

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 23rd 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 – 8th February 2023
- Summer '23 – 15th June 2023
- Autumn '23 – 17th October 2023

The meeting concluded at 11:37am.