

# Annual Report



CYNGOR  
monmouthshire  
COUNTY COUNCIL  
*sir fynyvy*

## **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)**

**1st August, 2017 - 31st July, 2018**

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## **SECTION 1: INFORMATION ABOUT SACRE**

### **1.1 Duty to Establish a SACRE**

All Local Authorities are required to constitute a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) within their local region.

### **1.2 Composition of SACRE**

Representation on SACRE is required as follows:-

- Such Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the Local authority, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area
- Associations representing teachers
- The Local Authority

### **1.3 Membership of SACRE**

The list of members of Monmouthshire SACRE is set out in Appendix 1. Every effort has been made to maintain representation from a wide range of non-Christian communities. However, since the beginning of the summer term 2018 a number of long-standing members have resigned from the Standing Council. The Clerk has approached a number of organisations and CYTUN to maintain representation with limited success to date.

### **1.4 Functions of SACRE**

- To advise the Local Authority on worship and the religious education to be given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus including methods of teaching, advice on materials and the provision of training from teachers.
- To consider whether to recommend to the Local Authority that its current Agreed Syllabus should be reviewed by convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference.
- To consider whether the requirement of religious worship in a county school should be 'broadly Christian in nature' should be varied (determinations)
- To report to the Local Authority and Welsh Government on its activities on an annual basis.

## 1.5 Meetings

SACRE only met on two occasions during the academic year 2017-18. The summer meeting was not held due to the decline in membership and that SACRE has taken steps to rectify this going forward.

October 13<sup>th</sup> 2017

February 9<sup>th</sup> 2018

## 1.6 Circulation of the Report

Copies of this report are circulated electronically to those organisations and establishment listed in Appendix 3. It is also available on the Local Authority and WASACRE website.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ADVICE GIVEN BY SACRE

- **RE GCSE – Use of Guest Speakers**

SACRE Members recognised that sensitive topics are a significant challenge for teachers to approach and provide a balanced view. It was agreed that guest speakers provide an effective stimulant and worthwhile discussion.

- **SACRE RE News Bulletin**

The LA continued to support the termly SACRE RE News Bulletin and distributes this to all schools via the Monmouthshire Headteachers' Association.

- **WASACRE**

The Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE) published a guidance document entitled 'Managing the Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education'. This has been distributed to schools free of charge.

- **Curriculum Review and Development**

Regular updates on the curriculum review were considered and discussed by members. The positive working relationships with Welsh Government continued and the RE Consultant attended a number of meetings with Pioneer schools.

- **Pilot RE Pupil Profile**

A member of SACRE reported that he had attended the Archdiocesan Conference in Cardiff on the topic of the Donaldson curriculum and the way forward for Religious Education in Catholic Schools. St Mary's RC Primary School follows the "Come and See" scheme that is adopted for use in all Roman Catholic Schools. This values based profile is being incorporated and piloted in the school. The school has extended an invitation to SACRE Members to visit the school to see this in action and information was circulated to schools. SACRE noted that there is another values based package (not church/faith based) that provides universal positive human values and this is available online.

- **Summary of Inspection Reports**

SACRE considered inspection reports in order to monitor standards in Religious Education and Collective Worship.

- **Self Evaluation Reports**

SACRE has continued to request self- evaluation reports from schools outlining the range and quality of provision for Religious Education and Collective Worship.

- **Guidance on Managing the Withdrawal of Pupils From RE**

The RE Consultant provided a guidance document for schools on managing the right of withdrawal from RE. In consultation the document has received the support from Headteachers and many faith communities. This has been distributed to schools free of charge.

- **Visitors From Faith Communities**

Monmouthshire SACRE is privileged to have a wonderful group of faith representatives on its Council who are willing to visit schools to talk about aspects of their faith with pupils for example; the Muslim representative visited Goytre Fawr Primary School to answer questions from pupils about current news items and the Buddhist representative visited Archbishop Church in Wales Primary School to lead assembly.

