

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)
held
at Room P3 - County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk on Monday, 17th June, 2019 at 1.00 pm

PRESENT:

COUNTY COUNCILLORS:

County Councillor R. John (Chair)
County Councillor T. Thomas

FAITH REPRESENTATIVES:

Revd. Peter Baines	Free Church Council
Mrs. S. Gooding	Free Church Council
Major N. Pryor	Free Church Council – Salvation Army
Dr. L. Brown	Free Church Council – Methodist Church

TEACHER REPRESENTATIVES:

Mr. A Jones
Mrs. K. Wilding
Mrs. M. Millington

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Sharon Randall-Smith	Head of Achievement and Attainment
Wendy Barnard	Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES:

County Councillor P.Pavia, Dr, A. Daly, Mrs. R. Davies, Mrs. S. Cave, Mrs. S. Hamer and Mrs. K. Christofi.

1. To note the appointment of Chair as the Cabinet Member for Children and Young people as appointed by Council.

The appointment by Council of the Cabinet Member, Children and Young People to the position of Chair was noted as County Councillor R. John.

2. Election of Vice Chair

Mr. A. Jones was appointed as Vice Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

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4. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 28th March 2019 and to consider matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th March 2019, were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting. It was confirmed that item 9 of the minutes was sent off as the response to the White Paper.

5. Public Open Forum

No members of the Public were present.

6. To receive a membership update.

The Clerk provided a Membership update as follows:

County Councillors	One vacancy following the resignation of County Councillor J. Watkins
Roman Catholic Church	One vacancy
Free Church Council	New member representing the Methodist Church – Dr. L. Brown
Hindu Faith	One vacancy
Jewish Faith	One vacancy
Muslim Faith	One vacancy - Abdul-Azim Ahmed offered seat. Response awaited.
Sikh Faith	One vacancy
Teacher Representative	S. Oram stepped down due to secondment in Powys.
Co-Opted Members	One vacancy

It was noted that a letter will be sent to the Onyx Foundation to seek assistance in filling the faith representative vacancies. Contact will also be made with Cytun.

Welsh Government guidance was sought on Humanist representation on SACRE. It was noted that this matter is not for SACRE to determine; a report will be presented to Council in July to revise the terms of reference and to consider Humanist representative.

A discussion on definition of religions and beliefs took place.

7. Curriculum development update: Welsh Government Consultation on the draft curriculum for Wales 2022, the Humanities AoLE and the supporting framework for Religious Education.

It was announced that SACREs throughout the South East Wales region agreed to form a collaborative working party to respond to the Welsh Government consultation on the Curriculum for Wales 2022. The deadline date to respond is 19th July. It is very important that the views of SACREs on the place and visibility of Religious Education within the curriculum, particularly within the Humanities AoLE, are heard. Differing views held between SACREs would be recorded in the collaborative response.

It is the intention to encourage as many teachers as possible to be involved in this working group and also that each SACRE sends at least one other member.

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Newport City Council will host this working party on Tuesday 9th July, 10.00am to 3.00pm.

An update was provided that some dates have been arranged to work on the RE framework. This will be published in draft for consultation with SACREs.

The RE Adviser provided a presentation on Humanities and agreed it will be circulated to all members.

8. Monitoring of Religious Education and Collective Worship

8.1. GCSE and GCE Examination reports (to be tabled)

The report was received and the following comments were made:

- The Numbers taking the GCSE full course decreased from the previous year but pass rates are up. It was pointed out that schools previously putting forward whole cohorts had moved to an options system. Next year there will be a return to whole cohorts and a new specification. The new specification will be more challenging and a national dip in performance can be expected.
- Results in Monmouthshire compared well to EAS and Wales and results have risen significantly.
- Short course results compared well with previous years.
- A Level numbers had increased and there were no major concerns. Results were above national and regional performance.

8.2. Estyn Inspection Reports (to be tabled)

SACRE considered Estyn Inspection overview and noted that Estyn will now comment on spiritual development whereas previously it was very often a view on collective worship. Estyn has asked NAPFRE for more details to assist the formation of judgements.

