

FLINTSHIRE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL
FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
1 OCTOBER 2014

Minutes of the meeting of the Flintshire Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education held at County Hall, Mold on Wednesday, 1st October 2014

PRESENT:

Councillors: Dave Mackie, Colin Legg and Nigel Steele-Mortimer

Religious Denominations: Dora Jones, Gareth W. Jones, Delyth McIntyre, Rev. Huw Powell-Davies and Rita Price

Teacher Associations: **Ron Keating (Chair)**

APOLOGIES:

Councillors: Chris Bithell and Hilary Isherwood
Sue Jones

IN ATTENDANCE:

Challenge Advisor and Committee Officer

At the start of the meeting, the Chair asked those present to introduce themselves to the group, as the membership had changed slightly.

10. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: CODE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONDUCT.**

No declarations of interest were made.

11. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

The Chair sought nominations for the position of Vice-Chair from the Religious Denominations Representatives. Rita Price was nominated by Delyth McIntyre and this was duly seconded. Rev. Huw Powell-Davies was nominated by the Challenge Advisor but he declined the nomination.

Ms. Price agreed to her nomination and on being put the vote, the proposal was carried. The Chair congratulated Ms. Price on her appointment as Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED:

That Rita Price be appointed as Vice-Chair until the Summer of 2015 and become Chair for the academic year 2015/16.

12. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2014 2014 were submitted.

Matters Arising

Minute number 3 – Analysis of Inspection Reports

In referring to the resolution on page 2, the Challenge Advisor confirmed that a letter had been sent to the schools concerned to congratulate them on the positive outcomes of the inspections.

Minute number 4 – Presentation on the delivery of Religious Education at Holywell High School

The Challenge Advisor said that a letter had been prepared but had not yet been sent to the Governing Body at Holywell High School.

Minute number 5 – Speech from Huw Lewis to REC

Rita Price referred to the speech from Huw Lewis to REC and asked whether an update was available. The Challenge Advisor confirmed that this would not be available until the review had been completed and the report of Professor Donaldson had been published. WASACRE had met with Professor Donaldson and he had expressed his disappointment that there were not enough positive outcomes for Religious Education by pupils at Welsh Schools but WASACRE had not felt that this was the case. The Challenge Advisor referred to the Religious Education Quality Mark (REQM) and explained that he was to undertake an assessment to identify some positive outcomes from responses shown on the REQM website.

The Chair indicated that he had spoken with the Challenge Advisor prior to the meeting on the Agreed Syllabus for Flintshire, which was due to be out of date shortly. They had suggested that the drawing up of a new syllabus should wait until the production of the report by Professor Donaldson and that working to the current Agreed Syllabus should continue.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

13. SACRE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14

The Challenge Advisor introduced the draft annual report of Flintshire SACRE 2013-14 which had been circulated to members with the agenda.

He detailed the content of the report, which included examination results for Religious Studies for 2013, and asked members to advise him of any amendments that were required.

In referring to the organisations that would receive the report, as detailed on page 16, the Chair queried why the Diocese of Bangor had been included in the list.

The Challenge Advisor stated that once the report had been published, it would be sent to WASACRE to include on their website and the other organisations in the list would be emailed a link to the WASACRE website to allow them to view the report. Following a discussion, it was agreed that a note should be included in the report about the role played by the Diocese of St. Asaph and the Diocese of Wrexham.

Delyth McIntyre proposed that the draft report be finalised, published and sent to WASACRE for inclusion on their website, and this was duly seconded.

RESOLVED:

That the draft report be finalised, published and sent to WASACRE for inclusion on their website.

14 ANALYSIS OF INSPECTION REPORTS

The Challenge Advisor introduced the report on the analysis of inspection reports for the following school inspected under the Estyn Framework in May 2014:-

Sandycroft C.P. School

The Chair welcomed the positive comments for Key Questions 2 and 3 and the strong links with the community reported under the section on partnership working.

In response to a question from Delyth McIntyre about why there were no comments on Key Question 1, the Challenge Advisor said that the Estyn report, which this report was a summary of, had not included any comments on Key Question 1. The Chair referred to standards and said that the core curriculum was reported and that not including Key Question 1 was not a negative result.

Rita Price queried whether there was the opportunity for SACRE to undertake dialogue with Estyn on the issue of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development. The Chair felt that the inclusion of examples in the reports of good practice would provide more detail for SACRE. The Challenge Advisor explained that guidelines about Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development were included on the Estyn website and he did not feel that Estyn would be able to provide any further detail on the subject. He added that he had requested information from Sandycroft School on their partnership working for inclusion in the Community Partnership pack. Ms. Yvonne Barker also indicated that the Head Teacher of Sandycroft school had spoken at a Primary School Federation meeting. The Chair asked Ms. Barker to provide an update and feedback on the presentation by the Head Teacher at the next meeting of SACRE. It was also agreed that a letter would be sent to the school congratulating them on the positive outcomes of the inspection.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That a letter be sent to Sandycroft C.P. School to congratulate them on the positive outcome of the inspection; and
- (c) That Yvonne Barker provide an update and feedback on the presentation by the Head Teacher of Sandycroft C.P. School at the next meeting of SACRE.

