

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL (SAC)

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 10 February 2026

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

The Education Authority

Councillors Gwilym O Jones, Dylan Rees, Keith Roberts

The Religious Denominations

Mrs Collette Owens (The Catholic Church)
Rev Deborah Stammers (The Baptist Union of Wales)

Teacher Representatives

Mrs Manon Morris-Williams (Ysgol Santes Dwynwen) (from 2:35 pm)
Mr Owain Roberts (Ysgol Cybi)

IN ATTENDANCE: Director of Education, Skills & Young People
Mr Owen T Davies (Senior Manager, Primary Sector, Education Dept) (Clerk to the SAC)
Mr Phil Lord (Independent RVE Advisor)
Mrs Shirley Cooke (Committee Officer)

ALSO PRESENT: Mr Luke Donnellan (Humanists UK)

APOLOGIES: Mrs Mefys Jones-Edwards (Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones, Amlwch)
Sarah Lloyd (Humanists)
Rev Neil Ridings (The Church in Wales)
Mr Rheinallt Thomas (Co-opted Member)

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

2. MINUTES

The draft minutes of the previous SAC meeting held on 16 October 2025 were presented and confirmed as correct, subject to the following: -

Matters arising from the minutes: -

- The Chair confirmed that a copy of the final version of the Anglesey SAC's Annual Report for 2024/25 has been forwarded to Welsh Government for information.
- The Senior Manager, Primary Sector (Clerk to the SAC) confirmed that he has

written to WASACRE to ask its Executive to produce a template for SACs to adopt national objectives, which SACs could add to their development plans to identify and share good practice. He reported that WASACRE has not yet responded.

- The Senior Manager, Primary Sector confirmed that he has written to the four religious groups that have vacant seats on the SAC, asking each of them to nominate a member to represent the SAC. He reported that he is awaiting a response from all the religious groups, and will provide feedback at the next SAC meeting in July.

Action: The Senior Manager, Primary Sector to contact the Head of Democracy to discuss appointing an elected member to the vacant seat on the SAC.

3. WALES ASSOCIATION OF SACRES (WASACRE)

The draft minutes of WASACRE's virtual Vale of Glamorgan meeting held on 19 November 2025 were presented for information and noted.

The WASACRE's next Annual General Meeting will be held on 19 March 2026.

RESOLVED to note the information presented.

4. HUMANISM – THE BENEFITS OF INCLUDING NON-RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHICAL CONVICTIONS IN THE RELIGION, VALUES AND ETHICS (RVE) CURRICULUM

A presentation was given by Mr Luke Donnellan, Director of Understanding Humanism, providing an insight into how Humanism benefits and supports RVE teachers in schools in Wales.

Mr Donnellan reported that RVE must reflect that Christianity is the main religion in Wales, whilst considering the teaching and practices of other religious and non-religious world views.

It was noted that teaching Humanism in the curriculum supports a knowledge rich subject, enabling pupils to develop and comprehend the world they live in and its history. The subject also teaches mutual understanding and social cohesion. It was highlighted that learning about Humanism can support personal development by exploring beliefs, values and life's big questions.

Mr Donnellan referred to non-religious philosophical convictions and stated that the Humanist philosophy includes a naturalistic understanding of human nature: who they are; where they came from; where they go when they die? He stated that Humanists are critical thinkers who understand the world of science, where they search for evidence. They are concerned about protecting the environment and the world around them. They share ethical values, demonstrate reason, respect, empathy, human kindness, problem solving etc. They believe that there is only one life and speak of the need to find freedom of expression and happiness and not harming others. They practice diversity in their worldviews and try to live up to their aspirations and live meaningful lives.

It was noted that some Humanists celebrate Christmas, festivals and ceremonies, but not for religious reasons.

The Chair thanked Mr Donnellan for his very interesting and informative presentation on Humanism.

RESOLVED to note the content of the presentation.

5. ANGLESEY SAC'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2025/26

The Independent RVE Advisor reported on the following actions from the SAC's Development Plan: -

- Promotion of SAC - to ensure that schools see the SAC as a relevant, important body that they can approach for advice and answers to questions.
- Development of RVE - teachers need to familiarise themselves with the term 'lenses' and language used in their agreed syllabus. It was noted that any requests from schools for support can be tailored to suit each individual school.
- Collective worship - schools observe the right of withdrawal for collective worship, but not for RVE. The importance of ensuring that key messages are delivered to the right people was highlighted.

The Senior Manager, Primary Sector reported that the RVE Advisor will attend an inset training session and HMS meeting next term to review the RE Guidance and remind Headteachers of the expectations on them.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People reported that the quarterly school Bulletin will be shared with School Governors as well as teachers. Arrangements are in place for a digital RVE network to be available soon, which will include the Newsletter.

A suggestion was made for the issue of terminology and content of the training on offer be raised in the joint meetings with Headteachers. The Senior Manager, Primary Sector responded that he would forward information on the next inset training for schools to update them.

The RVE Advisor reported that progress on the Development Plan will be recorded in this year's annual report, which will be forwarded to Welsh Government.

RESOLVED to note the information presented on the SAC's Development Plan.

Action: The Senior Manager, Primary Sector to forward information on the content of the next inset training session for schools.

6. MANAGING THE REMOVAL OR THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL FROM RELIGION, VALUES AND ETHICS (RVE)

The RVE Advisor reported that some parents are not familiar with the law concerning the removal of the right of withdrawal from RVE and are concerned about the content of the subject. He stated that schools must be prepared to engage with parents by offering support and understanding, while managing concerns with sensitivity and care.

The RVE Advisor explained that problems might occur when schools provide partisan RVE, which is not how the subject should be delivered. Schools would need to look into whether there is a pluralistic nature in their RVE and investigate further by engaging in internal dialogue.

It was highlighted that some parents want to remove their children from RVE lessons for prejudicial or racist reasons. In such instances, schools can pass that information to the inclusion team. Concerns were expressed that schools could respond by taking an easy option to resolve matters by only teaching Christianity, which is not how RVE should be taught.

One church school in Anglesey has received a request to remove a child from RVE lessons. The teacher emphasised that they do not have the right to question why? A request was made for this matter be raised on an inset training day, so that staff and Headteachers know how to respond in future.

Draft guidance including a letter to parents to initiate conversations between schools and parents was presented before the SAC, which was accepted.

RESOLVED: -

- **To approve the draft letter to parents in the SAC's Action Plan.**
- **The Senior Manager, Primary Sector to circulate the letter to parents to Headteachers.**

7. ANGLESEY SAC NEWSLETTER

The RVE Advisor reported that Mr Luke Donnellan from Humanists UK and Dr Gareth Evans-Jones from the RE Centre in Bangor University have both written articles for the termly Newsletter, which will be published online for schools in due course.

8. ANY ISSUES SPECIFIC TO THE SAC

The SAC discussed and **RESOLVED to invite Professor Nathan Abrams from Bangor University to talk on Looking at Judaism throughout Welsh History.**

9. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the SAC's next meeting will be held on 9 July 2026 at 2:00 pm.

The meeting concluded at 3:25 pm

**COUNCILLOR NON DAFYDD
CHAIR**