
**S.A.C.R.E. – STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
09/02/11**

Present: Councillor Huw Edwards (Chairman)

Gwynedd Council Members: Councillors Stephen Churchman and Pat Larsen.

Christians and Other Faiths: Ruth Davies, (Union of Welsh Baptists), Mr Wyn Myles Meredith, (Methodist Church), Mr Gwyn Hefin Jones, (Presbyterian Church of Wales).

Teachers: Mr Noel Dyer, (UCAC), Miss Miriam Williams (NAS/UWT).

Officers: Mr Ken Robinson (Assistant Education Officer and SACRE Clerk), Miss Bethan James (Humanities Advisor), Mrs Glynda O'Brien (Committee Officer).

Apologies: Councillor Selwyn Griffiths, Reverend Robert Townsend (Church of Wales), Mrs Alwen Watkinsm (ASCL) and Mrs Leusa Jones (Part-time Advisory Teacher CYNNAL).

1. **PRAYER**

The meeting was commenced with a prayer by Mr Noel Dyer.

2. **DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

No declarations of personal interest were received from any member present.

3. **MINUTES**

The Chairman signed the minutes of the meeting of this committee held on 13 October, 2010, as a true record.

4. **MONITORING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Submitted:

(a) Information and an explanation from the Humanities Advisor on the Self-evaluation arrangements to be completed by schools during the year when they are inspected by ESTYN.

The Humanities Advisor explained that in light of the fact that the new ESTYN inspection framework did not refer specifically to Religious Education and collective worship, that SACRE would fulfil its statutory responsibility by inviting schools to share their self-evaluations of Religious Education and collective worship with the Members. Members' attention was drawn to the specimen form before them and specifically to the key questions asked namely:

- (a) How good are outcomes in Religious Education?
- (b) How good is provision in Religious Education?
- (c) How good is provision in Collective Worship?

It was noted that Mr Keith Parry, Education Quality Improvement Officer, was undertaking work to update the collective worship policy and that Mr Ken Robinson, Temporary Assistant Education Officer (SACRE Clerk) was looking at the quality and standards of Religious Education in schools. It was further noted that Members were welcomed to contact them with any queries regarding this.

The Humanities Advisor felt that the self evaluation system already had good roots in Gwynedd and Head teachers were very willing to share information with SACRE.

(b) By a Member that he was of the opinion that self-evaluation was a very useful tool subject to guidelines being available to measure the outcomes.

In response, the Humanities Advisor explained that ESTYN had guidelines of good practice in Religious Education together with an outline of excellent standards.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(b) A letter received from Mr Rheinallt Thomas on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Wales, asking what were the intentions of SACRE for monitoring Religious Education and Collective Worship in light of the changes as outlined in (a) above.

Resolved: That the presentation received from the Humanities Advisor in (a) above, responded to the enquiry of the Presbyterian Church, namely that the system would continue with Head teachers submitting Self-evaluations on the Religious Education provision in their schools to SACRE during the year that ESTYN would inspect their schools.

5. PRESENTATION - TEACHING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A presentation was received in the form of slides by the Humanities Advisor on themes provided by different schools for Religious Education in the classroom, such as looking at religion in the local area. A taster of the type of work undertaken by schools was given when dealing with key questions, examining beliefs, religious teachings and customs and expressing personal responses.

Examples of the framework were seen in the context of examining beliefs, religious teachings and customs and the opportunities for pupils to roam streets to find evidence of religious beliefs in the area such as researching specific areas by visiting places of worship, memorials, notice boards, looking in local papers etc. Reference was made to three questions asked by pupils of one school in response to the above, namely:

- What pupils already know about religion
- What they want to know
- How they can learn

Examples were also seen of school work by enquiry to identify the key features of the local Church and to give an opportunity for pupils to question the Vicar and Church members regarding the qualities and responsibilities, initially in the form of a questionnaire. This work was built upon as the pupils looked at religious symbols and prepared an advertisement to appoint a new Vicar and this gave them a link with the world of work.

