

**Merthyr Tydfil
County Borough Council**

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Annual Report

2013 - 2014



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Merthyr Tydfil SACRE

Annual Report 2013 – 2014

COMPOSITION, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SACRE

COMPOSITION OF SACRE

The membership of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education is determined by the Education Acts of 1944, 1993 and the Education Reform Act of 1988. SACRE has three constituent groups, each group being entitled to one vote:

- Christian denominations and other religions and religious denominations;
- associations representing teachers; and
- the local authority (LA).

The members representing each of these groups for 2013 - 2014 are listed in Appendix 1.

THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SACRE

The main function of a SACRE is to:

- advise the LA about religious education and collective worship;
- require the authority to review the agreed syllabus;
- consider applications from schools for determinations (to be exempt from the requirement that worship be “Christian”);
- publish an annual report on its work; and
- play a part in the local statutory complaints procedure where cases are referred to it relating to religious education or collective worship.

Advice may relate to:

- methods of teaching;
- the choice of teaching materials;
- the provision of teacher training; and
- any other matter relating to religious education and collective worship which SACRE considers appropriate.

RECORD OF MEETINGS

Three meetings of SACRE were held in the academic year 2013 - 2014:

- 8th October 2013;
- 11th February 2014; and
- 10th June 2014.

A record of the main agenda items discussed during the meetings is to be found in Appendix 2.

THE PLANNING AND ORGANISATION OF THE WORK OF SACRE

Prior to the commencement of the 2013 - 2014 academic year, SACRE had agreed to organise and prioritise its work in the framework of a development plan.

A copy of the development plan, including details of progress achieved during the year, is included as Appendix 3.

CIRCULATION OF REPORT

Copies of this report have been circulated to the organisations/establishments listed in Appendix 5.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summary of the advice given to the LA by SACRE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Aim: To monitor standards and provision in religious education

Action

1. SACRE considers and analyses school inspection reports. If there are any issues regarding religious education, such as the non-fulfilment of statutory requirements, the LA follows this up. During the academic year 2012 – 2013 it was a recommendation for one primary school to meet statutory requirements in relation to religious education. Progress was monitored by the system leader with strategic lead for religious education at Central South Consortium with feedback provided to SACRE on a termly basis. During 2013 – 2014 it was reported to SACRE that the school had fully addressed the Estyn recommendation. No additional follow up action was necessary for any inspection reports considered during 2013 – 2014.
2. SACRE has resolved to use school self-evaluation as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor provision and standards in religious education. In 2013 – 2014 three secondary schools were invited to share their religious education self-evaluation with SACRE. A summary report was presented to SACRE during its summer term meeting. A copy of the report was sent to the three secondary heads of department. Primary schools were also invited to share their self-evaluation and one report was received.
3. SACRE analyses examination results over a three year period and identifies trends in performance benchmarked against All Wales data. SACRE writes to schools after analysing examination results. The letter includes congratulations for the good results, where appropriate, and raises issues that schools should be addressing as a result of this analysis.
4. The LA and its SACRE gathers and analyses data regarding key stage 3 teacher assessment in religious education. This information is presented to SACRE and sent to all secondary schools in the LA.

AGREED SYLLABUS

Aim: To fulfil the legal requirement to review the agreed syllabus for religious education

Action

1. In 2008 Merthyr Tydfil SACRE adopted a new agreed syllabus for the authority's schools to be implemented from September 2008. All schools received a programme of Inset in summer 2008 and received a package of support materials to exemplify the new syllabus.
2. In June 2013 Standing Conference endorsed the re-adoption of the Merthyr Tydfil agreed syllabus for religious education with an understanding that the syllabus would be reviewed once further information is received in relation to the assessment and National Curriculum review.
3. During 2013 – 2014 SACRE members received updates on the consultations undertaken in relation to the National Curriculum and assessment review.

TEACHING MATERIALS

Aim: To ensure that schools are informed of suitable teaching resources

Action

1. Secondary schools in the LA were informed of the 2014 Holocaust Memorial Day theme '*Journeys*' and that resources to support the theme can be found on the Holocaust Memorial Day website (www.hmd.org.uk).
2. SACRE informed all schools in the LA about the re-launch of the RE:quest website (www.request.org) and resources available on the site to support the exploration of Christianity within religious education.
3. Members considered the Welsh Government document 'People, beliefs and questions: religious education for 3 to 7 years olds in Wales'.

TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

Aim: To ensure that teachers are able to access appropriate continuing professional development

Action

1. The local authority, via Central South Consortium, offered primary teachers a course on religious education and literacy in the Foundation Phase '*Not Just Any Old Story*'. The planned course had to be cancelled due to lack of a viable number of delegates.
2. SACRE members and delegates from schools attended the WASACRE conference REsourcing National Priorities in Wales on October 10th 2014. SACRE received feedback from the conference during its spring term meeting.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Aim: To ensure that schools fulfil statutory requirements for collective worship and provide a worthwhile experience for pupils.

Action

1. SACRE monitors the sections of inspection reports that are concerned with collective worship and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. If there are any issues such as the non-fulfilment of statutory requirements the LA follows this up. There was no necessity this year to request the action plan of any school.
2. SACRE has resolved to use school self-evaluation as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor fulfilment of statutory requirements, provision and quality of collective worship. The self-evaluation report of one primary school was considered in 2013 – 2014.

OTHER ISSUES:

Aim: To ensure a more informed SACRE through providing regular updates on local and national issues.

1. SACRE has maintained its membership of the Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE) and receives termly feedback from meetings of the association.
2. SACRE has considered the main findings and recommendations of the Estyn thematic review of religious education in secondary schools.
3. The LA and its SACRE agreed to inform schools about the availability of the Religious Education Quality Mark (REQM) and materials to support self-evaluation.
4. SACRE has received information about secondary schools in the LA involved in the Lessons from Auschwitz programme.
5. SACRE were updated about the restructure of Central South Consortium.
6. Members received feedback from the RE Council of England and Wales meeting that was held in Cardiff on May 7 2014.
7. Members received a presentation on religious studies at Merthyr College by Lynda Maddock.

SUMMARY OF ADVICE TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The local agreed syllabus

During the spring term 2008 Standing Conference endorsed and adopted a new agreed syllabus for the authority's schools to be implemented from September 2008. A yearly programme of INSET has continued and specific training on the agreed syllabus has been offered. Comprehensive support materials, including schemes of work and electronic *Progress in Learning* documents have already been issued to primary and secondary schools.

During the 2012 – 2013 academic year SACRE were made aware of the announcement by the Minister of Education and Skills of a pending review of assessment and the National Curriculum in Wales. This review would involve the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework and the identification of revisions to the current assessment and curriculum arrangements. In June 2013 Standing Conference endorsed the re-adoption of the Merthyr Tydfil agreed syllabus, with an understanding that the syllabus would be reviewed once further information is received in relation to the assessment and National Curriculum review.

During 2013 – 2014 SACRE members received updates on the consultations undertaken in relation to the national curriculum and assessment review.

Standards in religious education

SACRE has adopted a number of strategies for monitoring standards achieved in religious education in the authority's schools that include analysing school inspection reports, monitoring school self-evaluation, reviewing examination results and analysing end of key stage 3 data.

- **Examination results**

SACRE considered examination performance in the secondary schools for 2013. The examination results are compared with the All – Wales figures and with the results of the previous years. SACRE members are also informed of the percentage of the year 11 cohort being entered for the religious studies GCSE examinations (specification A and B). The examination results are published as an appendix along with results for 2011 and 2012.

The results need to be treated with caution for three reasons:

(1) the relatively low numbers opting for religious studies at GCSE and A levels; this is especially the case when looking at averages for the LA, which has only four secondary schools; (2) the percentages are based upon those pupils entered for the examination, not those who opted for the subject and therefore selective entry could influence overall pass rates; (3) there is no indication how those pupils who sat religious studies performed in their other subjects so it is not possible to measure pupils' performance against their overall ability.

In 2013 there were 39 candidates entered for the religious studies A level course and this is comparable with the entry figures for 2012 and 2011. The overall percentage of pupils achieving grades A*-E (100%) is comparable with the performance of 2012 and higher than the All Wales figure of 96.3%. The percentage pass rate for grades A* – C (84.62%) is significantly above the performance of 2012 (66.7%) and slightly below performance of 2011 (88.15%). The pass rate of 84.62% is also above the All

Wales % pass rate for grades A*-C (79.8%). The results at A*-A (23.08%) is an improvement on the performance of 2012 (17.9%) and 2011(2.4%) and higher than the All Wales figure of 20%.

