

**Draft Joint Annual Report**  
**of**  
**Flintshire**  
**Standing Advisory Council**  
**For Religious Education (SACRE)**  
**and Standing Advisory Council (SAC) for Religion, Values**  
**and Ethics (RVE)**  
**2022-2023**

## **Foreword**

2022 -2023 was an important year with the phased roll out of the new curriculum, including Religion, Values & Ethics (RVE), from September 2022.

Flintshire local authority convened its Agreed Syllabus Conference during the 2021-2022 academic year, in preparation for the implementation of Curriculum for Wales and for the new Standing Advisory Council (SAC) for RVE. The decision of that Conference was to adopt the Welsh Government statutory guidance for Religion, Values and Ethics in its entirety as the new Agreed Syllabus for Flintshire – to be implemented in line with the roll out of the curriculum across the different phases of education.

The role of Flintshire SACRE/ SAC is to support schools and teachers with advice and guidance on implementing a new or revised Agreed Syllabus. Given that RVE is very much integral to the new Curriculum for Wales, the regional professional development programme for curriculum design and development is also very relevant to developing RVE and implementing the new Agreed Syllabus.

Through the Welsh Association of SACREs, Welsh Government have supported some additional development work for RVE nationally, in producing some focused professional learning resources to support schools on embedding RVE within the curriculum. Those resources are made available via the national learning platform, Hwb. Flintshire recommended these professional learning resources to schools in support of the new Agreed Syllabus. Members of SACRE/ SAC are also keen to ensure that this is part of an ongoing dialogue with schools to ensure that RVE becomes fully and embedded within the curriculum.

We know that the new curriculum is very much focused on making provision for learners to develop an appreciation of belonging (in their locality, Wales and the wider world) and to experience the natural world, value the environment and work towards sustainable futures for all.

In each of our local communities, wherever we are in Wales, our schools and their learners have a very rich history, alongside their lived experiences of our vibrant communities today, to draw on and learn from.

RVE within the Curriculum for Wales can offer a distinctive contribution to the realisation of the four purposes for all learners.

**Chair of SACRE**

**2022 -2023**

**Chief Education Officer**

**2022 -2023**

## **The role of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education:**

The principal roles of SACRE are:

- advising the local authority on matters to do with Religious Education and Collective Worship, or Spiritual and Moral Development
- Consideration of applications from Headteachers that their school be released from the statutory requirements for Collective Worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character (Determinations)
- Require a Local Authority to review its Agreed Syllabus
- Monitor the provision of Religious Education, collective worship, and spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development in the schools of the Local Authority
- Give advice on teaching the Agreed Syllabus, including choice of materials
- Advising the Local authority on the training for teachers of Religious Education
- Considering complaints about the provision and delivery of Religious Education and Collective Worship made to the Local Authority
- To publish an Annual Report on its work.

## **The role of the Standing Advisory Council (SAC) for Religion, Values and Ethics**

Under the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 Religious Education (RE) has been replaced by Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE)

SAC advises the local authority on teaching and learning in RVE, including:

- mandatory RVE provision for learners aged 3 to 16 in all maintained schools and funded non-maintained nursery settings.
- provision of optional RVE for post 16 learners (from September 2027)

The SAC can provide advice on:

- methods of teaching
- the choice of teaching materials
- the provision of teacher training
- collective worship in community schools and foundation schools which do not have a religious character.
- any other matter the local authority refers to it, or as decided by the SAC

## CONTENTS

|   | <b>Page No:</b> |
|---|-----------------|
| <b>1. Advice given to the Local Authority:</b><br>a) Religious Education and the Agreed Syllabus<br>b) methods of teaching, choice of teaching materials<br>c) Collective Worship | 5 - 8           |
| <b>2. Other Matters:</b><br>a) Local matters<br>b) National Matters: Welsh Government, Estyn and WASACRE<br>c) Complaints   | 9               |
| <b>3. Appendices:</b><br>a) Composition of SACRE<br>b) Dates of meetings<br>c) Organisations receiving the report   | 9-10            |

## **The Annual Report**

### **Advice given by the Local Authority**

#### **(a) Religious Education / Religion, Values and Ethics**

##### **The Agreed Syllabus**

Flintshire Local Authority convened the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022. The ASC made the recommendation to the Local Authority to adopt the Religion, Values and Ethics guidance in its entirety as the Local Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics in Flintshire - to be implemented in line with the roll out of the new curriculum across the different phases of education.

