

Annual Report



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COUNTY COUNCIL
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Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education (SACRE)

1st August, 2015 - 31st July, 2016

Annual Report Of Monmouthshire County Council Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education (SACRE)

1st August, 2015 - 31st July, 2016

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1. Executive Summary

- **RE Today Art in Heaven competition**

On SACREs recommendation details of the RE Today Art in Heaven competition were sent to all schools.

- **RE Celebration Days**

SACRE supported the RE Day for Year 6 pupils.

- **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 Presentation: Developing the Work of SACRES**

SACRE members considered in detail the presentation shared by WASACRE and considered the issues in light of its own meetings and practice.

- **Farmington Fellowship 2015 – 2016**

Opportunities provided through the Farmington Fellowship were distributed to all schools with the LAs support.

- **Holocaust Memorial Service**

All schools were provided with details of the 2016 Holocaust Memorial Service.

- **Withdrawal Clause**

A guidance document for schools on managing the parental right of pupil withdrawal from RE is being prepared by the RE Consultant and will be available for distribution soon.

- **RE and the Welsh Baccalaureate**

On SACRE's advice, the LA consulted with schools on how the provision of RE will be managed alongside the introduction of the new Welsh Baccalaureate from September 2015.

- **Curriculum Review and Development**

Regular updates on the curriculum review were considered by members.

- **Revision to A level and GCSE Examination Specifications**

SACRE considered the issues surrounding the new A Level and GCSE Specifications for RS and updated schools accordingly.

- **Use of Incerts**

Schools using the Incerts software were advised to ensure that they are using the correct set of Levels for Religious Education.

- **CYTUN Bulletin**

Editions of the CYTUN News bulletin were distributed to members on a regular basis.

- **Summary of Inspection Reports**

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

- **Self Evaluation Reports**

SACRE has continued to request self evaluation of Religious Education and Collective Worship from schools.

- **Hosting of WASACRE Meeting**

Monmouthshire SACRE is pleased to have begun preparations to host the Spring 2016 meeting of WASACRE.

- **150th Anniversary of The Salvation Army**

Schools were advised of The Salvation Army's schools/colleges website <http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/schools-religious-education> where there are some excellent teaching and learning activities available for use in schools at both primary and secondary level.

- **BBC Programmes for Schools**

Schools were advised of five programmes, one each on Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Judaism and Hinduism made available through the BBC.

- **Cymru'n Cofio Wales Remembers 1914-1918 £1,000 Grant for Schools**

Details of the opportunity to apply for up to £1,000 to develop creative and innovative projects to commemorate the war were circulated to schools.

- **Voices of Conscience Video stories**

The true stories of people who made a personal stand against war on grounds of conscience are available as a resource to schools and details have been distributed accordingly.

- **Cymru dros Heddwch / Wales for Peace**

Schools were notified of the Wales for Peace project which will involve a programme of activities over the next four years.

- **Visits to Mosques**

Details of opportunities to visit both the local Blaina mosque and mosques in Cardiff were distributed to schools.

- **Video Clips**

Six digital stories created by Muslim children aged 6-13 from Cardiff for use in the classroom and suitable for all ages is freely available and details have been provided to schools.

- **See The World Through Our Eyes**

Schools were reminded of the BTA's project- 'See The World Through Our Eyes' which involves an interactive presentation provided by a native speaker who originates from the chosen country is available to all schools via GEMs.

- **Artefact Loan Service**

The comprehensive collection of Monmouthshire's RE Artefacts is now located at five schools around the county and this facility was promoted to schools.

- **RE Ideas From RE News**

A Festivals Through The Year overview made available by REMW was made known to schools as a possible useful resource which provides a reminder of some (but not all) of the important festivals from a range of faiths throughout the year.

- **Local faith community celebrations**

Schools were reminded to look out for local faith community celebrations. The autumn issue of the SACRE News Bulletin provided details of some local Hindu celebrations for autumn 2015.

- **Visitors From Faith Communities**

Monmouthshire SACRE is privileged to have a wonderful group of faith representatives on its committee who are willing to visit schools to talk about aspects of their faith with pupils.

- **RE News**

The previously published magazine RE News is now available freely from <http://www.religious-education-wales.org/> and is a good resource to keep up to date with developments and good practice in RE across Wales.

2. Advice To The LA

2.1 Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Date of adoption of current Agreed Syllabus: September 2008
Last review held: 24th January, 2008
Agreed Syllabus implementation date: September 2008

2008 Agreed Syllabus

Printed copies of the Agreed Syllabus were distributed to all schools within the authority. Each primary school received 2 copies with each secondary school receiving four copies. This is in addition to the electronic copy previously distributed.