- **SACRE News Bulletin**

The SACRE News bulletin provided a range of information to schools including specific focus on the following:

- Holocaust Memorial Day
- Inter Faith Network
- Calendar of Festivals

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- Report from Chris Abbas report (Afon Taf High School)
- Article from the Religious Education Council
- Bahá'í Faith: 200 years anniversary celebration. The Chair reported that she had attended the celebration event in the Senedd. The speaker was extraordinary, and the information pack was made available for members to view.
- Farmington Scholarship for Teachers
- Plurality in Religious Education Conference.
- SACRE Members were reminded that there is an Open Day at Blaina Mosque

## SECTION 2: ADVICE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### 2.1 The Locally Agreed Syllabus

**Date of adoption of current Agreed Syllabus:** September 2008  
**Agreed Syllabus implementation date:** September 2008  
**Last Review date:** September 2013

#### 2008 Agreed Syllabus

In 2008 SACRE endorsed and adopted a new Agreed Syllabus for Authority's schools with effect from September 2008. The concepts and skills based Agreed Syllabus is fully in line with the National Exemplar Framework for RE and the Foundation Phase. Printed copies of the Agreed Syllabus were distributed to schools and supporting guidance materials.

Training opportunities have been provided to support the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus for the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2. Secondary schools have been advised of other training opportunities including for transition between phases.

Teacher representatives on SACRE reviewed the effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus in 2013 in line with the five year requirement and reported back to SACRE. It was felt overall the programmes of study remained effective but with some revision to the Level descriptors. SACRE endorsed the re-adoption of the Agreed Syllabus and agreed that any changes should be in line with the National Curriculum (NC) Review.

#### Agreed Syllabus Review

During 2017-18, SACRE has continued to receive regular updates on the development of the NC review throughout the year and will continue to monitor and respond to developments in this area. The RE Consultant and her peers attended a number of curriculum development meetings including with Pioneer Schools and shared experience and learning from these events.

The Standing Conference identified potential concerns about the level of continuous curriculum change, the extent of the content of the curriculum, the use of non-specialist teachers to deliver RE and clarity around the RE element within the Humanities AoLE. SACRE are awaiting further exemplification of RE within the NC from Welsh Government and WASACRE, before beginning a review of the Agreed Syllabus.

The RE Consultant and the Chair of SACRE with input from teachers responded to Estyn's Thematic Review of RE and to WG proposals on the NC on behalf of SACRE.

## **2.2 Standards in religious education**

The Local Authority does not have a specific subject Adviser for Religious Education and consequently an external RE Consultant is employed to support SACRE in discharging its duties.

SACRE analyses school inspection reports and gleans what information it can in relation to religious education and collective worship. SACRE has established a process of asking schools to provide their own evaluation of the provision of religious education and collective worship shortly after the school is inspected by Estyn.

### **2.2a Inspection Reports and Self Evaluation**

SACRE received one inspection report and self-evaluation during the academic year from a primary school during the year. Estyn did not identify any instances of non-compliance from this inspection with statutory requirements. The provision in the school was judged to promote pupils' spiritual and moral development well by providing them with valuable opportunities to reflect and share their experiences, for example by learning about values in their daily assemblies.

Four schools, one secondary and three primary, were inspected during the academic year however, reports were not available to share at the time of the final SACRE meeting in 2017-18.

A detailed and helpful self evaluation report was received from the school which highlighted many areas of good practice and areas for further development. A letter was sent to the school commending its work in the relevant areas of good practice.

## **2.3 Methods of teaching and the choice of teaching materials**

### **2.3a Continuing Professional Development**

Comprehensive advice on methods of teaching and the choice of teaching materials is provided by the authority. Schools also have access to the Consultant RE Adviser to SACRE on an independent basis for individual school support.



The EAS provide a range of training courses for schools which are advertised centrally through CPD on-line. The current focus on Literacy and Numeracy has reduced the number of subject specific courses.

### **2.3b Teaching Materials**

#### **Holocaust Memorial Day 2018 Resources**

All schools were provided with details of the 2018 Holocaust Memorial Day theme 'The power of words'. Spoken and written words can have a huge impact, whether good or bad. The theme explores how language has been used in the past, and how it is used in the present day. Schools were informed by SACRE that further information and resources can be found on their website [www.hmd.org.uk](http://www.hmd.org.uk) – these include lesson plans, film clips, case studies, collective worship materials and worksheets suitable for primary to post 16 students.

It is hoped that schools will find the materials useful and they have been asked to let SACRE know of their involvement in order to hear about pupil experiences and learning outcomes.

#### **Artefact Loan Service**

The comprehensive collection of Monmouthshire's RE Artefacts is located at five schools around the county and this facility was promoted to schools. One comprehensive school lends artefacts, information and resources to cluster primary schools.

