

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(SACRE)**

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2023

PRESENT: Councillor Non Dafydd (Chair)

The Education Authority

Councillors Douglas M Fowlie, Gwilym O Jones, Dylan Rees

The Religious Denominations

Mr Edward Morus Jones (Union of Welsh Independents)
Mrs Collette Owens (The Catholic Church)
Rev Neil Ridings (The Church in Wales)

Teacher Representatives

Mrs Mefys Jones-Edwards (Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones, Amlwch)
Mrs Manon Morris-Williams (Ysgol Santes Dwynwen)

Co-opted Member

Mr Rheinallt Thomas

IN ATTENDANCE: Director of Education, Skills and Young People
Mr Owen T Davies (Primary Senior Manager, Education) (Clerk to the SACRE)
Miss Bethan James (Supporting Improvement Adviser, GwE)
Mrs Shirley Cooke (Committee Officer)

ALSO PRESENT: Mr Richard Jones (St Mary's Roman Catholic School, Holyhead)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Arfon Wyn
Rev Deborah Stammers (The Baptist Union of Wales)
Mrs Heledd Hearn (Ysgol Bodedern)
Mr Owain Roberts (Ysgol Cybi)

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

2. MINUTES

Matters arising: -

The draft minutes of the previous meeting of the SACRE held on 8 March 2023 were presented before the Committee. Clarity was sought on the decision in Item 9 of the minutes in relation to the appointment of a new member to the SACRE.

A SACRE member recalled that the key word in the decision was 'group' and the new representative would need to be a member of a 'group' that is active in Anglesey, and not an individual. The Head of Education, Skills and Young People accepted the comment, and proposed that the matter be discussed further in Item 4 on the agenda, with the exclusion of the press and public, which was agreed by the SACRE.

3. SCHOOL VISITS TALK – COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The Primary Senior Manager gave a presentation on the online support and resources that are available on the Anglesey Leaders' School Support Hub. He gave an overview of the information that is available on the SACRE page and provided a link for the SACRE to access information on the Hub. He stated that the intention is to further develop Religion, Values and Ethics on the website. It was noted that the microsite is continually evolving and is regularly being updated with new information and is the main form of communication between schools and educational establishments.

The Primary Senior Manager reported that he and the GwE Adviser attended a Diversity and Anti-Racist Professional Learning (DARPL) conference in Cardiff on anti-racial training for childcare and play work professionals. He stated that good initial contact has been established with DARPL following the meeting. He further stated that resources have been commissioned by Welsh Government, which are available for schools.

A proposal was put forward for schools to engage with the SACRE by inviting members to attend collective worship sessions and undertake learning walks next year. The Primary Senior Manager reported that visits would involve SACRE members attending schools in a supportive role rather than observing lessons, to experience what is happening in schools. It was noted that there needs to be flexibility on learning walks as they can be interpreted in different ways eg maybe focus on the work of the learner, speak to pupils, teachers, co-ordinators, feeling of ethos, looking at examples of school work. It was suggested that a limit be placed on the number of SACRE members who should undertake a school visit at any one time, to avoid the visits becoming onerous tasks for schools.

Discussion focused on whether collective worship sessions and learning walks could be encompassed into one visit, and whether the current template could be used for both ie Part A - Collective Worship; Part B - learning walks.

The teacher representatives welcomed joint visits to schools, as long as the SACRE are aware of what they will be committing to, and Head Teachers are aware of what each visit involves.

RESOLVED that: -

- **The SACRE accepts the proposal to participate in learning walks for schools.**
- **The Primary Senior Manager to write to Head Teachers in Anglesey schools to ask them to agree to undertake learning walks in their schools and raise this matter in a strategic forum before the next SACRE meeting.**
- **The Primary Senior Manager to plan for the SACRE to visit schools and prepare guidelines for learning walks.**

4. COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

This item was discussed in private session, as agreed in Item 2.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People referred to the decision in Item 9 of the minutes. He reported that legal advice would need to be sought on the SACRE's Constitution, as well as clarity on other matters discussed in today's meeting before a new representative could be appointed to the SACRE. It was noted that a report would be presented to the next SACRE meeting on 10 October 2023.

