



**Cyfarfod CCYSAGauC, Newport, 22 Mawrth  
2013 / Wales Association of SACREs meeting,  
Newport, 22 March 2013**

<p><b>Ynys Môn / Anglesey</b> Rheinallt Thomas Eurfryn Davies Bethan James</p> <p><b>Blaenau Gwent</b> Gill Vaisey</p> <p><b>Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr / Bridgend</b> Edward Evans Carys Pritchard</p> <p><b>Caerffili/ Caerphilly</b> Vicky Thomas Michael Gray Enfys Hawthorn Martyn Western</p> <p><b>Caerdydd / Cardiff</b> Carys Pritchard</p> <p><b>Sir Gaerfyrddin / Carmarthenshire</b> Mary Parry Helen Gibbon Gwyneth Thomas</p> <p><b>Ceredigion</b></p> <p><b>Conwy</b> Phil Lord Nicholas Richter</p>	<p><b>Sir Ddinbych / Denbighshire</b> Phil Lord <b>Gavin Craigen</b></p> <p><b>Sir y Fflint / Flintshire</b> Phil Lord</p> <p><b>Gwynedd</b> W M Meredith Bethan James</p> <p><b>Merthyr Tudful / Merthyr Tydfil</b> Carys Pritchard</p> <p><b>Sir Fynwy / Monmouthshire</b> Gill Vaisey Susan Cave Sharon Perry-Phillips</p> <p><b>Castell-nedd Port Talbot / Neath and Port Talbot</b> Janice Dudley?</p> <p><b>Casnewydd / Newport</b> Vicky Thomas Sally Northcott David Williams Huw Stephen Heather Vaughan Soam Sharma A Davidson Neata Baicher JP Val Delahaye Sally Mlewa</p> <p><b>Sir Benfro / Pembrokeshire</b></p> <p><b>Powys</b> John Mitson</p>	<p><b>Rhondda Cynon Taf</b> Carys Pritchard</p> <p><b>Abertawe / Swansea</b> Vicky Thomas</p> <p><b>Torfaen</b> Vicky Thomas Margaret Oelmann</p> <p><b>Bro Morgannwg / Vale of Glamorgan</b> Carys Pritchard Dafydd Treharne Ramez Delpak</p> <p><b>Wrecsam / Wrexham</b> Libby Jones Tania ap Siôn</p> <p><b>Sylwedyddion / Observers</b> Leslie Francis (Canolfan y Santes Fair / St Mary's Centre) Ben Wigley (REMW) Tudor Thomas (WJEC)</p>
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## Minutes

### 1. Cyflwyniad a chroeso / *Introduction and welcome.*

Chair, Edward Evans introduced the Mayor of Newport, Cllr John Guy who then welcomed everyone to the meeting in Newport. He described Newport as a city with a wealth of diversity and went on to say that Newport SACRE has many different faiths represented. He noted that WASACRE has been supportive of Community Cohesion initiatives and helps to ensure that RE is taught well in all schools, including Collective Worship. In 2011 Newport organised a series of events for the National RE festival. Many schools took part and that work is on going. WASACRE is important because it provides the forum and the voice for RE across wales. The Mayor concluded his address by offering well wishes for the meeting.

This was followed by a presentation by the Gwent Education Minority-ethnic Service who provides support for children who are Black Minority Ethnic in the Newport area. There are 94 different languages spoken in the Newport area including dialects, for which the team develop language and tuition support. They also work with Show Racism the Red Card and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. The service has organised a variety of activities for their 'See the World through Ours Eyes' project focussing on different countries including China and India. They informed members of the GEMS Faith Trail (leaflet shared in the meeting) and GRT History month for which there will be a celebration in Cardiff this year on June 5<sup>th</sup>. Their website address was shared [www.newportlearn.net/inclusion/](http://www.newportlearn.net/inclusion/) and members were invited to login as 'guest' to find out more information about any of the services GEMS provide.

### 2. Adfyfyrion tawel / *Quiet reflection*

Chair Edward Evans read two poems, one entitled 'The Donkey' by E A Chesterton and asked members to reflect on the events of Holy Week.

### 3. Ymddiheuriadau / *Apologies* Lynda Maddock, Jen Malcolm (NPT), Christine Abbas, Cllr Bob Poole, Claire Lane (Blaenau) Gwent. Meinir Loader.