#### **Visits to Mosques**

Schools were reminded that the local mosque in Blaina is pleased to receive visits from schools. Dr Muzafar Jilani can arrange visits to the mosque or visits to school.

He can be contacted on 01873 855565 or by email [m.jilani733@btinternet.com](mailto:m.jilani733@btinternet.com)

Alternatively, the Muslim Council of Wales can be contacted to arrange an educational visit to a mosque. They will discuss the possibilities with the school and identify the most local mosque that can facilitate a visit. They have a group of volunteers who are at hand to show pupils around the mosque facilities and also deliver a short talk on Islam and answer questions related to the particular aspect of Islam being studied. All volunteers used have undertaken a DBS check.

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For further information and to arrange a visit schools can contact:  
Nahida Begum (Executive Assistant to Saleem Kidwai OBE, KFO, FRSA  
Secretary General Muslim Council of Wales) Tel: 029 2048 7667 extension  
214 Email: [nahida@muslimcouncilwales.org.uk](mailto:nahida@muslimcouncilwales.org.uk)

**SACRE RE News Bulletin**

The termly SACRE RE News Bulletin is distributed to all schools via the Monmouthshire Headteachers' Association. It contains useful information about teaching resources and local and national support and initiatives.

**Local faith community celebrations**

Schools were reminded to look out for local faith community celebrations and signposted to the SACRE News Bulletin for details of local events.

It was acknowledged that Monmouthshire SACRE, through its members, is very proactive in supporting schools by regularly advising on and distributing resources to schools and in particular by providing RE Days for pupils. In addition, many of its faith members make individual visits to schools to support with RE lessons. SACRE will continue to consider further ways in which it can support schools through its work.

## **SECTION 3: ADVICE ON COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

### **3.1 WASACRE**

Monmouthshire SACRE is a member of the Welsh Association of SACREs and its representatives regularly attend meetings. Nominated representatives of Monmouthshire SACRE at WASACRE meetings are Bahá'í representative Mrs. Sue Cave, Mrs. Sharon Perry-Phillips, teacher representative and Tudor Thomas, Co-opted Member.

The LA funds supply cover and travel expenses for teacher representatives to attend WASACRE meetings.

### **3.2 Welsh Government National Curriculum Review**

SACRE has received termly updates on the progress of the National Curriculum View and its implications for Religious Education in the curriculum.

RE remains a statutory curriculum requirement across the 3 to 16 age range and sits within the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience. The Humanities working group have followed a 'What Matters' approach to identifying appropriate knowledge/skills and concepts for each discipline and building the AoLE around them.

SACRE have been informed of the autumn RE Conference organised by Welsh Government, in collaboration with WASACRE, to facilitate an opportunity for SACREs to discuss key approaches to the curriculum recommended by the Humanities group.

SACRE resolved to continue to monitor the situation and be prepared to respond to Welsh Government if there is a further consultation with stakeholders.

#### **National Advisory Panel for Religious Education (NAPfRE)**

The RE Consultant to Monmouthshire SACRE, Gill Vaisey, is a member of NAPfRE and regularly attends meetings on SACRE's behalf. In this way SACRE is able to keep abreast of developments in Wales and play a crucial role in informing decisions and policies that affect religious education.

### **Religious Education Council**

The RE Consultant to Monmouthshire represents the Wales Association of SACREs on the Religious Education Council for England and Wales and attends its biannual meetings where she can represent SACREs across Wales and also be kept informed of national developments across England and Wales.

### **3.3 Estyn Updates**

SACRE were informed that the RE Thematic Review of KS2 and 3 had been undertaken by Estyn and that outcomes would be published in June 2018. The RE Consultant and Chair of SACRE, with input from teacher representatives, had returned the Estyn survey relating to this review on behalf of SACRE. Outcomes from the review will be shared with SACRE at the next meeting.