In 2013 there was a slight decrease in the entries for the GCSE religious studies course with 173 candidates compared with 185 in 2012. The overall percentage at A* - C (57.23%) is a slight improvement on the results for 2012 (54.6%) but below the results for 2011 (61.7%) and 2010 (66%). The figure of 57.23% is also below the All Wales figure of 73%. The results at A* - G (95.38%) are comparable with the performance of 2012 (95.7%) and higher than the figure for 2011(92.6%). The overall percentage at A* - A (17.34%) is below previous performance and the All-Wales figure of 33%.

There has been an increase in the number of students who sit the GCSE religious studies short course. In 2013 there were 259 candidates from four schools compared with 186 pupils in 2012. The overall percentage at A* - C (55.98%) is lower than the results for 2012 (67.2%) and 2011 (78.3%). Performance at A* - G (96.14%) is slightly below the figure for 2012 (97.8%) but comparable with the performance of 2011(96%). The results at A* - A of 22.01% is lower than the result of 2012 (25.8%) and 2011(37.7%).

- **Key stage 3 data**

Members of Merthyr Tydfil SACRE also consider the levels awarded by teachers to pupils at the end of key stage 3. Comparisons are made with previous performance in religious education and also with core and foundation subjects of the national curriculum. Pupils' (boys and girls) achieving level 5 and above was 78.4% and level 6 and above was 33%. SACRE members were pleased to note the improvement in performance at level 5+ and level 6+. Performance at level 7+ was also considered in order to monitor progress of the more able pupils. End of key stage 3 levels are published in Appendix 4.

- **School inspection reports**

SACRE, with the LA's agreement and co-operation, receives reports from professional officers on standards and provision and reviews summary reports of inspection findings and Estyn surveys. During the academic year of 2013 - 2014 SACRE members received details of school inspections undertaken between autumn 2012 and summer 2013. The inspection reports of three primary schools were considered. There were no issues relating to religious education identified in the reports and therefore no follow up action was necessary.

SACRE also monitored closely the progress undertaken by another school that was inspected during 2011 – 2012 to address issues of non-fulfilment of statutory requirements in religious education. Progress was monitored by the system leader with strategic lead for religious education at Central South Consortium with feedback provided to SACRE on a termly basis. During 2013 – 2014 it was reported to SACRE that the school had fully addressed the Estyn recommendation.

- **School self-evaluation**

SACRE has resolved to use school self-evaluation as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor provision and standards in religious education. In 2013 – 2014 three secondary schools were invited to share their religious education

self-evaluation with SACRE. A summary report was presented to SACRE during its summer term meeting. A copy of the report was sent to all secondary heads of department. Primary schools were also invited to share their self evaluation and one report was received. A copy of the summary report presented to SACRE during its summer term meeting is included in appendix 6.

Methods of teaching, choice of teaching materials, teacher training

Teaching materials

All schools were informed of the 2014 Holocaust Memorial Day theme 'Journeys' 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.

SACRE informed all schools in the LA about the re-launch of the RE:request website (www.request.org) and resources available on the site to support the exploration of Christianity within religious education.

Inset

The local authority, via Central South Consortium, offered primary teachers a course on religious education and literacy in the Foundation Phase '*Not Just Any Old Story*'. The course had to be cancelled due to lack of a viable number of delegates.

SACRE members and teacher representatives from the local authority attended the WASACRE conference REsourcing National Priorities in Wales on October 10th 2014. SACRE received feedback from the conference during the spring term meeting.

SUMMARY OF ADVICE ON COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

School inspection reports

Monitoring of collective worship has continued through the review of inspection report findings, Estyn surveys and findings from the LA monitoring of school provision.

During the academic year of 2013 - 2014 SACRE members received details of school inspections undertaken between autumn 2012 and summer 2013. The inspection reports of three primary schools were considered. Very positive comments in relation to spiritual development were evident in all inspection reports. The reports made reference to all schools promoting pupils' spiritual development successfully.

The Estyn Common Inspection Framework notes that inspectors should only report on instances where the school does not comply with statutory requirements in relation to collective worship. We can therefore assume – as Estyn has not noted any instances of non-compliance - that all schools inspected between autumn 2012 and summer 2013 meet statutory requirements in relation to collective worship.