The concepts and skills based Agreed Syllabus is fully in line with other curriculum subject documentation and the Foundation Phase. It is supported by comprehensive guidance material.

Training opportunities have been provided to support the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus for Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2. A course for Key Stage 2 / 3 was offered but was cancelled due to insufficient number of applicants. Secondary schools have been advised of other training opportunities.

Review

SACRE initiated a review of the 2008 Agreed Syllabus as required within the five year period. Teacher representatives on SACRE have considered the effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus and reported back to SACRE at several meetings.

It was felt that overall the programmes of study are effective however, the Level Descriptions need to be reviewed and revised.

It was agreed that any changes made to the Agreed Syllabus for RE should be in line with the National Curriculum and therefore the review of the Agreed Syllabus would be ongoing until the outcome of the WG National Curriculum review and the review of the Foundation Phase was known.

In its spring and summer 2015 meetings SACRE received and discussed a presentation regarding the Curriculum Review: Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales.

Members felt that the emphasis in the review regarding Religious Education was pleasing in that it was recommended that it remained a statutory subject on the curriculum. It was also positive that it was being recommended that religious education be placed in the Humanities area of Learning and Experience. It was noted that Religious Education was not a statutory requirement for nursery provision and it was hoped there was an opportunity via the Donaldson Review to change this. The Committee resolved to respond to the review as a SACRE before the 8th May 2015 deadline. The RE Consultant subsequently formulated a response to the review on behalf of Monmouthshire SACRE and this was submitted as part of the Great Debate consultation process.

SACRE will continue to monitor and respond to developments in this area.

2.2 Standards in religious education

Monitoring of Provision and Standards

The LA does not have a subject Adviser for religious education. An RE Consultant is employed to support SACRE. This does not allow time for extra activities and support such as visiting schools and monitoring provision. SACRE analyses school inspection reports and gleans what information it can in relation to religious education and collective worship. Since the 2010 inspection framework, this has become increasingly difficult with little or no evidence of religious education or collective worship contained within the reports. Therefore SACRE has in place 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.

Inspection Reports and Self Evaluation

We received a summary of inspection reports and self-evaluations from five primary schools and one secondary school. A summary of the inspection report was considered for one special school and one nursery school.

In school 1 there was no reference to Religious Education in the inspection report. 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 the areas of good practice.

In school 2 there was no reference to Religious Education in the inspection report. The school submitted a self evaluation report which indicated that good provision is made for Religious Education and that standards of outcomes are adequate. The school highlighted areas for development. The RE Consultant to SACRE contacted the school to offer advice and support.

In school 3 it was noted that pupils at KS2 do not have full access to a few subjects including Religious Education. A detailed and helpful self evaluation report was received from the school which highlighted many areas of good practice. The school noted that an area for development was to ensure that planned activities in RE are taking place progressively and consistently across the school. The School Improvement Officer will monitor the situation at the school and offer support as necessary.

In school 4 there was no reference to Religious Education in the inspection report. A very detailed and extremely helpful self evaluation report was received from the school which highlighted many areas of good practice. A number of areas for development were identified by the school in order to raise standards further. A letter was sent to the school commending the areas of good practice and supporting the identification of areas for development.

In school 5 there was no reference to Religious Education in the inspection report. The self evaluation report received from the school was very detailed and extremely helpful and highlighted many areas of good practice. Several areas for development were identified by the school in order to raise standards further. A letter was sent to the school commending the areas of good practice. SACRE also supported the

identification of areas for development and took the opportunity to remind the school of the need to be careful in selecting the appropriate set of levels within the Incerts programme for tracking pupils' progress.

In school 6 there was no reference to Religious Education in the inspection report. The full RS Department self evaluation report was received from the school which highlighted many areas of good practice. The department identified that in most areas of Key Question 1 standards achieved are mainly good, with some excellent and some adequate features.

In the Special School it was noted that 'over the last three years, all school leavers have achieved one or more qualifications in accredited courses that are well matched to their individual needs and abilities. These include a wide range of entry level awards at level 1, 2 and 3 and GCSEs in religious education, physical education (PE), English and ICT'. SACRE is awaiting receipt of the school's self evaluation report.

In the Nursery School there was no reference to activities associated with Religious Education. However, cultural awareness is appropriately promoted and there is a strong emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Review of Non-Maintained Settings

The School Improvement Officer responsible for Early Years undertook a review of all non-maintained settings in the authority in order to monitor the provision of cultural and religious education.

