



**Cyfarfod Cymdeithas CYSAGau Cymru, Y Rhyl, 23 Mehefin 2016  
(10.30am – 3pm)**

*Wales Association of SACREs meeting, Rhyl, 23 June 2015 (10.30am – 3pm)*

**Attendance**

<p><b>Ynys Môn / Anglesey</b> Bethan James</p> <p><b>Blaenau Gwent</b> Gill Vaisey</p> <p><b>Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr / Bridgend</b> Edward Evans</p> <p><b>Caerffili/ Caerphilly</b></p> <p><b>Caerdydd / Cardiff</b> Gill Vaisey</p> <p><b>Sir Gaerfyrddin / Carmarthenshire</b> Mary Parry</p> <p><b>Ceredigion</b> Lyndon Lloyd</p> <p><b>Conwy</b> Phil Lord Nicholas Richter</p>	<p><b>Sir Ddinbych / Denbighshire</b> Phil Lord</p> <p><b>Sir y Fflint / Flintshire</b> Phil Lord</p> <p><b>Gwynedd</b> Bethan James</p> <p><b>Merthyr Tudful / Merthyr Tydfil</b></p> <p><b>Sir Fynwy / Monmouthshire</b> Gill Vaisey</p> <p><b>Castell-nedd Port Talbot / Neath and Port Talbot</b></p> <p><b>Casnewydd / Newport</b> Huw Stephens</p> <p><b>Sir Benfro / Pembrokeshire</b> Mary Parry</p>	<p><b>Powys</b> John Mitson Margaret Evitts</p> <p><b>Rhondda Cynon Taf</b> Gill Vaisey Mathew Maidment</p> <p><b>Abertawe / Swansea</b></p> <p><b>Torfaen /Torfaen</b></p> <p><b>Bro Morgannwg / Vale of Glamorgan</b> Gill Vaisey</p> <p><b>Wrecsam / Wrexham</b> Libby Jones Samantha Jesson Ruth Holden</p> <p><b>Sylwedyddion / Observers</b> Tudor Thomas (REMW) Abi Williams (Welsh Government) Paula Webber</p>
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## *Minutes*

### 1. Cyflwyniad a chroeso / *Introduction and welcome*

Chair of WASACRE, Phil Lord welcomed members to Rhyl and introduced Head of Education and Children's Services for Denbighshire, Karen Evans.

Karen Evans welcomed WASACRE members to the Council Chamber in Rhyl and spoke about the importance of collaboration and partnership working in Education. Karen Evans acknowledged the work of WASACRE and the 22 SACREs in Wales in contributing to this collaboration, which has helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Karen Evans shared her belief that RE remained a pivotal part of the curriculum because of the important skills it develops in young people and the life lessons they learn from it, which are often not taught elsewhere. Karen also said that RE gives young people the space to make sense of their own place in the world, with empathy, compassion, tolerance, and respect. Karen concluded her welcome by wishing WASACRE well in its meeting and AGM.

### 2. Adfyfrio tawel / *Quiet reflection*

Phil Lord lead a reflection and asked members to consider the important work they were about to embark on during the meeting.

### 3. Ymddiheuriadau / *Apologies*

Tania ap Sion, Christine Abbas, Alwen Roberts, Vicky Thomas, Cllr Ernie Galsworthy, Sue Cave, Helen Gibbon and Meinir loader, Jen Malcolm, Cllr Arwel Roberts, Sharon Perry Phillips

### 4. Cofnodion y cyfarfod a gynhaliwyd yn Hwlfordd, 8 Mawrth 2015 / *Minutes of meeting held in Haverfordwest, 8 March 2016*

Phil thanked Edward Evans for chairing the meeting in his absence.

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting. Proposed by Huw Stephens and seconded by Gill Vaisey.

### 5. Materion yn codi / *Matters arising*

P3. Item 5. Matters arising. Libby Jones explained that the link from the WASACRE website to the REMW archive material on the Peniarth website is currently being set up and will be available soon.

P4. Item 5. Matters arising. Libby Jones read out the email WASACRE had received from Lynda Maddock (WJEC), informing members that due to issues raised by Qualifications Wales regarding the new specification it is now unlikely that the spec would be accredited before September. Lynda gave indications of which topics would be safe for teachers to begin with their Year 9 pupils from September

2016, in preparation for its official implementation in September 2017. Aspects of the new Eduquas specification were suggested by Lynda as helpful for this purpose. Edward Evans proposed that the email be sent to SACREs for circulation to schools. Tudor Thomas urged caution as the spec has not yet been accredited. A discussion ensued in which the following points were raised:

Even though the content of the Eduquas RS specification is similar to the new RS specification for Wales, the question types might be quite different; therefore teachers need to be aware of that when teaching to Year 9 students pre September 2017.

