

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2023

PRESENT: Councillor Non Dafydd (Chair)
Councillor Arfon Wyn (Vice-Chair)

The Education Authority

Councillors Gwilym O Jones, Dylan Rees

The Religious Denominations

Mrs Elaine Green (Presbyterian Church in Wales)
Mr Edward Morus Jones (Union of Welsh Independents)
Mrs Colette Owens (The Catholic Church)
Rev Deborah Stammers (The Baptist Union of Wales)

Teacher Representatives

Mrs Manon Morris-Williams (Ysgol Santes Dwynwen)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Owen T Davies (Primary Senior Manager, Education) (RVE
Advisor to the SACRE)
Mrs Shirley Cooke (Committee Officer)

APOLOGIES: Mrs Mefys Jones-Edwards (Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones, Amlwch)
Rev Neil Ridings (The Church in Wales)
Mr Rheinallt Thomas (Co-opted Member)
Mr Marc Berw Hughes (Director of Education, Skills and Young
People)
Miss Bethan James (Supporting Improvement Adviser (GWE))

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Chair reported that Councillor Douglas Fowlie has stood down from the SACRE and thanked him for his work as a member of the Committee. She stated that nominations are currently being sought to fill the vacant seat.

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

2 MINUTES

The draft minutes of the previous SACRE meeting held on 12 July 2023 were presented and confirmed as correct.

Matters arising from the minutes: -

- In response to the SACRE's request to participate in learning walks for schools, the Primary Senior Manager confirmed that he has raised the SACRE's proposal with the Chair of the Head Teachers' Strategic Forum. He reported that the Forum is awaiting a response regarding the SACRE's expectations from learning walks. It was noted that once the SACRE have consulted on the matter, their comments will be forwarded to the Chair of the Strategic Forum, so that schools can be updated on the nature of the SACRE's proposed visits to schools.

A proposal was put forward to discuss learning walks in an informal session following today's formal meeting, which the SACRE accepted.

RESOLVED that the Primary Senior Manager forwards the SACRE's comments to the Chair of the Head Teachers' Strategic Forum.

- With reference to the SACRE's Constitution, it was confirmed that legal advice has been sought and is ongoing. An update report will be presented to the next SACRE meeting on 15 February 2024.
- It was noted that GwE is currently adapting its Humanities questionnaire, which will be circulated to Anglesey schools before Christmas.

RESOLVED that the Supporting Improvement Adviser (GwE) provides an update on the results of the questionnaire at the SACRE's next meeting.

- With reference to the SACRE's concerns regarding terminology in Estyn reports, the Primary Senior Manager reported that in future he would raise any further issues with Estyn.

3 WALES ASSOCIATION OF SACRES (WASACRE) UPDATE

The Primary Senior Manager reported that he had attended the virtual WASACRE meeting held on 25 October 2023. He stated that several items on the agenda related to ongoing developments in the Curriculum for Wales.

It was noted that the draft minutes of the meeting will be presented for information to the next SACRE meeting on 15 February 2024.

The draft minutes of the WASACRE meeting held on 19 June 2023 were submitted for information and noted.

4 YSGOL SANTES DWYNWEN - LITERACY THROUGH RELIGION, VALUES AND ETHICS

Mrs Manon Morris-Williams gave a presentation on the work undertaken in Ysgol Santes Dwynwen on literacy through Religion, Values and Ethics. She described how the 3 skills of literacy - listening/verbal speaking, reading, and writing fit in with collective worship, and how the children participate by following a story through listening, looking at pictures, reading and following words.

The teacher reported that during lockdown, weekly collective worship services were shared directly with the children at home on the 'See-Saw' system, where she would choose a hymn, display the words on the screen and through a series of slides the children would learn to sing a hymn.

When the children returned to school, this arrangement continued in the classroom and was extended to include tasks and activities for pupils following on from collective worship. The tasks included discussion topics to develop pupils' skills, video clips to develop their listening skills, writing a letter, a prayer or research books online to develop their reading skills. The children would also light a candle during the service to reflect and think about someone, a personal prayer for that person, before blowing out the candle.