School self-evaluation

SACRE has resolved to use school self-evaluation as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor fulfilment of statutory requirements, provision and quality of collective worship. In 2013 – 2014 information was received from one primary school where provision in collective worship was judged to be good. The school self-evaluation makes reference to a planned programme of topics covering the three terms across the school and pupils given regular opportunities to celebrate their successes and achievements. An area for development identified by the school made reference to new staff observing collective worship prior to leading a session.

Applications for determinations

No applications were received from schools for determinations to be made on the lifting of the requirements for collective worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

SUMMARY OF OTHER ISSUES

WASACRE

SACRE continues to support the work of the WASACRE and recognises the value of the body in promoting religious education and collective worship on a national basis. During 2012 -13 issues considered at WASACRE meetings have been fully reported back to SACRE.

Lessons from Auschwitz

SACRE has been informed that Wales had been included in the Lessons from Auschwitz programme for 2014. Members received information about the programme and a list of schools from Merthyr Tydfil that were in attendance.

Estyn thematic review: standards in religious education

Members received the key messages regarding standards in religious education at key stages 3 and 4. The main findings were discussed fully during the autumn term meeting, with consideration given to how SACRE could support some of the recommendations.

Welsh Government Review of SACRE Reports 2008 – 2011

SACRE discussed the content of the Welsh Government Review of SACRE Reports 2008 – 2011. Further consideration was given to how the recommendations noted in the report had been, or will be addressed by SACRE in the future.

RE Quality Mark (REQM)

Members received information about the REQM as a tool developed to celebrate high quality religious education and promote further development in the subject. It was agreed to forward information about the quality mark, and its audit tool, to all schools in the local authority. SACRE informed schools that they would be very interested to hear from any school who wish to apply for the quality mark.

Feedback from the RE Council of England and Wales meeting

Feedback was provided for members from the AGM meeting of the RE Council for England and Wales that was held in Cardiff on 7 May 2014. Excerpts from the speech of Huw Lewis, Minister for Education, were discussed and considered.

Religious Studies at Merthyr College

Members received feedback from Lynda Maddock during its summer term meeting about the AS course and plans for A level at Merthyr College. Members were pleased with the positive numbers at AS and appreciated the opportunity to hear more about the developments.

Appendix 1: Membership of SACRE

Local authority

Councillor Tony Chaplin
Councillor Graham Davies
Councillor Ernie Galsworthy,
Councillor Kate Moran

Local education authority
Local education authority
Local education authority
Local education authority

Teacher associations

Julie Symes

RE Teachers' Association
National Union of Teachers
UCAC

Sue Blackmore
Jonathan Martin / Lynda Maddock

Secondary Heads Association
NAS/UWT
Association of College Managers
Association of Teachers and Lecturers
NAHT

Lynne Lambe

Religious denominations

Debra Evans

Roman Catholic Church
Evangelical Church
Presbyterian Church
Church in Wales
Salvation Army

Ann Starr
Father Matthew Gibbons
Janine Brill

LA Officers

Dorothy Haines
Karen Vokes
Carys Pritchard

Head of School Improvement
Clerk to SACRE
System Leader

APPENDIX 2: RECORD OF MEETINGS

Three meetings of SACRE were held in the academic year 2013 - 2014:

- 8th October 2013;
- 11th February 2014; and
- 10th June 2014.

8th October 2013

- Apologies
- Election of chair person
- Election of vice chair person
- Minutes of the last meeting
- Matters arising
- SACRE annual report 2012-13
- SACRE development plan 2012 – 2015
- Estyn thematic review: religious education in secondary school
- Teacher assessment levels in religious education 2013
- WASACRE: Feedback from AGM at Caernarfon June 19th 2013, appointments to the Executive Committee and WASACRE Conference October 10th at Ty Dysgu, Cefn Coed, Nantgarw
- 'People, beliefs and questions: religious education for 3 to 7-year-olds in Wales'
- Holocaust Memorial Day 2014
- Schedule of meetings
- Correspondence
- Any other business