The new content is considered to be a step backwards by many teachers.

RE's place within the curriculum needs to be looked at if the exam is getting so much harder that many schools are starting the GCSE RS course in KS3 because they are not giving KS4 RE appropriate time on the timetable to cover the specification.

Disappointment was expressed in the extended delay, which will result in further confusion for schools and teachers.

Short Course is part of the capped point score so it is not in as much danger as it is in England where it is not counted at all and so will disappear.

The RE world has worked hard to attain and maintain the RS Short Course which revolutionised statutory RE and it will be a shame for Wales to lose it.

Mary Parry explained that from her meeting with representatives from WJEC including Chief Executive, Gareth Pierce, she can now confirm that retaining a separate short course as well as the new specification is not an option. Mary communicated to Gareth Pierce that the new specification is unlikely to appeal to the majority of RE students and this could mean that results will go down. If this happens it will put RE in a dangerous position in terms of time and status and what the pupils receive.

Action: LJ will reply to Lynda Maddock to thank her for the information and to ask when schools will be officially informed by WJEC of the current situation. LJ will send the information in the email from Lynda to SACREs for their information and for circulation to schools. LJ will write to Qualifications Wales to express disappointment in the delays and to outline the concerns members have about the content of the new specification.

P4. Item 5. Matters arising. Bursaries for PGCE students. LJ read out the email from Rachel Bendall, RS PGCE Course leader at USWTSD, which described the current bursary offer in Wales for RS PGCE students compared to England. It became clear to members that Wales cannot compete with England's offer which has resulted in students going across the border to study. Members agreed that WASACRE should take this issue to Welsh Government once it has completed some research on the current and projected staffing of all RE departments across Wales. Mary Parry proposed that WASACRE asks Rachel to make an enquiry to Vaughan Salisbury about the research he completed some time ago, which gave hard data to prove that there would be a shortage of RE teachers in the future. This data was shared with Welsh Government at the time to successfully prove that there was a need to introduce a bursary for the training of RE teachers, to avoid this shortage. The Welsh Government subsequently introduced this bursary (which has by now been removed). Members agreed that something similar

should be done in order to obtain further information and data regarding this situation to inform future action.

Action: LJ will email Rachel to make enquiries.

P5. Item 5. Matters arising. Humanist representation on SACRE. Humanists requesting representation on SACRE could be invited to make a presentation to current members outlining how their co-option will positively impact SACRE. The decision to co-opt lies entirely with each individual SACRE.

P10. Item 10. A.O.B. Incerts. WASACRE wrote to Welsh Government to request a statement which could be sent to Incerts to confirm that the RE levels in the National Exemplar Framework are statutory. Welsh Government refused to supply WASACRE with a statement due to Incerts being a commercial enterprise.

Mary Parry reminded members of the situation and that the headings for the RE levels within the Incerts assessment package used by many schools in Wales are misleading. The Foundation Phase outcomes are not on there and Incerts have refused to put them on. All SACREs have notified schools of the confusion and have explained which levels are the correct ones to use.

Action: LJ will ask Welsh Government for a statement which explains the status of the Agreed Syllabus levels in RE.

6. Addysg Grefyddol a'i le o fewn y cwricwlwm newydd / *Religious Education and its place within the new curriculum*

Gill Vaisey spoke about the meeting between WASACRE Executive representatives and Welsh Government representatives Manon Jones and Abi Williams. Gill said that it was a positive meeting in which they were able to share concerns over the implications of the new curriculum for Wales, including the current nursery provision for RE and withdrawal rights, and to share what good RE might look like. Gill assured members that WASACRE will continue to meet with Welsh Government in the future to maintain and develop this mutually beneficial relationship.

A member asked which schools had been chosen as pioneer schools. Phil Lord confirmed that the information was available on the Welsh Government website.

7. Diweddariadau/*Up-dates*:

- FEAAG/*EFTRE*

The EFTRE Conference will take place in August 2016, the dates and details for which are on the EFTRE website [www.EFTRE.net](http://www.EFTRE.net). Phil Lord will be going to the conference, which will focus on RE in a multi-cultural world and will aim to help address the anti-terrorism agenda. Lots of different workshops will be offered and Phil urged members to circulate the information about the conference to teachers in their Local Authorities.

- Canlyniadau'r Bagloriaeth Cymru ac Arolwg Addysg Grefyddol/ *Results of the Welsh Baccalaureate and RE Survey*

Libby Jones shared a PowerPoint presentation with members showing the initial results of the Welsh Baccalaureate survey. The PowerPoint is available on the WASACRE website [www.wasacre.org](http://www.wasacre.org)

A discussion ensued in which the following points and questions were raised:

What percentage of schools from each authority responded to the questionnaire?