The teacher reported that the school has been working on Ms Bethan James' work recently on progress steps within RVE as part of the curriculum by asking questions; recording and hearing information; analysing and evaluating evidence, reaching a conclusion; and presenting evidence.

The Chair and members of the SACRE thanked Mrs Morris-Williams for her excellent presentation on the school's work from a religious and Christian perspective.

RESOLVED to note the presentation and excellent work undertaken at Ysgol Santes Dwynwen.

5 LEARNING WALKS (SECONDARY)

This item was discussed in an informal meeting following today's formal meeting.

6 PLAYLISTS - RELIGION VALUES AND ETHICS

The Primary Senior Manager reported that Hwb and Welsh Government have created Playlists, which are interactive slides on the Hwb platform for Religion, Values and Ethics, which are excellent resources for schools. He stated that WASACRE, GwE and other stakeholders have contributed to this field by creating and sharing resources in line with the Playlists.

RESOLVED that the Primary Senior Manager provides an update on the Playlists at the SACRE's next meeting.

7 RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL SETTINGS ON ANGLESEY

The Chair reported that she has sought the views of the Supporting Improvement Adviser (GwE) and the Primary Senior Manager on creating a hub for teachers and pupils to access information on religious and spiritual settings on Anglesey. The Chair also sought the views of the SACRE members on creating a hub.

The Primary Senior Manager suggested that the SACRE looks at different buildings and locations that are linked to religion or spiritual settings, which could be included for discussion in SACRE meetings. He stated that he would be happy to lead on this topic and present information in digital format on the microsite to share with schools.

It was noted that the Pererin Pilgrimage Project by the Church in Wales has appointed a new member of staff who will be creating resources for Anglesey schools, which will be available to the SACRE in due course.

The SACRE welcomed the proposal for children to visit religious settings to raise their awareness of visiting Holy places. The SACRE showed concern at the decline in schools celebrating thanksgiving and felt that the importance of thanksgiving needs to be emphasised in schools.

The primary teacher reported that to facilitate visits to religious settings, careful planning would be necessary, and would need to involve people with local knowledge. She stated that a contact list for religious settings would also be useful, so that schools would know who to contact prior to visits. It was noted that visits to a church or chapel can reach across the spectrum in digital format eg history, art etc, which can be shared by local people who have access to information relating to religious settings online.

Discussion focused on how resources could be collated from different areas of the Island to share with schools. The following points were raised: -

- Could the SACRE provide information and contact details for religious settings in each specific area on Anglesey that they represent?
- It was suggested that the Primary Senior Manager contacts the Archives Section in Llangefni to seek clarification as to how they could assist the SACRE by providing information and resources on religious buildings on Anglesey.
- A SACRE Church member offered to conduct visits to her chapel in Holyhead. She stated that she could provide a contact list for members of chapels/churches in the area from other religious denominations.
- It was suggested that the SACRE invites a member from the Pilgrimage Project to attend the next SACRE meeting to provide an overview of her work.

RESOLVED that the Primary Senior Manager: -

- **Collates information received on religious settings from members and other interested parties.**
- **Invites a member of the Pererin Project to provide an update on her work in preparing resources for schools.**

- **Contacts the Archives and Library Service to discuss what resources are available on religious settings for schools.**

8 UPDATE BY THE DIRECTOR

This item was discussed by the Primary Senior Manager in Item 2 on the agenda.

9 ANY OTHER ITEMS

The Chair reported that in her daily work, she is contacting schools to ask if they would be willing to participate in an Advent Calendar campaign in reverse. She stated that the idea with the reverse Calendar is that we give rather than receive. She appealed to people to think of others and contribute to the local foodbanks at this is a very difficult time.

10 NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the SACRE's next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 15 February 2024 at 2:00 pm.

The meeting concluded at 3:15 pm

**COUNCILLOR NON DAFYDD
CHAIR**