### 4. Cofnodion y cyfarfod a gynhaliwyd yn Merthyr Tudful, 23 Tachwedd 2012 / *Minutes of meeting held in Merthyr Tydfil, 23 November 2012*

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

### 5. Materion sy'n codi / *Matters arising*

Item 6, 3<sup>rd</sup> point. Update on the launch of the All Party Parliamentary Group attended by Tania ap Sion in June 2012. The enquiry has been completed and copies of report are available from the WASACRE website. It presents a worrying picture in England in regard to supply of RE teachers and support for RE teachers. E.g. RE taught by teaching assistants; about half of primary teachers lacked confidence in teaching RE; over 50% of secondary RE teachers have no qualification in RE. The inclusion of non-specialists gave a false impression of England having enough RE teachers. The findings also show that applications for RE teacher training courses are down by 140, with the loss of bursaries for RE. With regard to support, 40% of schools found that

RE teachers have limited access to CPD. A range of government policies in England, e.g. the EBacc, is lowering the status of RE in schools in England.

In relation to the results of the APPG enquiry in England, Tudor Thomas (WJEC) raised concerns about the drop in WJEC RS exam entries in England due to the EBacc and noted that this was very worrying. Short courses are not recognised in England and the status of RE qualifications in general has diminished. Rheinallt Thomas asked whether WASACRE could do a research project focusing on the situation in Wales, and perhaps conduct a Wales 'review'. In response, Vicky Thomas reminded members that we will have the results of the Estyn thematic review shortly and said that this may be helpful and suggested that WASACRE waits to see what Estyn reports on 18 June. Leslie Francis agreed that research is helpful and Rheinallt Thomas proposed that we wait but discuss this at a later date. Members agreed.

Mary Parry raised concerns about the curriculum review in Wales, with RE not being a part of this review, and suggested that WASACRE should request that RE be made part of the review. She was concerned that the Exemplar Framework would no longer be relevant with the new Literacy and Numeracy Framework and other possible curriculum changes. Gavin Craigen urged caution, saying that the reason RE has not been included is because Welsh Government is satisfied with it. Therefore, he suggested that WASACRE should remind Welsh Government of the importance of RE and that RE is a statutory requirement. Rheinallt Thomas shared the correspondence he had received in December 2012 from Leighton Andrews, written in response to a letter he had written, highlighting the following section:

RE will remain a statutory requirement in all maintained schools in Wales and England (*Education Reform Act 1988 s.2 (1) (a)*). The religious education taught in schools must continue to comply with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus produced by each local authority via its Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). We would expect these arrangements to continue within the regional consortia structure but exact details would obviously vary from one consortia to another...

Gill Vaisey said that Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire SACREs have discussed the curriculum review and felt they would rather not make any change to their agreed syllabi yet as they would have to make amendments in line with the curriculum review proposed changes after September 2014. Vicky Thomas raised the point that since 2008 we have commonality of agreed syllabi in Wales and this has been a significant achievement. There was now a danger of losing commonality across Wales if Local Authorities make their own changes to reflect the national changes. Carys Pritchard noted that September 2014 is when the curriculum review will have been finalised and that the evaluation of the Foundation Phase is on-going. WASACRE should take account of the implementation, impact and future impact of this evaluation also.

Some members suggested that WASACRE contact the Minister of Education and Skills to request that RE is included in the curriculum review and /or to draw his attention to the Exemplar Framework for RE (2008) and ask what likely impact the

curriculum review will have on it from September 2014. In response to a vote on the question of sending a letter to the Minister, a majority of members voted for WASACRE to write a letter and to leave the officers of the Association to do this on their behalf.

6. *Hyfforddiant CA3/ KS3 Training*. Gavin Craigen thanked WASACRE for the opportunity to offer the KS3 training, and shared the very positive participant evaluation feedback from the training events held across Wales. A copy of his presentation will be available on the WASACRE website. Evaluations showed positive messages from teachers. This was the first national training and proved a very worthwhile project. The Chair thanked Gavin for his hard work and this was echoed by Vicky Thomas and Gill Vaisey who pointed out that WASACRE responded positively to the KS3 moderation issue by funding and organising the training and acknowledged the hard work of the advisors from all areas of Wales who had been part of this. Gill Vaisey suggested that WASACRE should look at whether there is a need for the Association to support further CPD for RE teachers in the current climate (that is within the consortia arrangements, and reduced advisory services). Phil Lord agreed that this should be explored because schools may be forced to use resources or training from England which would not reflect the Welsh RE curriculum. Chair echoed these concerns and suggested that we keep an eye on the situation. Other members commented that WASACRE support in this area is much needed and appreciated as schools can not afford to send teachers out for CPD and that it helped only having to pay for supply cover. Vicky Thomas said the training was value for money at around £40 for each teacher and this was possible due to Local authorities or consortia working together to keep the costs low. Thanks were extended to consortia and LAs that were involved and who paid for venues and lunches etc.