11th February 2014

- Apologies
- Minutes of the last meeting
- Matters arising
- Religious studies examination results 2013
- SACRE monitoring of secondary schools: self-evaluation findings in religious education
- Estyn overview of inspection reports: autumn 2012 – summer 2013
- Update on National Curriculum review and assessment
- Religious Education Quality Mark (REQM)
- WASACRE issues: representation at next meeting on March 27th 2014 at Caerphilly and nominations to the WASACRE executive
- Correspondence
- Any other business

10th June 2014

- Apologies
- Minutes of the last meeting
- Matters arising
- Update on religious studies at Merthyr Tydfil College – Lynda Maddock
- SACRE monitoring: school self-evaluation
- Review of SACRE reports 2008 – 2011
- Lessons from Auschwitz
- RE Quest

- WASACRE issues: feedback from WASACRE meeting on March 27th at Caerphilly, representation at next WASACRE meeting on July 2nd 2014 at Powys and executive voting
- Feedback from RE Council of England and Wales meeting on May 7 2014 at Cardiff
- Central South Consortium: update
- SACRE development plan 2012 – 2015: review of progress
- Schedule of meetings 2014 – 2015
- Correspondence
- Any other business

Appendix 3: SACRE development plan

MERTHYR TYDFIL SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2012 – 2015 (ACADEMIC YEAR) – REVIEW OF PROGRESS

Aim 1: To monitor standards in religious education and religious studies.

Plan of action	Schedule	People involved	Time and costs	Outcomes	Progress
1.1 Monitor standards through regular <i>review of</i> inspection reports / Estyn thematic reviews/ school self-evaluation reports and recommend, where necessary, action by LA.	Annual agenda item	Full SACRE Adviser	Agenda time Adviser time for analysis	Advice to LA on trends across the county borough; advice, where appropriate, on particular schools; follow up through school visits and review of action plan where necessary.	2012 – 13 Considered 5:2:13 2013 – 2014 Review of inspection reports considered 11:3:14; Estyn thematic review considered 8:10:13; monitoring of school self-evaluation considered 11:3:14 and 10:6:14.
1.2 Receive information on results of: teacher assessment at end of key stage 3; GCSE religious studies full and short course; A/AS level religious studies.	Autumn/ Spring Term	Full SACRE Adviser	Agenda time Adviser time for analysis	Advice to LA on trends; advice, where appropriate, on particular schools.	2012 – 13 KS3 teacher assessment considered 9:10:12 and 5:2:13; examination results considered 5:2:13 and 11:6:13. 2013 – 2014 Key stage 3 teacher assessment considered 8:10:13; examination results considered 11:3:14.
1.3 Identify INSET needs, monitor and offer advice on training.	Summer Term	Full SACRE	Agenda time	Training programme received along with figures on uptake; advice to LA.	2012 – 13 Considered 5:2:13. 2013 – 2014 WASACRE Conference considered 8:10:13 and 11:3:14

MERTHYR TYDFIL SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2012 – 2015 (ACADEMIC YEAR)

Aim 2: To review the agreed syllabus (as appropriate) and support its implementation.

Plan of action	Schedule	People involved	Time and costs	Outcomes	Progress
2.1 To review the agreed syllabus for religious education	Autumn 2012 onwards (or as appropriate)	Full SACRE Adviser Working group NAPfRE	Advisory time to review the agreed syllabus. Establish a working group (if applicable). Convene a Standing Conference to adopt the syllabus Publication/ translation costs (as appropriate)	Agreed syllabus reviewed and adopted by Standing Conference. Agreed Syllabus training programme for schools (if required) Agreed syllabus to be implemented the Autumn term after adoption.	<p>2012 – 13 Considered 5:2:13. Standing Conference held on 11:6:13 to readopt current syllabus.</p> <p>2013 – 2014 Information received about 'People, beliefs and questions: religious education for 3-7 year olds in Wales' on 8:10:13; update received on national curriculum review 11:2:14; schools informed of the re launch of the RE Quest website 10:6:13.</p>
2.2 Materials to support implementation of the agreed syllabus for religious education	Ongoing	Full SACRE Adviser	Advisory time	Support materials available to schools and accessed through Consortium website.	<p>2012 – 13 Inset provided by Central South Consortium for religious education in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2. WASACRE training held for secondary schools on moderating standards at key stage 3.</p> <p>2013 – 2014 SACRE members and teachers from local authority attended WASACRE Conference REsourcing National Priorities in Wales</p>

MERTHYR TYDFIL SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2012 – 2015 (ACADEMIC YEAR)

Aim 3: To monitor provision and provide support for collective worship.