No issues were identified. There were good references to the quality of collective worship noting that assemblies are sometimes pupil led and there are opportunities for moral awareness such as anti-bullying.

The RE Adviser informed SACRE that she is making available training to raise the profile of spiritual development across the curriculum.

It was noted that the inspection framework has changed and that there will be more self-evaluation. The local authority is calling for more detailed reports. It was suggested that there is a need to re-evaluate how we review RE in schools and also how we will monitor. The suspension of the inspection cycle in 2020 will provide the opportunity to conduct a review.

The authority will wait to see the changes from the Estyn review then consider revising the self-evaluation form.

It was clarified that the self-evaluation process includes recommendations of areas for development and these can be added to the School Development Plan.

It was suggested that, as a follow up to the receipt of inspection reports, letters of congratulation or letters offering support from SACRE may be sent.

Schools may also be asked if they are willing to share best practice. SACRE will arrange to visit best practice schools.

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8.3. Self-evaluation Reports (to be tabled)

A Member commented that it was worrying to see that the Chepstow School report noted that there were no AS students and no Year 9 going forward. He would have expected to see some take up of options. An update was provided that the report is the oldest one presented and a lot has happened since its publication. Discussion is in progress about the potential for collaborative work with Caldicot School.

It was agreed that Caldicot School's self-evaluation report will be presented at the next meeting.

9. WASACRE

9.1. To receive and note the draft minutes from the WASACRE meeting held on 28th March 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th March 2019 were received.

SACRE was informed that a meeting had been held with Kevin Palmer (Welsh Government, Curriculum Reform) to look at professional learning and funding for RE. The RE Adviser attended the meeting and hoped that an outcome will be funding for professional learning for RE teachers.

9.2. To consider nominations for the WASACRE Executive Committee

SACRE endorsed nominations for the WASACRE Executive Committee as: Mark Prevett, Andrew Jones and Matthew Maidment.

The nomination of Rachel Samuel for the position of Vice Chair was supported by SACRE.

9.3. To note dates of future WASACRE meetings: Friday 28th June 2019 - Colwyn Bay, Conwy.

It was noted that Paula Webber, Andrew Jones and Dr. Louise Brown would attend the meeting; the surplus place to be offered to other members of SACRE.

10. SACRE News Bulletin - to consider information briefings from members for inclusion in the next SACRE News Bulletin.

SACRE received a copy of the Summer News Bulletin. The RE Adviser referred to an article omitted from this edition. This will be published in the next bulletin.

- The authors of the *Abergavenny Parables* will be asked to provide an article for a future edition;
- A Member expressed concern that RE: Online and RE Today contains information on non-religious beliefs; other members endorsed the information available in RE Today.
- A Member asked that Care.org was added to the list;
- Members were impressed with the Caldicot School event on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;

11. Correspondence Update

SACRE Members had been sent an invitation to the AREIAC conference on the 1st July 2019.

The document Exploring Secularism was received. Andrew Jones agreed to review the brochure and to report back on its suitability for endorsement by SACRE.

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A Member thought that there should be less emphasis on non-religious topics to allow more time for religious education, noting that the Scottish curriculum covers main religions mostly and had less content on world beliefs. It was suggested that time allocation will be less of issue as the curriculum is not extending to non-religious beliefs, as these are already in place. The concerns were not generally shared. It was added that the emphasis within the new curriculum will be that teaching about religious and non-religious worldviews should be objective, critical and pluralistic.

12. Effectiveness of SACRE (to include discussion on the recommendations made by Estyn)

SACRE discussed the recommendations of the report. It was noted that the EAS is rolling out training on Humanities.

SACRE can help with advice to schools on sensitive issues as required and schools can be supported more generally on RE matters. It was noted that some parents sometimes have concerns about visiting religious sites, for example. SACRE can also facilitate for schools to meet people from other faiths by developing links. It was agreed that the *suggested* visits and visitors guide would be reissued to schools on the understanding that this is not an approved list.

ACTION (PW): It was agreed that the survey results for Monmouthshire on withdrawal from RE needed to be checked.

13. To note dates and venues of the future meetings

It was agreed to set meetings for the year and to circulate to Members accordingly.

The meeting ended at 3.00 pm