7. *Cyflwyniadau gan PYCAG ar y Cyfnod Sylfaen / NAPfRE presentations on the Foundation Phase*

Bethan James presented 'People, Beliefs and Questions. Our interpretation'. Anne Williams and Helen Evans from schools in Dolgellau, Gwynedd, thanked Bethan for her support and leadership before presenting 'A story book as a starting point, 'Salamatu and Kandoni go missing' by Steve Bruce' Through this book the pupils were learning more about the world around them, and it was shown how this was related to the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework e.g. The children wrote letters to Salamatu and worked out the costing of goat, weighed rice and estimated the weight of a baby. Bethan thanked her colleagues for their demonstration of how a small rural school in North Wales was responding to the Literacy and Numeracy Framework and their example of a child achieving an outcome 6 using RE.

Phil Lord presented 'RE in the Foundation Phase document' which he developed with help from teachers in Conwy, Denbigh and Flintshire.

Gill Vasey presented topic packs developed with help from teachers in Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen and Monmouthshire.

It is the intention to place all of these resources in one central location for all practitioners in Wales to use.

8. *Gohebiaeth /Correspondence*

- Letter received from Vaughan Salisbury in relation to *RE News* advising members that the publication will now only be available online. The Chair read out the letter and suggested three points that WASACRE need to consider.

Members agreed that WASACRE should write to Vaughan Salisbury to ask if *RE News* can be published in a cheaper format and for full costings to be provided so that the request could be properly evaluated .

- Neeta Baicher from Sikh Association South Wales encouraged members to register for their national conference, details for registration are available from Neeta and Libby Jones via email and hard copies were available at the meeting.
- Happy New Year greeting have been extended from Christine Abbas from the Ba' hai community.

9. *Aroddiad ar gyfarfod y Pwyllgor Gwaith a gynhaliwyd ar 6 Chwefror 2013 / Report from the Executive Committee held on 6 February 2013*

This was presented to members at the meeting and copies were available in their papers.

10. *Newyddion diweddar/Update:*

(a) *Gynhadledd CCYSAGauC / WASACRE Conference*

Members were given the background for the WASACRE conference taking place on Thursday 10 October 2013. Tania ap Sion urged members to take the information back to their SACREs and to put the date in their own diaries.

Aims: National training event, raising the profile of RE and the contribution RE can make to national priorities.

Theme: Raising standards in RE

Content: Highlighting the outcomes of the Estyn thematic review, workshops

Audience: Relevant for SACRE representatives, Councilors and teachers from Foundation Phase to post 16.

(b) *Yr Adolygiad Cwricwlwm a meysydd llafur cytûn / The Curriculum Review and agreed syllabuses.*

The following statement was agreed: "WASACRE recommends that SACREs start an agreed syllabus review process that is on-going for the next few years and should implement changes to their agreed syllabus in response to the curriculum review arrangements after September 2014."

This will go out in a letter to all SACRE clerks (LJ). Gill Vaisey clarified this by saying that the review process can begin within each SACRE, but that changes to each agreed syllabus will not need to be made until after September 2014 when we know the results of the curriculum review, in which case appropriate amendments can be made in line with those made to the new curriculum. A discussion ensued about the legalities of the agreed syllabus

review and conference within individual SACREs and the minister's response in his letter to possible implications on SACREs in removing responsibility for Education from local authorities. Vicky Thomas proposed that Leighton Andrew's letter is discussed at the next Executive meeting and is included in the papers for the Executive meeting on the 16 May 2013. (LJ)  
SACRE Clerks are to be asked who is responsible for RE within the new arrangements.

(c) REQM/ *Religious Education Quality Mark*

Bethan James spoke on behalf of Phil Lord. The pilot for the Welsh version of the quality mark is complete and he is hoping that teachers from the pilot school can give a presentation at the next WASACRE meeting.

(d) Adolygiad o adroddiadau CYSAG Blynyddol / *Review of SACRE annual reports.*

This item was withdrawn in order for the meeting to end promptly to alleviate time pressures for those travelling in the severe weather conditions.

11. Arddangos adnoddau AG / *Showcase of RE resources.* Examples given during the NAPfRE presentation under item 7.

12. U.F.A. / *A.O.B.* There was no other business.

14. Dyddiad y cyfarfod nesaf / *Date of next meeting:* 19 June 2013, Caernarfon.