Where the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification has negatively impacted schools support should be given as soon as possible.

WASACRE should highlight the examples of positive impact and share them as good practice to all schools in Wales.

The current agreed syllabi in Wales (National Exemplar Framework) currently states that KS4 RE can be offered through 'other appropriate qualifications (e.g. Key Skills/Welsh Baccalaureate)'. Should we be looking at this guidance with a view to re-wording it?

What are the consequences for not doing statutory RE at KS4?

The information within the responses from each school should be sent to the appropriate SACRE for them to deal with any issues which have been raised and feedback given to WASACRE on progress.

Schools should be formally thanked for responding to the survey.

Action: LJ to send letter of thanks to the individual schools via their local SACRE. Send PowerPoint presentation to SACREs for their information. Feedback the responses to the SACREs about their schools for their information. Send information to the RE Advisors/SACREs regarding the schools who may not be meeting current statutory requirements for RE and request feedback on the Local Authorities' actions and progress.

- *Canllawiau ar Reoli Hawl Tynnu'n ôl o Addysg Grefyddol/ Guidance on Managing the Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education*

Gill gave members the context to the guidance document explaining that it was done on request of Headteachers for guidance on withdrawal from RE. NAPfRE have supported Gill on writing this Guidance. Headteachers have been involved, as have different Local Authorities in Wales and Dilwyn Hunt (chair of AREIAC). The emphasis of the document is on helping Headteachers manage the withdrawal from RE. The Exec committee considered making it available as a glossy document and on PDF to publish it and have asked the Treasurer if WASACRE would support it in terms of funding. It would be a WASACRE sponsored document and WASACRE would pay for the design, printing and translation costs.

The majority of members present at the meeting agreed for WASACRE to give financial support to this guidance document.

It was proposed that the WASACRE website should be improved and up-dated, including the WASACRE logo and design style for future WASACRE documents. The majority of members voted in agreement of this proposal.

8. Cyflwyniad NAPfRE / *NAPfRE presentation:*

Addoli ar y Cyd a cadw arferion crefyddol mewn Ysgolion / *Collective Worship and Religious Observance in Schools- Alison Mawhinney and Ann Sherlock*

Alison and Ann gave a presentation on their recent research into Collective Worship across the UK, including looking at current legislation. The presentation is available on the WASACRE website. [www.wasacre.org](http://www.wasacre.org). Phil thanked Alison and Ann for their presentation and members were invited to ask questions. An example of some of the questions asked are as follows:

Q1. Is there a specific age suggested by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that a child is capable of making the decision to withdraw themselves from collective worship?

A. No there is not. However, competence is referred to in convention and schools would have to make that decision.

Q2. When a child is withdrawn from collective worship what activities are deemed to be educational that the children can do instead and where is that in the legislation?

A. It states in International Guidance that the activity should be in line with parental wishes and in line with the rights of the child.

9. Adroddiad ar gyfarfod y Pwyllgor Gwaith a gynhaliwyd ar 10 May 2016 / *Report from the Executive Committee held on 10 May 2016*

Phil talked about WASACREs relationship with the Religious Education Council for England and Wales and plans for further dialogue and collaboration.

Phil suggested that WASACRE should keep a watching brief on what is happening with the WJEC new RE specification which will be implemented in September 2017.

10. Gohebiaeth / *Correspondence*

Libby Jones received an email from Kathy Riddick, development officer of the Wales Humanists on April 5 2016 to enquire about how Humanist representation on SACREs can be arranged. Libby Jones replied to Kathy to explain the process, a copy of her response was read out at the meeting, and Kathy asked to attend one of the future WASACRE meetings. In consultation with Phil, Libby has invited Kathy to attend the meeting in Carmarthenshire in November as an observer.

Libby received an email from a parent from RCT local Authority regarding a possible equality issue within his child's school. Libby read out the email to members who agreed that it was not a WASACRE issue and that it would be more helpful to pass it on to RCT SACRE for them to investigate further with the school in question.

Action: LJ will contact the parent to explain that his enquiry is now being dealt with by RCT SACRE and RCT SACRE has been advised of the enquiry.

11. U.F.A. / *A.O.B.* None.

12. Dyddiad y cyfarfod nesaf / *Date for next meeting*: 18 Tachwedd 2016, Carmarthenshire/ 18 November 2016, Carmarthenshire.

The meeting will be held in the Carmarthenshire Council Chamber.

Dyddiadau cyfarfodydd yn y dyfodol / *Future meeting dates*: Spring 2017 Monmouthshire; Summer 2017 Wrexham; Autumn 2017 Bridgend; Spring 2018 Swansea.

Phil Lord brought the meeting to a close and thanked those involved for their contributions.