### **3.4 Applications for Determinations**

No applications were received from schools for determinations to be made on the lifting of the requirements for collective worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

## APPENDIX 1

### MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL: Membership of SACRE 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018

#### LOCAL AUTHORITY:

County Councillor L. Brown (replaced by County Councillor R. John in May 2018)

County Councillor A. Easson (replaced by County Councillor T. Thomas in May 2018)

County Councillor M. Lane

County Councillor P. Pavia

County Councillor J. Watkins

County Councillor A. Webb

#### TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

##### Primary Schools

Ms. K. Christofi (NAHT)

Mr. S. Oram (NEU)

Ms. M. Millington (NASUWT)

Mrs C. Cooper (NEU)

##### Secondary Schools

Mr A. Jones (NASUWT)

Mrs R. Davies (NEU)

Mrs S. Perry-Phillips (resigned 18<sup>th</sup> May 2018) - Vacancy

#### CHRISTIAN AND OTHER RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION

Dr. A. Daly (Church in Wales)

Mr. R. Cottrell (Roman Catholic Archdiocese) resigned in June 2018 –  
Vacancy

Major Neville Andrews (Salvation Army)

Revd. Peter Baines (Free Church Council)

Mrs. S. Cave (Bahá'í Faith)

Ngakpa Namgyal Chatral (Buddhist Faith)

Mr. S. Sharma (Hindu Faith)

Mr. A. Davidson (Jewish Faith)

Mrs F. Jilani (Muslim Faith) – resigned in February 2018 - Vacancy

Mrs. N. Baicher (Sikh Faith) – resigned July 2018

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS**

Mrs K. Fitter

Mr. T. Thomas

**OFFICERS**

Sharon Randall-Smith – Head of Service Children and Young People  
Directorate

Gill Vaisey – RE Consultant

**CLERK TO SACRE**

Richard Williams (replaced by Wendy Barnard in March 2018)

## **APPENDIX 2: SCHEDULE AND AGENDA OF MEETINGS**

### **October 13<sup>th</sup> 2017 at Monmouthshire County Council, Innovation House, Magor**

#### **Main Agenda Items**

- Election of Chair.
- Appointment of Vice-Chair.
- Declarations of Interest.
- Minutes of the SACRE Council meeting held on 9th June 2017 and actions arising.
- Feedback from a presentation to Cardiff SACRE: RE Days for Year 6 Pupils in Monmouthshire Schools.
- Draft SACRE Annual Report 2016 - 2017.
- Curriculum development update.
- WASACRE: a) Draft minutes of the WASACRE meeting dated 7th July 2017,  
b) Appointments to the WASACRE Executive Council and c) dates of future WASACRE meetings and attendance from Cardiff SACRE.
- SACRE News Bulletin: a) September 2017 News Bulletin b) Information briefings from members for inclusion in the next SACRE News Bulletin.
- Dates and venue for future meetings.

### **February 9<sup>th</sup> 2018 at Monmouthshire County Council, Innovation House, Magor**

#### **Main Agenda Items**

- Declarations of interest
- Minutes of the meeting held on 13th October 2017
- Presentation from Andrew Jones: Using guest speakers to support the delivery of the new Religious Studies GCSE.
- SACRE News Bulletin a) September 2017 News Bulletin - feedback from Goytre Fawr Primary School on visit from Fatma Jilani responding to concerns of children following terrorist attacks and b) Information briefings from members for inclusion in next SACRE News Bulletin
- Curriculum development update

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- To consider and respond to Welsh Government papers: a) Letter to SACREs from Manon Jones, b) RE Paper by WASACRE' - What Matters In RE and WG Humanities Report
- Self-Evaluation Report
- Ysgol Y Ffin Self-Evaluation report
- Estyn: To receive a copy of completed Estyn Survey.
- Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education: a) To receive copy of WASACRE guidance document Managing the Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education and b) To receive copy of questionnaire to schools
- WASACRE: a) To receive and note draft minutes from WASACRE meeting 10th November 2017, b) To consider possible nominations from Monmouthshire SACRE members to join the WASACRE Executive Council and c) To note dates of future WASACRE meetings
- Dates and venue of future meetings



### **APPENDIX 3: Circulation of the Report**

A copy of this annual report has been sent to the following organisations:

- Members of Monmouthshire County Council
- Chair of Children and Young People Select Council
- All Monmouthshire County Council maintained primary, secondary and special schools
- Voluntary Aided Schools in Monmouthshire
- All members of SACRE
- Regional Director of the Education Achievement Service
- Welsh Government / DfES
- Wales Association of SACRES's (WASACRE)
- Cabinet Secretary for Education Welsh Assembly
- Estyn
- Available to all Local Education Authorities in Wales via the Welsh Association of SACRE's website.