Plan of action	Schedule	People involved	Time and costs	Outcomes	Progress
3.1 Monitor provision for collective worship through regular review of inspection reports/ school self evaluation reports; recommend, where necessary, action by LA.	Annual agenda item	Full SACRE and Adviser	Agenda time Adviser time for analysis	Advice to LA on trends across the county borough; advice, where appropriate, on particular schools; follow up through school visits and review of action plan where necessary.	2012 – 13 Considered 5:2:13 2013 – 2014 Review of inspection reports considered 11:3:14; monitoring of school self-evaluation considered 10:6:14.
3.2 Support the implementation of statutory collective worship	Ongoing	Advisory service	Advisory time	Provision of INSET (if applicable) Schools informed of resources and websites for collective worship. Schools informed of guidance materials available for collective worship.	2013 – 2014 Estyn and WASACRE guidance on collective worship sent to all schools autumn term 2013.

MERTHYR TYDFIL SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2012 – 2015 (ACADEMIC YEAR)

Aim 4: To ensure a more informed SACRE through providing regular updates on local and national issues related to RE and collective worship in schools.

Plan of action	Schedule	People involved	Time and costs	Outcomes	Progress
4.1 To update members on the role of SACRE and its implications; recent developments in religious education and collective worship; guidance materials from relevant bodies; input from practising teachers and outside providers	Annually as required	SACRE members , Adviser, practising teachers, outside providers	Member time; Adviser / Officer time	SACRE members fully aware of their responsibilities. SACRE and schools updated and informed of recent developments and initiatives, both local and national.	<p>2012 – 13 Presentation by Carys Pritchard on the roles and responsibilities of SACRE 10:10:12. KS3 securing teacher assessment chief moderator’s report for 2012 discussed 10:10:12. SACREs and the Local Community survey discussed 10:10:12. Presentation on the House of Religions by Julie Symes, Head of RE at Afon Taf High 5:2:13.</p> <p>2013 – 2014 Presentation on religious studies at Merthyr Tydfil College by Lynda Maddock 10:6:14; information received about REQM 11:3:14.</p>
4.2 Programme of school visits.	Annually as required	SACRE members, Adviser/ Officers	Member time; Officer time to arrange visits	More informed SACRE on provision and practice regarding religious education and collective worship in schools.	<p>2012 – 13 Visit to the House of Religions at Afon Taf High 5:2:13.</p>

APPENDIX 4: EXAMINATION RESULTS 2011 –2013

A level religious studies

	Merthyr Tydfil 2011	Merthyr Tydfil 2012	Merthyr Tydfil 2013	All Wales 2013
A* - A	2.4%	17.9%	23.08%	20%
A* - C	88.1%	66.7%	84.62%	79.8%
A* - E	97.6%	100%	100%	96.3%
Entry	42 students 3 schools	39 students 3 schools	39 students 3 schools	1, 422 students

GCSE religious studies

	Merthyr Tydfil 2011	Merthyr Tydfil 2012	Merthyr Tydfil 2013	All Wales 2013
A* - A	24.6%	19.5%	17.34%	33%
A* - C	61.7%	54.6%	57.23%	73%
A* - G	92.6%	95.7%	95.38%	98%
Entry	175 students 3 schools	185 students 4 schools	173 students 4 schools	11, 414 students

GCSE religious studies short course

	Merthyr Tydfil 2011	Merthyr Tydfil 2012	Merthyr Tydfil 2013	All Wales 2013
A* - A	37.7%	25.8%	22.01%	N/A
A* - C	78.3%	67.2%	55.98%	N/A
A* - G	96%	97.8%	96.14%	N/A
Entry	175 students 2 schools	186 students 4 schools	259 4 schools	N/A

APPENDIX 5: KEY STAGE 3 YEAR 9 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEVELS 2013

BOYS	NOR	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	EP	<i>Total</i>	% L 5+	% L 6+	% L 7+	% NL
Total numbers	274	0	4	35	89	104	34	6	0	0	272				
Percentages			1.5	12.8	32.5	38.0	12.4	2.2			99.3	52.6	14.6	2.2	0.7
Consortium	4208	0.1	0.8	5.1	22.7	45.8	20.0	4.5	0.2	0.0	99.2	70.5	24.8	4.7	0.8