In the context of expressing personal responses, stemming from visits to religious places, this gave the pupils an opportunity to create and design chapels/churches themselves and each one could hold an extended conversation about their experiences.

Resolved: To accept, note and thank the Humanities Advisor for the interesting presentation and for seeing the fruit of the excellent work of schools and pupils.

6. FESTIVAL TO CELEBRATE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2011

Submitted:

(a) For information, the lyrics and music of 'Place of Trust' composed by Pwyll ap Siôn and Tania ap Siôn.

Having listened to the music and joining in the song, the committee expressed its wish to congratulate and thank the three named above for the song that was suitable according to several members for every age and was a very catchy tune.

(b) For information, a leaflet outlining ideas for SACREs in Wales to enable them to contribute to the celebrations of the Religious Education Festival in March this year.

Reported: By the Humanities Advisor that the leaflet had already been sent to primary and secondary schools as part of their weekly bulletin.

SACRE Members were requested for their ideas and a Member suggested on behalf of the Baptists that an 'Open Door' should be held at Capel Peniel, Bangor inviting pupils to see the baptismal font etc.

Resolved: (a) To request that the SACRE Clerk congratulated Pwyll ap Siôn and Tania ap Siôn for their work composing the song 'Place of Trust' .

(b) To accept, note and thank the members for the above idea in (b) above.

7. WALES ASSOCIATION of SACREs.

Submitted:

(i) Draft minutes of the Wales Association of SACREs meeting held on 26 November 2010 in Caerphilly.

Reported: By the Humanities Advisor, as one that attended the above meeting, that an interesting presentation was given by Ian Morgan on the national grid for teaching Religious Education. She also referred to the activities held during the Religious Education Festival and drew particular attention to the fact that one school in Gwynedd was already taking part in the REsilience project. To conclude, she referred to the website 'Face to Faith' that enabled pupils from different faiths to contact each other and to learn from each other.

(ii) Information that the next meeting of the Association would take place on Wednesday, 2 March 2010 in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Humanities Advisor reported that the second part of the above meeting would include launching the Religious Education Festival that would take place at Stanwell School, Penarth with Archbishop Barry Morgan officially launching the festival. During the launch there would be various activities from local schools and it was trusted that the occasion would be an excellent opportunity to launch the song 'Place of Trust'.

RESOLVED:

To accept and note:

- (i) the contents of the Wales Association of SACREs meeting held on 26 November 2010 at Caerphilly.**
- (ii) information regarding the next meeting of the Association that would take place on Wednesday, 2 March, 2011.**

8. GWYNEDD SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2009-10

Submitted for information to Members during the meeting, was the final Gwynedd SACRE Annual Report for the 2009-10 academic year.

Resolved: To accept and thank the officers for the report.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

The Religious Education News journal was submitted to Members during the meeting and their attention was drawn to the two following articles that appeared in the journal:

- (i) Saints 2010 (Reverend Robert Townsend)
- (ii) Journeying with St Deiniol (Julie Williams, Ysgol Cae Top)

Firstly, reference was made to the article Saints 2010 by Reverend Robert Townsend and the successful work undertaken by the Cathedral in Bangor with pupils in the Church school in the Bangor Diocese. Further reference was made to the hard work of the School Councils and the pupils that had succeeded to collect £3,500 + to be presented to the 'Send a Cow' charity which worked with some of most poverty stricken people in Africa.

The second article by Julie Williams, Religious Education Coordinator, Ysgol Cae Top, Bangor referred to the opportunities for schools to learn more about Christianity through the medium of a story, activities and religious experiences such as a religious journey and a series of workshops.

RESOLVED: To request that the SACRE Clerk congratulates the Reverend Robert Townsend and Julie Williams for their interesting articles and to thank them for their work.

The meeting commenced at 2:00 pm and concluded at 3:15 pm.

CHAIRMAN