15. ESTYN REPORT 'ESDGC PROGRESS IN EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP'

Prior to the introduction of the report by the Challenge Advisor, Councillor Colin Legg expressed his disappointment at the inclusion of the item on the agenda as he felt that the report did not include any reference to religious points of view for any faith. The Chair responded that the Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) report could be used as a tool for the promotion of Religious Education in other areas.

The Challenge Advisor provided a detailed presentation of the report which gave information on the progress made in schools for sustainable development and global citizenship since 2006 when Estyn published a baseline report on 'Establishing a position statement for Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship in Wales. He added that in his experience, Religious Education did have an impact on ESDGC in schools. The seven themes, which included identity and culture, were shown in the introduction to the report.

The Chair felt that ESDGC were within the remit for exploration of identity in Wales and added that a strand of the Welsh baccaulaureate included a module on the history of Wales. He said that it was important to ensure that there was guidance and understanding about how the strand could be developed through Religious Education.

The Challenge Advisor felt that the document did contain elements of Religious Education and highlighted the section on the background to the document which included a comment about evaluating values, which he said also formed part of the Religious Education agreed syllabus. He also spoke on the comment that ESDGC should promote ensuring diversity and biodiversity to enhance local, national and international communities. The Challenge Advisor highlighted sections on 'Pupils' understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship', 'Wealth and Poverty' and 'Identity and Culture'.

The Chair asked whether there was the opportunity for Religious Education teachers to meet to discuss subject delivery and the agreed syllabus. The Challenge Advisor said that this took place in secondary

schools and Yvonne Barker confirmed that schools in the consortia did meet; she would put forward the issue for discussion at one of their future meetings.

In recognising what had been said by the Challenge Advisor, Rita Price raised concern about the report as she felt that it could result in issues which did not have a place being added on to Religious Education which would then take teaching away from the educating pupils on religion. She felt that it was important that SACRE defended the subject of Religious Education and that it played an essential part in teaching of pupils.

The Challenge Advisor said that there were a number of subject areas that did not have a subject in their own right but he did not feel that ESDGC would replace Religious Education in schools. He commented on the work undertaken on Choices and decisions and in highlighting paragraph 58 on vision and policy, he said that he felt that the report could encourage schools to write their own policies which could be more effective than policies which were forced upon them; he spoke of the resources which were available. Paragraph 66 reported that almost all schools used specific curricular areas such as religious education for delivering aspects of ESDGC and many also used ESDGC as a catalyst to deliver other subjects or topics; the Challenge Advisor felt that this would continue to happen. He expressed his disappointment at the schools visited as he felt that it was not a fair sample of schools across the whole of Wales. Delyth McIntyre spoke of the diversity in Deeside and Wrexham and raised concern at the significant emphasis on visiting schools in rural areas.

Gareth W. Jones felt that the report emphasised how Religious Education contributed to other subjects and increased the value of Religious Education. He also highlighted the section in the report on identify and culture. The Chair said that teachers must be aware of the onus of responsibility to implement the education of Religious Education and develop it.

Councillor Legg said that it was important that school children were encouraged to have beliefs and understand other religions to make them good global citizens.

The Challenge Advisor spoke of work across class areas and Rita Price, in welcoming the views, commented on the potential of selecting some of the points in the report to promote the teaching of Religious Education and on the demands of schools on Religious Education at cross curricular areas.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

16. RE AND LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Challenge Advisor explained that he had sent out two requests for case studies but had not received many responses which was disappointing.

A database was to be established with contact details for co-ordinators in schools and he would use this information to request case studies again. He added that he would also contact Church Groups to provide examples of community links. The second request for case studies would include a proforma to fill in which he hoped would encourage responses. An update on community links would be provided at the next meeting of SACRE.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

17. WASACRE

- (i) To agree attendance to the next WASACRE meeting scheduled for 26th November 2014 in Neath Port Talbot

The Challenge Advisor indicated that he would be able to attend the next WASACRE meeting scheduled for 26th November 2014.

- (ii) 25th June 2015 – Flintshire hosting WASACRE and WASACRE AGM

The Challenge Advisor explained that Flintshire SACRE were to host the WASACRE meeting and AGM on 25th June 2015 in the Council Chamber at County Hall, Mold. The Leader of the Council had been invited to attend and he hoped that some local schools would be able to join the meeting to provide a presentation. A formal introduction would also be given by the Chief Officer (Education and Youth).

The Chair thanked the Challenge Advisor and Committee Officer for their work in facilitating the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Challenge Advisor attend the next WASACRE meeting on 26th November 2014 in Neath Port Talbot; and
- (b) That the update on the WASACRE meeting and AGM be noted.

18. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Chairman informed members that the next meeting of SACRE had been scheduled for 2pm on Wednesday, 11th February 2015 in the Clwyd Committee Room, County Hall, Mold.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 3.29 pm)

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Chairman