RESOLVED that: -

- **The Director of Education, Skills and Young People to liaise with the Legal Section to seek advice on the SACRE's Constitution.**
- **The Education Department to seek further information, as discussed in today's meeting, for the purpose of appointing a new representative to the SACRE.**
- **To present a report to the next SACRE meeting on 10 October 2023 specifying the criteria that any new SACRE representative must satisfy to join the SACRE.**

5. RELIGION, VALUES AND ETHICS

The Chair welcomed back Miss Bethan James, the Supporting Improvement Adviser (GwE) to the SACRE. Miss James reported that she was happy to be reacquainted with the Anglesey SACRE after many years. She offered her condolences to the SACRE and families of the late Mrs Catherine Jones and Councillor Alun Mummery on their loss. She stated that she had very fond memories of both when they represented the Anglesey SACRE.

The Supporting Improvement Adviser (GwE) reported that she has been working closely with Mr Phil Lord to support Humanities across North Wales. She stated that GwE has successfully conducted bilingual online training for both primary and secondary school teachers on Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE). She stated that online training was held in May - 37 registered for the English session; 3 teachers from Anglesey attended the training. 21 registered for the Welsh session; 4 teachers from Anglesey attended. It was noted that a link is available to access the training via the GwE website.

The Supporting Improvement Adviser (GwE) reported that she and Mr Phil Lord contributed to a conference in Venue Cymru on 22 June on the Curriculum for Wales, for primary and secondary schools to hear the experiences of other schools on the development of the curriculum in their schools. Presentations were given by Owen Lloyd, Welsh Government, Graham Donaldson, Charlotte Williams and Chantelle Haughton (DARPL). Workshops were also held for Humanities and the other Areas of Learning and Experiences, where schools exhibited examples of their work. A link to the presentations is available on the GwE website.

It was noted that the GwE advisers have held training sessions on RVE in Bangor University for prospective primary school teachers. GwE have also been invited to offer training sessions next year for students in Year 1 and Year 2.

With reference to the primary sector, GwE has commissioned 6 primary schools, one from each local authority to develop a pack to demonstrate how each school has planned and tailored the curriculum to suit their own school. Ysgol Morswyn has accepted a commission, and its support package will be available for other schools in 2024.

Regarding the secondary sector, GwE hopes to plan a Humanities Conference for secondary teachers in November 2023. A questionnaire will be shared in the GwE Bulletin this week on the needs of schools.

- **To note the information presented.**
- **That the Primary Senior Manager circulates the GwE Humanities Questionnaire to Anglesey schools.**

6. SCHOOLS/ESTYN

Estyn School Inspections

The Primary Senior Manager gave a summary of the findings from Estyn Inspections undertaken at schools in Anglesey.

Concerns were expressed that Estyn needs to be reminded to use correct terminology in their Welsh and English versions of reports. It was noted that in the Ysgol Esceifiog report, Estyn state that the school “*Attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship*”, which highlights that they can’t be doing both. The word “services” is no longer included in collective worship, and “*addoli dyddiol ar y cyd*” (“*daily worship collectively*”) is also incorrect in the Welsh version of the report.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People reported that he will convey the SACRE’s concerns to Estyn in its next half term meeting.

The SACRE felt that Anglesey schools need to be praised, as all the comments from Estyn are positive.

RESOLVED: -

- **To note the information presented.**
- **The Director of Education, Skills and Young People to raise the ACRE's concerns regarding Estyn's terminology in their reports and include an item on the agenda for Estyn's next quarterly meeting.**

Mr Richard Jones, the Head Teacher of St Mary's Roman Catholic School in Holyhead presented a slide show and summarised the work that is being undertaken in his school, including collective worship and RVE teaching.

Members of the SACRE thanked Mr Jones for his inspirational presentation and congratulated him on his excellent work in the school. He was also praised for introducing the Welsh element to a Roman Catholic school.

A member questioned whether the school's evaluation sheet could be shared with the SACRE Clerk to see if there are any elements that may be relevant to the SACRE's evaluation sheet.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Concerns were expressed that the WASACRE minutes for March 2022 and details of the WASACRE Annual Meeting had not been itemised on today's agenda.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People apologised for the oversight and reported that it has been a difficult period for the Education Department due to staff changes. He assured the SACRE that this matter would be prioritised and resolved by the SACRE's next meeting.

RESOLVED that the Chair and Primary Senior Manager liaise on matters relating to WASACRE.

8. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the SACRE's next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 11 October 2023 at 2:00 pm.

The meeting concluded at 4:40 pm

**COUNCILLOR NON DAFYDD
CHAIR**