GIRLS	NOR	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	EP	<i>Total</i>	% L 5+	% L 6+	% L 7+	% NL
Total numbers	227	0	2	9	26	121	50	15	2	0	225				
Percentages			0.9	4.0	11.5	53.3	22.0	6.6	0.9		99.1	82.8	29.5	7.5	0.9
Consortium	4036		0.1	2.0	10.8	45.0	30.3	10.4	0.8	0.0	99.5	86.6	41.6	11.2	0.5

ALL PUPILS	NOR	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	EP	<i>Total</i>	% L 5+	% L 6+	% L 7+	% NL
Total numbers	501	0	6	44	115	225	84	21	2	0	497				
Percentages			1.2	8.8	23.0	44.9	16.8	4.2	0.4	-	99.2	66.3	21.4	4.6	0.8
Consortium	8244	0.0	0.5	3.6	16.9	45.4	25.1	7.4	0.5	0.0	99.3	78.4	33.0	7.9	0.7

L5+ is the figure for those pupils gaining a level 5 or above in Religious Education

L6+ is the figure for those pupils gaining a level 6 or above in Religious Education

L7+ is the figure for those pupils gaining a level 7 or above in Religious Education

NL means that no level was able to be awarded to those pupils.

APPENDIX 6: SURVEY OF SELF-EVALUATION REPORTS

Background

As part of SACRE's monitoring programme schools in Merthyr Tydfil were invited to share their self evaluation of religious education. The self-evaluation reports of three secondary schools and one primary school were received.

Main findings

How good are outcomes in Religious Education?

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	No judgement
Primary		1			
Secondary		2	1		

Judgements / comments on KS3, GCSE and A level standards identified in school self-evaluation	Number of schools
KS3	
Good standards	2
Improved performance over time	1
Girls outperform the boys	3
GCSE	
Good outcomes at KS4	1
Girls outperform the boys	3
Improved performance at KS4	2
A level	
Excellent outcomes	2

Good features

In analysing these reports, the good features that were identified in the self-evaluation reports were:

Good features identified in school self-evaluation	Number of schools
Pupils are developing their knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teaching and practices	3
Pupils have a good understanding of controversial issues and religious viewpoints	2
Pupils benefit and enjoy visits and visitors relating to RE e.g. places of worship	2
Pupils' levels of interest and engagement is impacting positively on standards	2
Pupils are able to recall prior learning	2
Pupils are able to ask, discuss and respond to a number of fundamental questions	1
Pupils participate confidently in a range of speaking and listening activities	1
Pupils use a range of subject specific vocabulary appropriately	1
Pupils are confident in using their ICT skills to research and present information	1

Pupils are able to identify strengths and set targets to improve their work further	1
Pupils are developing good evaluative skills and are able to identify arguments for and against a number of moral and religious issues	1
Pupils are developing an understanding of religious concepts	1
Pupils are able to communicate religious ideas and concepts, personal opinion and ideas in a creative way	1
Pupils are able to express their own beliefs and make their own decisions	1

Areas for development

Areas for development identified in the reports make reference to:

- improving boys' performance at key stages 3 and 4 (2 schools);
- continuing to improve performance of the more able pupils;
- ensuring that tasks are challenging enough for pupils to achieve the higher levels;
- continuing to improve the performance of pupils in receipt of free school meals at key stage 3; and
- making further use of performance data in order to more effectively identify where and what to improve in relation to standards and provision (2 schools).

How good is provision in religious education?