SACRE received the report which covered twenty nine settings. Members of SACRE were pleased to note the numerous examples of good practice identified. It was noted that many settings explore the festivals of Christmas, Easter, Chinese New Year and Diwali and that appropriate provision is being made for moral education within the PSE Curriculum, with values such as kindness being promoted. SACRE also noted that in many settings pupils interact with and enjoy RE through a combination of roleplay, dressing up, puppets and stories. Members were also pleased to note that many settings have established strong links with their local church and that visitors from a range of faiths visit some settings.

In response to the review, SACRE wrote a letter to each setting congratulating them on their achievements. A list of faith representatives who are able to provide support to Early Years settings was distributed together with a list of recommended resources to encourage settings to explore a wider range of aspects of RE to build on the excellent work being covered around festivals.

Survey of RE at KS4 and implications of the Welsh Baccalaureate

In 2014 – 2015 it was reported by WASACRE that the new Welsh Baccalaureate has impinged on RE time allocation in some schools across Wales. SACRE therefore recommended that the LA consults with schools on how the provision of RE will be managed alongside the introduction of the new Welsh Baccalaureate from September 2015. All secondary schools within the authority responded either via the WASACRE produced survey or via direct communication with the RE Consultant.

SACRE noted the varied provision of RE across the four secondary schools within the authority. As from September 2016, two schools will be fulfilling their statutory requirements with providing RE at KS4 through RS examination courses for all students. However, one of these schools will have lost time from RS to the Welsh Baccaulaureate.

Two schools will offer full course RS GCSE as an option. Other pupils will only be provided with RE through the Welsh Baccaulaureate. One of these schools has already identified that this does not fulfil the statutory requirements. The second school intends to monitor the effectiveness of this provision.

- **School 1**
The majority of students study the RS Full Course and all others either follow the RS Short Course or Entry Level.
- **School 2**
Pupils have the option to take RS GCSE full course. Those who do not take the option should study some RE via the Welsh Baccaulaureate which is taught by form tutors. However, although detailed schemes of work and lesson resources are provided by the RE Department, often the RE is not actually provided as planned due to demands on time. Furthermore, on occasions when the RE is provided through the Welsh Baccaulaureate by non-specialist teachers, it is difficult for the RE Department to monitor the RE skills being covered.
- **School 3**
The Welsh Baccaulaureate will have a negative impact in relation to RE provision at the school. Provision has previously been made for all students take full course RS GCSE. From September 2016 some RS curriculum hours will be given to the Welsh Baccaulaureate Skills Challenge Certificate and therefore, all students will only take short course RS, with the full course being taught as an option group.
- **School 4**
Previously, pupils had the option to take either a short course or gain a full course RS GCSE (via two short courses). From September 2016, pupils will have the option to take full course RS GCSE only. Those who do not take the GCSE option will cover elements of RE via the Welsh Baccaulaureate with non-specialist RE teachers. The Head of RE will monitor the provision to establish the effectiveness of this system in providing RE according to the Agreed Syllabus statutory requirements.

SACRE members felt that schools would suffer by not having an RS qualification and the issue should be raised with WJEC and Welsh Government. There was concern that the Welsh Baccaulaureate might result in statutory RE time being cut. Members suggested that RS should be made a statutory examination in order to safeguard its provision. SACRE's concerns were communicated to WASACRE and the WJEC.

The School Improvement Officer will liaise with the schools and discuss provision in order to try to ensure that statutory requirements are met by all schools for all pupils.

2.3 Methods of teaching and the choice of teaching materials

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

2008 Support Material

Foundation Phase

Comprehensive Foundation Phase support material entitled 'Think Topic' was distributed to all settings and schools within the authority in summer 2008.

The production of the material in the form of a CD and hard copy was a joint project with two other authorities. A working party of teachers, Foundation Phase Training Officers and the RE Consultant developed topic based support material with Religious Education included as appropriate. Additional religious education support material was included in the pack as it was recognised that this area of learning often needs additional guidance.

Key Stage 2 / 3

The Key Stage 2 / 3 Agreed Syllabus Support Material was made available to all schools in autumn 2008. The material includes an updated outline long term plan for Key Stage 2 'straight classes' and a long term plan for 'mixed classes' over a two year cycle. There are twelve units of work, six of which are exemplified with samples of pupils' work. All of the units promote a skills based approach to RE and provide a wealth of activities and specific learning objectives. The units are aimed to be supported by the use of the 'Developing Primary RE' series produced by RE Today Services and schools have been encouraged to invest in the purchase of these publications.

