
S.A.C.R.E. – STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

02/07/2024

Present:

Councillors: Menna Baines, Anne Lloyd-Jones, Jina Gwyrfai, and Paul Rowlinson

Others:

Christian and Other Faiths and Non-religious Philosophical Convictions: Eirian Bradley-Roberts (The Catholic Church)

Teachers:

Officers: Buddug Mair Huws (Assistant Resources Officer and SACRE Clerk), Gwern ap Rhisiart (Head of Education) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

Co-opted Members: Eleri Moss (Secondary Headteachers)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Item 9: Nia Eleri Roberts (School Pilgrimage Engagement Officer, Llan Project)

1. PRAYER OR QUIET REFLECTION

The meeting opened with an opportunity for quiet reflection.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Menna Baines as chair for 2024/25.

3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Meryl Roberts as Vice Chair for 2024/25.

4. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

- Councillors Meryl Roberts, Elin Walker Jones, John Pugh Roberts and Beca Brown.
- Teachers: Heledd Jones and Emma Roberts
- Nathan Abrams (Judaism)
- Eurfryn Davies (The Baptist Union of Wales)
- Nick Sissons (The Methodist Church)

Einir Rhian Davies (Democracy Services Officer) was thanked for years of service to the SACRE Meetings. Best wishes were extended to her in her new post.

5. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

6. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent items were received.

7. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Sadness was expressed at the shocking death of Bethan James (GwE) and she was thanked for her work and support over the years. Expressions of sympathy were shared with Bethan's family.

The Chair signed the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 21 November, 2023 as a true record.

8. ANNUAL REPORT – GWYNEDD SACRE 2022/23

The Report was presented by the Chair highlighting the following main points:

It was recognised that it was a difficult year because the context for the SACRE's work had changed quite a bit.

It was directed that one of the main duties of the SACRE was to monitor standards in the schools. Reference was made to the fact that this was a challenging task because ESTYN review methods had just been revised. Members were reminded that the SACRE had been asking schools to complete self-appraisal questionnaires in the past but confirmed that this questionnaire was no longer circulated.

The second main duty of the SACRE which is to consult on Worship in schools was highlighted. It has been noted that this had been on the programme of work recently, with the aspiration of updating the Collective Worship Guide in schools.

Disappointment was expressed that the agreed syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics of the New curriculum was not timely. It was elaborated that this was not possible because there was some time between the agreed syllabus being agreed and the Cabinet approving it.

Members were reminded that there were currently empty seats on the Gwynedd SACRE and Members were encouraged to suggest suitable individuals to fill these to secure full membership.

A correction to the Report was noted prior to publication ensuring that Membership was updated.

Everyone was thanked for their work for the SACRE and all their valuable contributions over the past few years. Gratitude was also extended to the Assistant Resources Officer and SACRE Clerk for producing the Report.

RESOLVED to accept the Report with the amendments raised as part of the discussion.

9. LLAN PROJECT

The item was presented by the School Pilgrimage Engagement Officer, Llan Project highlighting the following main points:

It was reported that the project received the support of the Church in Wales Evangelism Fund for the development of pilgrimage within the Diocese and the learning of the Welsh language. It was elaborated that the project had been funded for 7 years.

One element of the project's work was detailed, which was to re-develop pilgrimage routes. It was noted that the first of these 'Llwybr Cadfan' was launched at the National Eisteddfod in 2023, detailing the route going from Tywyn to Ynys Enlli. It was confirmed that a link on the 'Eventbrite' website allowed users to walk the path as well as to join groups walking the path. It was explained that a map of the route was also available on the Outdoor Active website and a paper copy of the map would be available to be purchased shortly. It was elaborated that a second route called the 'Llwybr Cybi a Seiriol' was also currently being developed in Anglesey. It was confirmed that work was ongoing to develop maps and share information on these routes.

It was explained that one of the main roles of the School Pilgrimage Engagement Officer, the Llan Project was to motivate teachers to use the theme of 'pilgrimage' within their classwork as well as promoting religious history and the Welsh language. It was stressed that this project was available to all schools, not just church schools. It was noted that it was hoped that lesson packs, visits and presentations would be available to all schools soon. Examples of these teaching packages were shared. Pride was expressed that teachers were sharing positive feedback from the project so far and appreciated the resources available to schools.

Other projects being developed as part of the project were highlighted including a website for teachers, projects across schools, workshops on church sites, a film resource and also books about local saints.

Everyone involved in the project were congratulated for their work in the field of pilgrimages and in developing the confidence of schools in the teaching of Religion, Values and Ethics.

10. JEWISH HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH WALES

It was confirmed that officers had received a request from the Jewish History Association of South Wales to postpone this item until the next meeting. It was elaborated that this item would be presented at the SACRE meeting to be held on 19 November 2024.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

A copy of the minutes of the recent Wales SACREs meeting was shared, thanking Eurfryn Davies and Councillor Meryl Roberts for attending the meeting on behalf of Gwynedd.

A letter circulated to Welsh religious leaders as well as the Welsh Government to develop a Collective Worship Guidance was shared. Members were reminded of the need to update the guidance and Councillors Elin Walker Jones and Nick Sissons were thanked for looking at the current guidance as well as formulating recommendations about the way forward. However, it was acknowledged that there were few responses to the letter at this time.

RESOLVED for the Chair to re-send the letter to religious leaders and the Welsh Government and to discuss any responses at the 19 November 2024 meeting.

The meeting commenced at 3.30 p.m. and concluded at 4.15 p.m.

CHAIR