural development well through a range of visits and visitors, including work with the Llangollen Fringe. Learning within the curriculum and acts of collective worship provided beneficial opportunities for pupils to reflect and to develop their spiritual awareness appropriately. (Bryn Collen)
- Pupils had many worthwhile opportunities to develop their understanding of moral and social issues. The school promoted pupils' cultural development well through a range of visits and opportunities to learn about, for example, Chinese New Year. Daily acts of collective worship provided suitable

opportunities for pupils to reflect and develop their spiritual awareness appropriately. (Clawdd Offa)

- The school provided very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The morning assemblies and opportunities for reflection were prominent in school life and promote pupils' spiritual development effectively. This included regular visits by the vicar and 'Open the Book' assemblies, and, as a result, values such as fairness were fostered well. (Llanfair DC)
- Learning experiences provided pupils with worthwhile opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Collective worship and circle time sessions enable pupils to consider their own values and beliefs as well as the feelings and viewpoints of others. All pupils visit the local church for celebrations, particularly at Christmas, Easter and leavers' mass. The school celebrated its diverse population successfully throughout the year in events such as an international week where pupils learn about other cultures and beliefs. (Ysgol Mair)

Learning Environment:-

- The school had policies, plans and procedures to ensure equal opportunities to all pupils and that promote equality successfully. Respect for racial diversity and equality was promoted successfully. (Bro Elwern)
- The school provided an inclusive, welcoming environment for all pupils. All staff treated pupils equally and promoted diversity successfully. (Bryn Collen)
- The school was a warm, welcoming and inclusive community. The caring ethos encouraged pupils to have respect and tolerance for others. (Clawdd Offa)
- The school was a caring and supportive environment which valued all pupils equally. The school's commitment to celebrating the diversity of all pupils was a prominent feature of its work. As a result, a culture of mutual care, tolerance and respect permeates the school. (Ysgol Mair)

Key Question 3; How good is leadership and management?

Leadership:-

- The headteacher promoted a caring, inclusive community for the school based on its strong Christian ethos. He shared this successfully with all pupils, staff, governors and parents. As a result, all members of the school community had a strong sense of belonging. (Ysgol Mair)

Partnership working:-

- Staff make purposeful, extensive links with the local community, including taking part in the local Remembrance Day service and the International Eisteddfod parade, to enhance pupils' learning opportunities successfully. These links promoted a strong ethic of community involvement in the life and work of the school. (Bryn Collen)

The CA made particular reference to Page 2 of the report and focused on the positive work undertaken in relation to Care, Support and Guidance. He also

highlighted the detail included in the Estyn Report with regard to collective worship and spiritual matters, which he felt had been very positive.

The Chair and Members of SACRE extended their congratulations to the work undertaken by the schools involved in the Inspections.

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

6 SCHOOL TO SCHOOL COLLABORATIVE WORKING - LAUNCH EVENT

SACRE Members were informed that GwE would be working with SACRE to provide opportunities for schools to work together supporting Religious Education and Collective Worship.

Members received a PowerPoint presentation on the School to School Collaborative Working Launch which would be held at St Mary's, Denbighshire on the 30th June, 2016 and St Giles, Wrexham on the 7th July, 2016.

The Challenge Advisor for GwE (CAG) provided a detailed summary of the PowerPoint presentation which included the following:-

- The wonderful world of RE.
- RE is a unique subject.
- Foundation Phase.
- Religious Education in the Foundation Phase.
- KS2/CA2.
- Levelling:-
 - What do they need to improve?
 - Where are they?
 - Where have they come from?
 - About their own experiences, the world around them aspects of religion
 - Beliefs, teachings and practices investigated
 - Importance of others
 - Their opinions
 - Opinions of others
 - Using vocabulary
- Lesson Ideas.
- Parable of the wise and foolish builders.
- Plenary quiz.
- What do you think:-
 - Engaging with fundamental questions
- The facts:-
 - Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)
- Responding to:-
 - Expressing personal responses
- Discussion.

During the ensuing discussion the following issues and points were raised by Members, and responses provided by the CA:-

- Ms M. Lundenbach explained the content of the presentation encompassed teaching methods currently adopted, and she provided comparisons and examples of the similarities incorporated in current teaching practices.
- The CA referred to the adoption and utilisation of user friendly and less complicated wording.
- In response to a question from Mr S. Cameron in relation to the long-term vision, the CA provided details of the number of participating schools and explained that they would be questioned as to how the presentation would impact on their teaching methods.
- Confirmation was provided that backing for the project had been received from GwE, with the possibility of a repeat in September, 2016.
- It was explained that schools would be encouraged to sign up to small groups of primary schools, and through SACRE would be encouraged to look at presentation, engagement, levelling, resources and collective worship and encourage them to assume various tasks.
- Members of the groups would be invited to attend SACRE to share their findings and experiences.
- In response to a question from the Chair regarding the option for pupils to opt out of RE at the Foundation Phase, the CA highlighted the importance of understanding different cultures and views and to share them while adopting a positive stance on RE. The CA provided a brief view on the approach he would adopt on such matters.

The Chair and Members of SACRE thanked the Challenge Advisor for GwE for the work he had undertaken. Following further discussion, it was:-

RESOLVED – *that the presentation be received and noted.*

7 WASACRE

(a) Minutes of WASACRE – 8th March, 2016

The minutes of the meeting of the Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE) held at Haverford West on the 8th March, 2016 (previously circulated) were submitted for Members' information.

RESOLVED – *that the minutes of WASACRE held on the 8th March, 2016 be received and noted.*

(b) Denbighshire SACRE to host the spring meeting of WASACRE on the 23rd June, 2016.

Confirmation was provided that Denbighshire would be hosting the spring meeting of WASACRE to be held in the Council Chamber, Russell House, Rhyl on the 23rd June, 2016. The Challenge Advisor GwE (CA) informed the meeting that all Members of SACRE were welcome to attend.

RESOLVED – that notice of the meeting be received.

(c) WG Curriculum Review Up-Date May 2016.

A copy of a Plan provided by the Curriculum Reform Team had been circulated with the papers for the meeting. The Challenge Advisor GwE (CA) referred to the PowerPoint presentation which had been provided at the previous meeting, which had outlined the development of the new Curriculum for Wales as proposed by the Curriculum for life document.

It was confirmed that the work developing the Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) outlined in Successful Futures would begin later in the year. Working groups of Pioneers would be established to lead the design and development of each AoLE, and during the second phase there would be engagement with experts and stakeholders with subject specific interests to inform their work.

Members were informed that 106 Pioneer Schools had been appointed to focus on curriculum design and development. Working with Welsh and international experts, they would be designing the new curriculum and assessment arrangements for Wales. Following a period of induction, they had recently commenced their work designing the new curriculum framework. Four working groups of Pioneers had been established, focussing on:-

- Assessment and progression;
- Cross-curriculum responsibilities;
- Enrichment and experiences; and
- Welsh dimension, international perspective and wider skills.

It was hoped that meetings would be held with AoLE Groups before the end of the summer term for an induction meeting or event but this had not yet to be confirmed. Members were informed that it had been anticipated that a further update would be provided in the next couple of months.

RESOLVED – that the report be received and noted.

(d) Nominations for the Executive Committee (23 June 2016).

Details of the nominations for the Executive Committee were circulated with the papers for the meeting. Members were informed that there were four nominations for three positions on the Executive Committee.

RESOLVED – that details of the nominations for the Executive Committee be received and noted.

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Denbighshire SACRE had been scheduled for Wednesday, 19th October, 2016 at a venue to be confirmed.

The meeting concluded at 11.25 a.m.