

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2014

PRESENT:	Councillor Dylan Rees (Chair) The Education Authority Councillors Alun W Mummery and G O Jones Religious Denominations Mr. Rheinallt Thomas (The Presbyterian Church of Wales) (Vice-Chair) Mr. Christopher Thomas (The Roman Catholic Church) Mr. Stephen F. Roe (The Methodist Church) Mrs. Catherine Jones (The Baptist Union of Wales) Professor Euros Wyn Jones (Union of Welsh Independents) Teacher Representatives Mrs. Mefys Jones-Edwards (Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones) Co-opted Member Rev. Elwyn Jones (Sunday Schools Council)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mr. D. Gareth Jones (Primary Education Officer) (Clerk to the SACRE) Committee Officer (MEH).
APOLOGIES:	Councillor R.LI. Jones Mrs. Alison Jones (Ysgol Parch. Thomas Ellis) Ms. Bethan LI. Jones (Ysgol y Graig) Ms. Kirsty Williams (The Church in Wales)
ALSO PRESENT:	Corporate Director (Lifelong Learning) Miss Bethan James (Systems Leader – GwE)

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was received.

2 MINUTES 17 JUNE, 2014 MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of the SACRE held on 17 June, 2014 were presented and confirmed as correct.

3 MATTERS ARISING

- **Working in Partnership**

The Primary Education Officer noted that Kirsty Williams (The Church in Wales), gave a presentation to the last meeting of the SACRE in respect of working in partnership. Ms. Williams was requested to review the proposals within her report and report back to this Committee.

Ms. Williams was unable to attend this SACRE meeting but has responded as follows :-

“Regarding expanding the report on the Church in Wales supporting Schools on Anglesey, we are currently exploring support required and drafting a report that involves participation from the schools, therefore unfortunately this will not be complete until the next meeting.”

It was RESOLVED to await a report to the next meeting of SACRE in relation to the above.

- **Corresponding with Estyn – Religious Education Standards**

It was noted that a letter had been sent to the Chief Inspector of Estyn in accordance with the SACRE’s resolution at the last meeting.

- **Independent Review of Assessment and the National Curriculum Wales**

The Systems Leader reported that she had responded formally to the questionnaire on behalf of this Committee based on the views expressed during the discussion on the matter at the last meeting. She noted that a response has been sent to the Welsh Government which stated that it was hoped that Religious Education would be part of any reform of the curriculum so that any changes that is happening to other subjects would include Religious Education as well. She also hoped that officers who deal with Religious Education should be invited to any National meetings organised to review the Curriculum for Wales.. As Religious Education is not part of the National Curriculum it is a danger that it is ignored when discussions take place.

She noted that she would report back to this Committee in due course when a response has been received by Welsh Government.

4 ANGLESEY SACRE ACTION PLAN

Submitted – a report by the Systems Leader in respect of the draft Anglesey SACRE Action Plan 2013-2015.

The Systems Leader reported that it is customary for Anglesey SACRE to prepare an Annual Report. Welsh Government has produced ‘A Review of SACRE Reports 2008-2011’ guidelines in 2013 and has noted that the recommendation that SACRE’s should evaluate their own work and to monitor the effect that their work has on the standards of Religious Education within the local schools.

Members of the Committee were separated into groups to discuss the following.

To what extent has Anglesey SACRE been able to :-

- Develop good leadership in religious education and collective worship;
- Close the gap between standards attained by boys and girls at GCSE;
- Update teachers’ knowledge e.g. Welsh Government guidance documents and ESTYN thematic report;
- Promote good quality collective worship.

A general feedback session took place on the issues raised.

It was RESOLVED to note the report.

ACTION : Systems Leader to report back to the next meeting of the SACRE in respect of the above.

5 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

- The Chair welcomed Ms. Manon Williams, Head of Llangaffo Primary School to the meeting.

Ms. Williams gave a comprehensive outlook of the collective worship at Llangaffo Primary School (a voluntary school of the Church in Wales) and highlighted the following :-

- The school has a corporate worship plan which ensures continuity on a daily basis for the children;
- 7 Christian values are emphasised within the school;
- A variety of hymns are sung by the children. The hymn 'Agor ein Llygaid' is sung at morning service;
- The local Rector assist at the morning worship once a fortnightly;
- Local Community groups attend the school to enact Religious stories from the Bible as part of the 'Open the Book' project.

The Chair thanked Ms. Williams for her presentation.

- Members of the Committee gave a feedback on their collective worship visits to Ysgol Bodedern and Ysgol Parc y Bont as agreed at the previous meeting.

6 ANGLESEY SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

Submitted – the initial draft of the Anglesey SACRE's Annual Report for 2013/14.

The Systems Leader provided Members with background information to the preparation of the report along with a summary explanation of its contents which were based on the deliberations of the SACRE at its meetings held during 2013/14.

She noted as from September onwards Estyn School Inspections will be unannounced. It was noted that it was felt that it was unreasonable to ask Religious Education Teachers to prepare self-evaluation reports during the term when the school was inspected. She noted that names of the schools that have not submitted self-evaluation reports are not included with the Annual Report. Members of the Committee expressed that they wished to note within the Annual Report that there had been 10 Estyn Inspections on the Island and only 3 schools have submitted self-evaluation reports.

It was agreed to include within the Annual Report that only 3 schools had submitted self-evaluation reports from the 10 schools that had Estyn Inspections.

7 SCHOOL INSPECTIONS - SUMMER 2014

Information about the relevant findings from Estyn Inspection reports in relation to Ysgol Llanfechell, Ysgol Llangaffo, Ysgol Esceifiog and Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni was presented.

The Primary Education Officer confirmed that there were no issues arising with regard to the schools inspected.

It was RESOLVED to note the information presented.

8 SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

Submitted – and accepted, the self-evaluation reports of Ysgol Gynradd Llangaffo and Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni.

The Committee wished to express their appreciation to the staff of both schools.

ACTION : To request the Primary Education Officer to write to both schools to express SACRE's appreciation.

9 WASACRE

The minutes of the WASACRE held on 2nd July, 2014 were circulated at the meeting.

The Vice-Chair, Mr. Rheinallt Thomas noted that Ms. Vicky Thomas and Ms. Gill Vaisey had been elected at the Annual Meeting of the Wales Association of SACRE's to the SACRE's Executive.

He gave a background to the WASACRE meeting and requested that the SACRE should re-register with the Wales Association of SACRE at the sum of £422.

It was RESOLVED to request the Education Authority to consider re-registering with the Wales Association of SACRE.

10 CORRESPONDENCE

The Primary Education Officer noted that he had received an email from the Secretary of the WASACRE stating that WASACRE are hoping to provide a document for schools containing guidance surrounding the right of parents to withdraw their children from collective worship and religious education. The Secretary had questioned if the Education Authority had such a document at present. The Primary Education Officer stated that he had responded that the Education Authority do not have such a document.

11 NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the SACRE's next meeting would be held at 2.00 p.m., on Tuesday, 17th February, 2015.

**Councillor Dylan Rees
Chair**