Key Stage 3 teachers should find the support material helpful in providing an insight into the provision of RE at Key Stage 2 and the quality and standards of pupils' work being achieved. Many of the units identify key resources and areas of exploration for Key Stage 3 which will effectively build on prior learning.

Feedback from schools using the support material has been extremely positive. Teachers have found the material easy to use and very effective in supporting a skills based approach to Religious Education. SACRE will continue to monitor the impact of the use of the material across schools within the authority.

RE Today publications

To accompany the locally produced support material, schools were advised that it was highly recommended that they purchase the '*Developing Primary RE*' and '*Developing Secondary RE*'. A significantly reduced cost was negotiated with RE Today Services and schools were invited to place an order via the authority. Sixteen primary schools subsequently purchased the resources which have been cross-referenced with the Agreed Syllabus Support Material units of work.

Teaching materials

Farmington Scholarships

Schools were advised of the opportunity to apply for a Farmington Scholarship and let SACRE know of any successful applications. Scholars are free to study any aspect of Religious Education they wish but preference will be given to applicants whose work can be seen to be of direct value to the teaching of RE in schools. The Scholarship will cover the cost of tuition, board and lodging where appropriate, essential local travel and, by negotiation with the school, the salary of a replacement teacher up to point 6 of the main pay scale.

School/home-based Scholarships may be taken in the form of day release, for instance for one day a week over a term or over the year or for continuous periods up to a maximum of 30 days. University-based Scholarships may be taken as a block of up to eight weeks or in the form of day release up to 30 days. For more information schools can visit www.farmington.ac.uk or E-mail: farmington@hmc.ox.ac.uk

Holocaust Memorial Service

All schools were provided with details of the 2016 Holocaust Memorial Day and that Holocaust resources can be found on their website www.hmd.org.uk – these include lesson plans, film clips, case studies, collective worship materials and worksheets suitable for primary to post 16 students.

Holocaust Memorial Day is an annual event that takes place on January 27th.

HMD was established in the UK in 2000 and the first HMD was held in January 2001.

January 27th marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz- Birkenhau concentration camp by soviet troops in 1945. Holocaust Memorial Day seeks to change the future by learning from and remembering the past. Schools are encouraged to participate in Holocaust Memorial Day in order to remember the victims of the Holocaust and more recent genocides. It provides a framework to explore issues of morality, human reactions, individual experiences, responsibilities and larger questions of the role of governments and democracies. The government, including the Welsh Government, encourages schools and LAs to commemorate this event in some way.

Further information and **free educational materials** for primary to post 16 students specific to the theme of Holocaust Memorial Day can be accessed online at <http://education.hmd.org.uk>

The theme for 2016 is 'Don't Stand By'.

HMD's purpose is to commemorate the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and subsequent genocides – to remember. To build on the legacy of HMD 2015, the theme this year will be forward-looking with a clear call to action in the present: focusing on the contemporary relevance of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides, and considering individual responsibilities not to be bystanders to hate crime and prejudice, nor to international threats of genocide. It must be ensured that the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and subsequent genocides are not forgotten, trivialised or denied.

Survivors, victims and refugees will remain at the centre of HMD; for many survivors, influencing behaviour today and relationships with others in our communities are crucial reasons for their commitment to speaking about their experiences. For some, the focus needs to be on individual acts of kindness that signify that a blind eye will not be turned when those around us face prejudice or victimisation.

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.

See The World Through Our Eyes

The BTA's project- 'See The World Through Our Eyes' – involves an interactive presentation provided by a native speaker who originates from the chosen country. Each session is usually for half a day and can accommodate one class per session. During the presentation culture, festivals, currency, location, language (short dialogue) and clips about places and people will be explored. Following the presentation there will be two or three practical activities that can include practising dialogues, dance, art craft, food (when possible) or a more specific activity related to a curriculum topic when the class teacher asks for it.

Any costs are only related to the resources used in the activities. Providers do not charge for their time as this is covered by GEMS.

For further information schools can contact: Creusa Alessandrini

Tel: 07814392727 Email: Creusa.Alessandrini@newport.gov.uk

150th Anniversary of The Salvation Army

Schools were notified that this year marks the 150th Anniversary of The Salvation Army. To celebrate this The Salvation Army booked the O2 in London for a variety of events from 1st - 5th July. These included bands, singing groups and dance groups from around the world. On Sunday 5th July there was a march of witness down the Mall. Schools can visit The Salvation Army website for more information and particularly The Salvation Army's schools/colleges website <http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/schools-religious-education> where there are some excellent teaching and learning activities available for use in schools at both primary and secondary level.