For all primary schools in Flintshire therefore, this replaced the current Agreed Syllabus with effect from September 2022. For secondary schools in Flintshire, this will replace the current Agreed Syllabus (extended until fully replaced) as the new curriculum is rolled out from September 2023.

The agreed syllabus is not designed to be a scheme of work, but a guide and legal reference point for schools to support them in designing an appropriate and relevant curriculum for their learners which includes RVE within the Humanities Area. The approach of the Framework is based on the principle of subsidiarity and, as such, each agreed syllabus should recognise and reflect the autonomy of each school and setting in realising its own curriculum. One of the intentions of the statutory RVE guidance is to provide the right balance between the central steer of the Framework and the requirements of local determination for RVE, as set out in agreed syllabi across Wales. Therefore, the statutory RVE guidance was written as the basis for the agreed syllabus.

From September 2022, there has been no parental right to request withdrawal from RVE in respect of all learners up to and including year 6, as the Curriculum for Wales will be implemented by all primary schools and settings for learners aged 3 -11 from this date. With respect of secondary schools, there will be flexibility with regard to when they begin the roll out of the new curriculum.

For secondary schools in Flintshire the right to withdraw remained for learners in the academic year 2022/23.

From September 2023, there will be no right to withdraw for years 7 and 8 learners, as all secondary schools and settings will have begun the roll out of the Curriculum for Wales for those year groups. After September 2023, the phased roll-out of the Curriculum for Wales will continue and the right to withdraw will be removed for:

- Year 9 learners in September 2024
- Year 10 learners in September 2025
- Year 11 learners in September 2026

- The advice offered by the Standing Advisory Council reflects the Flintshire Agreed Syllabus for RVE (2022) and the Curriculum for Wales guidance for schools and settings on Hwb.

During the academic year, members were pleased to receive the following presentations:

- “Professional development support for primary schools and resources for Religion, Values and Ethics”, Jane Borthwick, Senior Primary Learning Adviser, Education and Youth Portfolio
- “Developing Religion, Values and Ethics (Primary) in the new Curriculum for Wales” Amira Mattar, Westwood Community Primary School
- “Collaborative Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) planning by Flintshire and Wrexham Heads of RE Forum”, Lyn Oakes, The Alun School.

In order to support primary schools with the implementation of RVE, the local authority facilitates an RVE Forum which met twice during the last academic year. Meetings were attended by RVE co-ordinators and some headteachers. Agenda items included:

- progress of the national resources on Hwb and sharing of other resources that are being used across the region, including from the Diocese of St Asaph and the St Giles Centre
- the key components of RVE that most schools would be addressing through their taught and wider curriculum
- exploration of some non-religious aspects with a partner school
- work being undertaken in a group of primary schools in Flintshire in partnership with Natural Resources Wales (NRW), who have created a course for teachers which included elements of RVE in relation to a study on Halkyn mountain and one on the shore at Talacre.
- Sharing of effective practice and networking opportunities between schools and RVE co-ordinators.

## **Standards**

Within the Estyn inspection framework there are no subject judgements within inspection reports. Instead, members receive relevant information from the reports relating to Estyn’s comments on a school’s provision for Religious Education, Collective Worship and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC).

Following consideration of Inspection Reports, the Chief Education Officer writes on behalf of SACRE/ SAC to schools, congratulating them on the good features in their reports that relate to RE, RVE and Collective Worship.

### **Performance Measures**

As a result of the covid pandemic, Welsh Government suspended the calculation and publication of Key Stage 4 and legacy sixth form performance measures for 2020 to 2021 and 2021 to 2022 academic years.

The Welsh Government restarted reporting of Key Stage 4 outcomes at a school level in 2023, using the approach adopted in 2019. Information on the headline measures, which are all based on point scores, will be publicly available in Welsh Government statistical reports and on the My Local School website.

The headline measures include:

- Capped 9 measure (interim measures version)
- Literacy measure
- Numeracy measure
- Science measure
- The Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate measure

These arrangements are for an interim period, beginning with outcomes data from the academic year 2022/23.

