
**S.A.C.R.E. - STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
29/11/2022**

Present:

Councillors: Meryl Roberts (In the Chair), Paul Rowlinson, Elin Walker Jones and Beca Brown (Cabinet Member)

Others:

Christians and Other Faiths: Edward Pari Jones (Humanist), the Reverend Nick Sissons (Methodist Church)

Teachers: Miriam Amlyn (NAS/UWT)

Officers: Garem P Jackson (Head of Education Department), Einir Rh Davies and Rhodri Jones (Member Support Officers), Buddug Mair Huws (SACRE Clerk) and the Translators

1. PRAYER OR QUIET MEDITATION

The meeting was opened with a prayer from Councillor Paul Rowlinson and time was taken for quiet meditation.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received beforehand from Nathan Abrams, Councillor Menna Baines, Sion Huws, Heledd Jones and Gwawr M Williams and late apologies were received from Bethan Jones and Naomi Wood.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

4. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent items were received.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED to accept the minutes of a meeting of this Committee held on 22 July, 2022, as a true record and the Chair signed them subject to the following amendments:

Item 6 - Add "... the schools that are introducing the Wales curriculum to Year 7"

Item 6 - Delete "*February 2021*"

Item 8 - Reword "Representatives of more religious denominations were added"

6. SACRE MEMBERSHIP AND THE WORK OF THE SACRE

Everyone introduced themselves and who they represented. Councillor Paul Rowlinson gave an oral presentation on the work of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and the Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE) referring to the Handbook "So you're joining your local SACRE: A Handbook for SACRE Members in Wales.

It was noted that many of the matters discussed in the Handbook had been discussed by SACRE, such as

- Holding a conference every five years
- Discussing the new curriculum
- Agreed Syllabus
- Changing the name of the subject
- Supporting schools
- Send representatives to WASACRE meetings
- Responding to consultations
- Considering how to monitor schools
- What difference does SACRE make?
- How can Gwynedd SACRE improve?
- Lack of expertise in the field.

RESOLVED: To accept the presentation on the work of the SACRE.

7. HOW CAN SACRE MONITOR STANDARDS WITHIN GWYNEDD SCHOOLS FROM 2022?

The Committee was reminded of SACRE's monitoring role, and reference was made to the attached package, indicating the situation prior to 2020. It was noted that a document was being distributed to every School that would receive an ESTYN Inspection for completion and to then be presented to SACRE, however it was noted that the context had changed by now.

Concern was noted that it was not so easy to get information now, ESTYN did not grade schools and did not compare them, however, there was more narrative in their reports, and consequently the current way of monitoring was not suitable by now. In addition, it was noted that the aim was to reduce the administrative burden on teachers.

The concern about the lack of specialised support to SACRE was noted following the changes by GwE, however, the Head of the Education Department confirmed that there was a meeting in the pipeline that would possibly offer a solution.

It was felt perhaps that at the moment it would be better to wait and see, as we are in the initial period of change.

RESOLVED to accept the report and write to WASACRE for guidance

8. UPDATE: AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RELIGION, VALUES AND ETHICS WITHIN THE NEW CURRICULUM FOR WALES

The SACRE Clerk made reference to the steps taken to accept the agreed syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics within the New Curriculum for Wales, and although the Cabinet's seal of approval had not been received by September 2022, they had by now given their seal of approval.

RESOLVED to accept the update.

9. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM THE WASACRE

WASACRE Autumn Conference

Councillor Paul Rowlinson noted that he had attended the WASACRE Autumn conference, and reported as follows:

The attendees received a presentation on the Year 8 resource pack, and although a number of modules were in the process of being assessed, they looked good.

In terms of Welsh Government Matters, he noted that the question has arisen following removal of a parent's right to remove his/her child from lessons, where it was questioned if this would create the same issues as a parent's right to remove his/her child from sex education lessons, however, they were of the opinion that the situation was not the same.

The matter of monitoring standards was raised and it was confirmed that there was a need to discuss this further with the Welsh Government.

Reference was also made to the need for every SACRE to prepare an Annual Report and the format of the current reports were discussed.

Details of the Interfaith Week

Concern was noted that it appeared that activities had been cancelled in some areas, however, it seemed that this had only occurred in one area.

RESOLVED to accept the correspondence.

The meeting commenced at 3.30pm and concluded at 4.30pm.

CHAIR