BBC Key Stage 2 Resources

New RE programmes were recently broadcast by the BBC 2 in March 2015. The five half hour programmes, one each on Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Judaism and Hinduism have been produced with the support of Lat Blaylock, a key figure in the RE world. The BBC will not sell these programmes on DVDs but they will be available on BBC Clips if schools missed recording the broadcasts.

£1,000 Grant for Secondary Schools -

***Cymru'n Cofio* Wales Remembers 1914-1918**

All secondary schools were notified of the opportunity to apply to receive up to £1,000 grant to develop creative and innovative projects to commemorate the war.

Each school is able to decide how best they can do this, and they could also work with other schools and undertake collaborative projects. The commemorations will mark the one hundredth anniversary of the conflict and should encourage debate and discussion. The programme will help young people understand the events and consequences of the conflict and link with the wider commemorations of the First World War that are taking place around the World. *Cymru'n Cofio* Wales Remembers 1914-1918 is the official programme which marks the centenary of the First World War in Wales. Its website provides a focal point for information on [the latest news, events, projects and signposting information on commemorative activities](#) relating to Wales between 2014 and 2018.

Interested schools should email FWWCommemorationGrant@Wales.gsi.gov.uk to receive a grant application pack.

Voices of Conscience – Video stories

Much of the retelling of the history of World War I has focussed on the dreadful numbers killed and injured, and on the soldiers' experiences.

Schools were notified of this new resource which aims to explore a lesser-known aspect of World War I through the true stories of people who made a personal stand against war on grounds of conscience, and who looked for another way. The stories shed light on the World War I period, but are also relevant to contemporary society. They are particularly powerful because they allow ordinary people to tell their own stories, accompanied by photographs and illustrations.

This is a South Wales Area Meeting project of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). It is generously funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, with contributions from South Wales Area Meeting, North Wales Area Meeting, Mid Wales Area Meeting, Southern Marches Area Meeting, Meeting of Friends in Wales, The Spirit of Sulien Trust, Cynefin y Werin and many local Quaker Meetings and Quaker individuals from across Wales and beyond.

<https://vimeo.com/channels/voicesofconscience>

Wales for Peace Project

Via the News Bulletin, schools were advised of a £920,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund towards a new project, Cymru dros Heddwch / Wales for Peace.

A new team have been appointed to deliver this exciting programme of activities over the next four years and details are available via the website

<http://www.wcia.org.uk/walesforpeaceteam.html>

This four-year project will explore one key question: In the 100 years since the First World War, how has Wales contributed to the search for peace?

The aim is to engage 100,000 people in discovering, sharing and learning from the peace heritage of Wales – the people and organisations who have been part of this search, and whose stories remain largely untold.

Stories will also be linked with today's conflicts and people's current views on achieving peace, so that heritage is seen as a living, relevant story that continues to resonate today.

A wide range of activities will be organised from 2015 to 2018, falling into 5 main categories:

- Soldiers' Stories – Uncovering the Impact of War
- The Peace Builders – Discovering Wales' Hidden Histories
- Peace Now – The Legacy for Today
- Future Generations – Inspiring Young People through Heritage
- The Whole Story – Wales for Peace Exhibition

Schools can view the [Activities](#) page for what is planned in each of these categories.

The project is only just getting started, so if you'd like to be kept updated as things develop you can join the mailing list via: [please join our mailing list](#).

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

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 advise of the most local mosque that can provide an appropriate visit. They have a group of volunteers who are at hand to show pupils around the mosque facilities and also to do a short talk on Islam and answer questions related to the particular aspect of Islam being studied. All volunteers used undertake a DBS/ CRB check.

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

Video Clips

A very useful series of six digital stories created by Muslim children aged 6-13 from Cardiff for use in the classroom and suitable for all ages is freely available on-line at <http://vimeo.com/channels/learningtobeamuslim> and schools were reminded of this valuable resource.

Guidance on Managing the Withdrawal of Pupils From RE

The RE Consultant is writing 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. It is to be published bilingually by WASACRE and will be made available to all schools across Wales.

RE Celebration Days

SACRE worked with Caldicot School to provide an RE day for all Y6 pupils from its cluster secondary schools. The feedback from primary school staff and the pupils themselves showed that the day was a huge success. The workshops provided by SACRE faith representatives were excellent and the pupils and staff benefitted greatly from this firsthand experience.