The Welsh Government's expectation is that this information:

- Will be used to support schools and local authorities to understand their own contexts and improve their own offer.
- Should not be used in isolation to judge performance or compare schools.

In line with this guidance from Welsh Government, members were not presented with and were unable to discuss any comparative data for examinations in Religious Studies, awarded in 2021/22.

### **Methods of Teaching**

Flintshire SACRE and the local authority have previously provided comprehensive documents and materials in support of the Agreed Syllabus, and these contain advice on methods of teaching and delivery of Religious Education.

Flintshire SACRE continues to advise the local authority on RE provision for learners between 11 and 18 until the Curriculum for Wales roll out has been fully completed.

Given that RVE is very much integral to the new Curriculum for Wales, the regional professional development programme, provided by GwE, for curriculum design and development of Areas of Learning Experiences is also very relevant to developing RVE and implementing the new Agreed Syllabus. GwE also facilitated professional development sessions for Unpacking the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience (AOLE), aimed at secondary teachers of Humanities, including Religious Education.

Members of SACRE/ SAC also committed to ensure that this is part of an ongoing dialogue with schools to ensure that RVE becomes fully and embedded within the curriculum.

SACRE/ SAC does not formally advise schools in the matter of purchasing teaching resources as this is a matter for schools themselves.

### **Resources Recommended**

Guidance documents provided by SACRE previously continue to be available to schools. In addition, advice is offered in response to specific requests.

Through the WASACRE, Welsh Government have supported some additional development work for RVE nationally, to produce some focused professional learning resources to support schools on embedding RVE within the curriculum. That work is almost complete and will be shared with all schools via Hwb as soon as available. Flintshire SAC has recommended these professional learning resources to schools in support of the new Agreed Syllabus.

Schools are encouraged as part of effective school to school collaboration to facilitate opportunities for Religious Education teachers to share resources relevant for GCSE and A level courses.

### **Collective Worship**

As part of the usual process of monitoring, Estyn inspection reports are analysed in relation to Collective Worship, spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC). These are compiled and noted by SACRE/ SAC. Letters are sent to schools following consideration, commending any good practice and offering support as necessary. However, the pandemic meant that Estyn could only visit a few providers during the year, mainly in the summer term.

No INSET has been provided for Collective Worship in the current academic year.

The Estyn supplementary guidance on inspecting Collective Worship was updated in April 2018.



## **Determinations**

There were no requests for determinations in 2022-2023.

## **2. Other Matters**

### **Local**

Flintshire primary and secondary schools were reminded of the requirements of the new Agreed Syllabus for Flintshire (2022)

During the year, members continued to hold meetings virtually.

### **National**

#### **Welsh Government**

Welsh Government published their Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) guidance in spring term 2022.

#### **WASACRE**

Members of SACRE and the local authority were represented at the three meetings of WASACRE during the academic year and SACRE received reports from representatives attending. Minutes and presentations can be found on WASACRE's website.

Flintshire's Senior Manager for School Improvement, sits as a member of the Executive of the Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE).

## **3. Appendices:**

### **Composition of SACRE /SAC:**

#### **Representing Flintshire County Council: (September 2022– April 2023)**

Councillor Marion Bateman, Councillor Paul Cunningham, Councillor Adele Davies-Cooke, Councillor Mared Eastwood, Councillor Dave Mackie, Councillor Roz Mansell, Councillor Debbie Owen and Councillor Andrew Parkhurst

#### **Representing Religious Denominations:**

Church in Wales Representatives (St Asaph Diocese) Jennie Downes, Marina Parsons

Roman Catholic Representatives (Wrexham Diocese); Wendy White, John Morgan

Presbyterian Church of Wales; Rev. Huw Powell Davies, Ann Smith

#### **Representing Teacher Associations**

Secondary Headteachers; Catherine McCormack

Primary Heads Federation; Anna Stephens

Secondary RE Specialist; Lyn Oakes

College Representative Deeside VI; Robert Hughes

Primary Classroom Teachers; Amira Mattar

Special School Representative; Julian Lewis

**(b) Dates of meetings held:**

24<sup>th</sup> November 2022

8<sup>th</sup> February 2023

7<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**(c) Organisations receiving the report:**

- Welsh Government
- Flintshire Schools
- The report is also available via WASACRE for interested organisations.