Artefact Loan Service

Following the closure of the Schools' Library Service the comprehensive collection of Monmouthshire's RE Artefacts is now located at five schools around the county. Whilst there is no formal system for loaning the resources, informal arrangements can be made by contacting the host schools on an individual basis. Schools hoisting the resources are: Cross Ash Primary, Goytre Fawr Primary, Llantilio Pertholey VC Primary, Undy Primary and Osbaston VC Primary. To date, few schools have requested to loan the artefacts, however, each of the host schools is making good use of the resources with their pupils in their own schools.

RE Ideas From RE News

A Festivals Through The Year overview has been made available by REMW and may prove to be a useful resource which provides a reminder of some (but not all) of the important festivals from a range of faiths throughout the year.

Local faith community celebrations

Schools were reminded to look out for local faith community celebrations. The autumn issue of the SACRE News Bulletin provided details of some local Hindu celebrations for autumn 2015.

Visitors From Faith Communities

Monmouthshire SACRE is privileged to have a wonderful group of faith representatives on its committee who are willing to visit schools to talk about aspects of their faith with pupils. Many schools will have met several of our faith representatives on the Secondary School hosted RE Days. Some of those involved in the days may be willing to provide a similar workshop within individual schools. An up to date list of contacts is available and schools are encouraged to make use of this valuable resource.

RE Today Art in Heaven competition

On SACREs recommendation details of the RE Today Art in Heaven competition were sent to all schools.

RE News

The previously published magazine RE News is now available freely from <http://www.religious-education-wales.org/> and is a good resource to keep up to date with developments and good practice in RE across Wales.

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.

2.4 Teacher training

WASACRE

It was noted that WASACRE had agreed to provide training courses for teachers across Wales and that a programme of possible courses was being considered.

These would be made known to schools as soon as details have been finalised.

Local Consortium Training

It was agreed that as training courses for RE had not been provided locally for the last two years, the RE Consultant would consider arranging some courses for the next academic year. These would be facilitated by the South Wales Education Achievement Service and details would be made known to schools as soon as available.

2.5 Collective Worship

Inspection Findings

SACRE continued to analyse inspection reports in order to monitor the provision of collective worship in schools within the authority although evidence is limited. Self evaluation reports are requested from schools in order to provide details of collective worship provision.

We received a summary of inspection reports and self-evaluations from five primary schools. A summary of the inspection report was considered for one special school. The inspection reports indicated that four of the primary schools meet statutory requirements. One school does not meet statutory requirements as a few children are withdrawn from Collective Worship on one day a week for additional support.

In school 1 there was no reference to Collective Worship in the inspection report. A detailed and helpful self evaluation report was received from the school which highlighted many areas of good practice and areas for further development.

In school 2 there was no reference to Collective Worship in the inspection report. The school submitted a self evaluation report which indicated good provision is made for Collective Worship details examples of good practice and areas for development.

In school 3 there was no reference to Collective Worship in the inspection report. A detailed and helpful self evaluation report was received from the school which highlighted many areas of good practice and areas for development.

In school 4 the inspection report noted that the school does not meet statutory requirements as a few children are withdrawn from Collective Worship on one day a week for additional support. A detailed and helpful self evaluation report was received from the school which confirmed that the issue of non-compliance has been addressed. The self evaluation also identified many areas of good practice.

In school 5 there was no reference to Collective Worship in the inspection report. A detailed and helpful self evaluation report was received from the school which highlighted many areas of good practice and areas for development.

In the Special School it was noted that the school does not comply with its statutory duty to provide a daily act of Collective Worship. SACRE is awaiting receipt of the school's self evaluation report and the School Improvement Officer is monitoring the situation.

Collective Worship Guidance

In 2010, locally produced guidance on the provision of collective worship was distributed to all schools within the authority together with Estyn's Collective Worship Guidance document and the WASACRE guidance on sixth form provision.

On the recommendation of SACRE faith representatives, schools have also been advised that the guidance should prove useful to visiting clergy who contribute to the school's collective worship. In July 2012 the WASACRE Guidance on Collective Worship was distributed to all schools.

Determinations

SACRE did not receive any requests for determinations this year.

2.6 Advice to the LA on other issues

Local Issues:

Monmouthshire Inclusion Group

SACRE is represented on the Monmouthshire Inclusion Group by the RE Consultant who regularly attends meetings.

CYTUN Policy Bulletin

SACRE members regularly received the Cytun Policy Bulletin for information. Members agreed it would be useful to receive regular updates, particularly regarding Afghan interpreters as Monmouthshire had been offered as a welcome place.

WASACRE Presentation: Developing the Work of SACRES

SACRE members considered in detail the presentation shared by WASACRE and considered the issues in light of its own meetings and practice.

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 all Year 6 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.

Hosting of WASACRE Meeting

Monmouthshire SACRE is pleased to have begun preparations to host the Spring 2016 meeting of WASACRE. This will take place in County Hall, Usk on 3rd March 2017. A welcome will be extended by the Chairman of the Council and also the Chair of SACRE.

Year 1 Children at Gilwern Primary School

Melanie Millington, from the Gilwern Primary School the children and staff of Year 1 at Gilwern School love to share information about their lives in class, so when a class member offered to share a story, an activity and some cake in honour of a Bahá'í holy day they jumped at the chance to celebrate the diversity of beliefs within the classroom. Thanks to the family who provided all the materials, the teacher shared and explained the story of the birth and childhood of the Bab. This was followed up by a reading from a prayer book, a celebratory cupcake and a very relaxing colouring session which was enjoyed by everyone.

Year 6 RE Day at Caldicot School

Following the success of similar days in previous years, Year 6 pupils from the Caldicot School cluster enjoyed another fabulous day of workshops provided by SACRE faith representatives.

Six primary schools visited their cluster secondary school where the RS Department hosted the day. Each class of pupils participated in five different forty minute workshops throughout the day provided by representatives from the Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, Bahá'í, Muslim, and Sikh faiths.

The day enabled pupils to engage in a variety of educational activities and meet faith adherents who were able to talk with them about the importance of various aspects of their faith.

The following responses are just a small selection of thoughts about the day shared by pupils.

“I enjoyed everything today but my favourite was Muhammad’s lesson on Islam. He was awesome and everything he said was very interesting. He is the best teacher ever and I learned so many new things”

Year 6 pupil at Durand Primary School.

“Today was fun as now I know what people from other religions feel like. So now I can relate to how they feel.”

Year 6 pupil at Durand Primary School

“My favourite part of the day was when we learned about good choices and the Bahá'í religion.”

Year 6 pupil at Ysgol Y Ffin.

“Most people thought it was going to be boring, but I found it really fun. All the activities were equally as fun!”

Year 6 pupil at Castle Park Primary School.



“I enjoyed all of the workshops today. I mostly enjoyed the Sikh, Islam and Hindu. It taught me many new things as well as having lots of fun.”
Year 6 pupil at Castle Park Primary School.

“I enjoyed Buddhism because everything is so interesting about their hobbies and style of living.”
Year 6 pupil at Durand Primary School



“We learned about interesting religions today. I especially enjoyed the meditation session in the Buddhism workshop.”
Year 6 pupil at Dewstow Primary School.

“I really liked doing Buddhism because it was easy to understand and I liked listening and talking about how you have to kill to survive.”
Year 6 pupil at The Archbishop Rowan Williams C. I. W. Primary School.

“It was brilliant learning about the different religions.”
Year 6 pupil at Dewstow Primary School.

“I enjoyed Hinduism the most as it involved a memory game where we drew the important objects that we remembered from the lesson. I also learned that the Hindus give special sweets to God.”
Year 6 pupil at Durand Primary School.



“I learned that Hindus take different things, such as food, to offer to God. I enjoyed trying on the Sikh clothes.”
Pupil at The Archbishop Rowan Williams C. I. W. Primary School.

“Today was fantastic. I learned about religion and I liked learning about Buddhism.”

Year 6 pupil at Castle Park Primary School.

“I have learned that Hindus offer rice, sweets, water, flowers and candles to their Gods. I have also enjoyed learning about Islam and how they don't eat from 2:40pm until 9:30pm.”

Year 6 pupil at Durand Primary School.

“I have learnt more about Christianity than I thought there was. I really enjoyed the lesson.”

Year 6 pupil at Durand Primary School



Evaluations received from teachers would very welcome to help us build on this success in future years.

“A very successful day, well organised and ran very smoothly. I was particularly happy with the variety of religions shared.”

Sue Thomas, Year 6 teacher at Dewstow Primary School.

“The day was very good. The children were engaged in most of the activities. The variety of activities kept their interest; drama, singing, look and draw.”

Sue Wilsher, Year 6 teacher at Castle Park Primary School.

“All sessions were different and so interesting for the children. The day was very successful. My children were engaged at all times.”

Louise Farrant, Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin

National Issues:

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 Gill Vaisey, RE Consultant.

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

Gill Vaisey also represents Monmouthshire on the WASACRE Executive Committee.

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.

REC

Gill Vaisey 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.

Curriculum Review

SACRE has received regular updates throughout 2015 – 2016 and will continue to monitor and respond to developments in this area. In its summer meeting, SACRE discussed in detail the implications for Religious Education if it becomes part of the National Curriculum.

Members recognised that in order for Religious Education to become part of the new National Curriculum a change in legislation would need to take place. The RE Consultant informed the committee of the positive meeting held between NAPfRE (the National Advisory Panel for Religious Education) and representatives from Welsh Government where some of the issues surrounding Religious Education and the new curriculum were highlighted and discussed in detail. Issues such as the current status of Religious Education being part of the basic Curriculum and not the National Curriculum, the right of withdrawal clause, and the age at which Religious Education becomes statutory for pupils were all considered in these discussions.

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

Revision to A level and GCSE Examination Specifications

SACRE considered the issues surrounding the new A Level and GCSE Specifications for RS. Schools were updated with developments as soon as they were known as both WASACRE (Welsh Association of SACREs) and NAPfRE (National Advisory Panel on Religious Education) continued to represent the interests of teachers and students regarding the revision of the A Level and GCSE Specifications for RS.

Use of Incerts

In light of some concerns shared by schools about misinformation from staff at Incerts, schools were once again reminded to ensure that they are using the correct set of Levels for Religious Education. For maintained and voluntary controlled schools in Wales the correct assessment criteria within the Incerts programme is 'RE – Exemplar Framework' which uses the statutory Level Descriptions for RE in Wales in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus.

Monmouthshire SACRE wrote to the producers of Incerts with a view to ensuring the correct advice is being given to schools regarding the use of the programme for Religious Education, however no response has been received. SACRE has advised schools that every Agreed Syllabus in Wales contains the Level Descriptions for RE as produced by Welsh Government and these form part of the statutory syllabus and aim to ensure consistency of expected standards across all maintained and voluntary controlled schools.

Schools were urged to ensure that the correct version is used if this programme is adopted by the school to track pupils' progress in RE.

3. Annexes

Annex A) **Number of meetings**

Monmouthshire SACRE met on three occasions this year:

20th November, 2015

11th March, 2016

10th June, 2016

Annex B) **The Composition Of Monmouthshire SACRE**

6 Representatives of the Local Education Authority

12 Representatives of Religious Denominations

7 Representatives of Teachers' Associations

2 Co-opted Places

The committee is also supported by the following officers:

Clerk to SACRE

School Improvement Officer responsible for RE

RE Consultant

Annex C) **Membership Of Monmouthshire County Council
Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education**

As at 31st July, 2016:

Representatives of the Local Education Authority:

Councillor E. J. Hackett Pain Chairperson
Councillor P. Clarke
Councillor D.W.H. Jones
Councillor B. Strong
Councillor A. Easson
Councillor J. George

Representatives Of Religious Denominations

Free Churches (4 places):

Gwent Baptist Association	The Reverend Dr. P. Baines
The Salvation Army	Major S. Wilson
2 vacancies	

Church In Wales	Mrs. V. Howells
Roman Catholic Church	Sister D. O'Donnell
Bahá'í	Mrs. S. Cave
Buddhist	Ngakma Shé-zér Chatral
Hindu	Mr. S. Sharma
Jewish	Mr. A. Davidson
Sikh	Mrs. N. Baicher
Muslim	Mrs. F. Jilani

Representatives Of Teachers' Associations

NASUWT	Mr. A. Jones
NAHT	Ms. A. Wiggins
ATL	Mrs. R. Davies
NUT	Mrs. C. Cooper
ATL	Mrs. S. Perry Phillips
NUT	Ms. M. Millington
NUT	Mr. J. Thomas

Co-option

Mrs. K. Fitter
Mr. S. Mock

Officers:

Ms G. Vaisey	RE Consultant
Mrs. S. Randall-Smith	School Improvement Officer
Mrs. R. Williams	Clerk to SACRE

Annex D) **Distribution of the Annual Report**

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

- Monmouthshire County Council Full Council
- All Monmouthshire County Council maintained primary, secondary and special schools
- Voluntary Aided Schools in Monmouthshire
- University of Wales, Newport
- Welsh Government / DfES
- National Library of Wales

It has been made available to WASACRE and all Local Education Authorities in Wales via the Welsh Association of SACRE's website.