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	No judgement
Primary		1			
Secondary		3			

Good features identified in school self-evaluation	Number of schools
Planning incorporates appropriate skills especially literacy, ICT and thinking skills	3
Planning is differentiated e.g. challenge for more able, support for less able	3
A wide range of teaching and learning strategies are being used in the classroom	3
Good use of assessment for learning support pupils' learning	3
Monitoring programme is in place that includes lesson observations, analysis of data, book scrutiny and pupil voice interviews	3
Schemes of work promote community cohesion, inclusion, equality and diversity	2
Strong links exists with the local community with appropriate use of visits and visitors	2
Opportunity is provided for pupils to evaluate their own work and the work of their peers	2
A wide range of high quality resources is used effectively to support the teaching of religious education	2
There is strong emphasis on ESDGC (education for sustainable development and global citizenship) in the scheme of work	2
Teachers regularly monitor and track pupils' progress	2
Classrooms provide a stimulating and supportive environment to support teaching and learning	2
Portfolios in place exemplifying standards	2
Differentiated resources are available to support less able pupils	2

High expectations are shared with pupils	2
Cwricwlwm Cymreig is promoted well in scheme of work	1
Planning reflects the local authority agreed syllabus	1
Continuity and progression is evident in planning	1
Teaching and learning activities promote spiritual and moral development	1
Good working relationship between teachers and pupils	1
Subject leader / teachers have good, up to date subject knowledge	1
Departmental staff are involved in professional learning communities	1

Areas for development

Areas for development identified in the reports make reference to:

- developing further opportunities in the scheme of work to promote literacy and numeracy skills;
- improving the feedback given to pupils especially in the area of setting literacy targets;
- updating and creating new resources for statutory RE to make it more engaging and accessible for pupils (2 schools);
- further developing the integrated curriculum;
- using peer observations to increase consistency of delivery amongst non-specialist teachers;
- developing individual pupil portfolios;
- increasing opportunity for pupil voice to influence provision;
- further developing staff's understanding of levels at key stage 3; and
- creating resources to meet the needs of additional learning needs pupils and more able and talented pupils.

APPENDIX 7: CIRCULATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

- Members of Merthyr Tydfil SACRE
- Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Democratic Services
- All Merthyr Tydfil County Borough schools
- Central South Consortium
- Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE)
- The Welsh National Centre for Religious Education
- University of Wales Trinity St David
- Swansea Metropolitan University
- National Library, Aberystwyth
- Welsh Government
- Estyn
- Cytun

APPENDIX 8:

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Constitution

Terms of reference

1. To advise the LA on matters connected with collective worship in county schools.
2. To advise the LA on matters connected with religious education which is given in accordance with the agreed syllabus.
3. To decide when, within the five year statutory time scale, the LA should review its agreed syllabus.
4. To consider with the LA and the Agreed Syllabus Conference any changes required to the agreed syllabus.
5. To consider with the LA the support offered to religious education in its schools, with particular regard to methods of teaching, the choice of teaching materials and the provision of training for teachers.
6. To offer advice on any other matters related to its function as it sees fit.
7. To publish an annual report on its work, which should:
 - a. specify any matters on which it has advised the LA;
 - b. broadly describe the nature of the advice;
 - c. set out its reasons for offering advice on any matters which were not referred to it in the first place by the LA; and
 - d. record the membership of SACRE and the dates of meetings held.
9. To participate in the LA's statutory complaints procedures in those instances where the complaints relate to religious education and/or collective worship.
10. To receive and make determinations in respect of applications from headteachers of county schools for the lifting or modifying of the requirements that collective worship in such schools must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

Composition

11. The council shall comprise three groups representing:
 - a. Such Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the LA, will appropriately reflect the religious traditions in the area.
 - b. Such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the LA, ought to be represented having regard to the circumstances of the area.
 - c. The LA.
12. The Council may also co-opt members.
13. Membership of the Council shall be for a period of four years. Any outgoing members may be re-appointed.
14. Membership of the Council is subject to the condition that the LA has taken all reasonable steps to assure itself that the persons appointed are representative, as the case may be, of the denominations or associations in question.
15. Members representing associations of teachers must include teachers of religious education.
16. Individuals may be removed from the Council if they cease to be representative of the denomination, association or of the Authority they were appointed to represent.
17. Any member of the Council may at any time resign his or her office.

Proceedings

18. The Council shall meet not less than once in each school term.
19. The Council shall elect from its membership a chairperson and vice chairperson at the first meeting in each academic year. The chairperson and vice chairperson in any one year shall not be drawn from the same representative group. An outgoing chairperson may be re-appointed.
20. On any question to be decided by the Council only the representative groups on the Council shall be entitled to vote, and each group shall have a single vote. Before a formal vote is taken opportunity shall be given to each representative group to determine how its vote is to be cast.
21. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote.

22. The agenda for each meeting shall be determined by the chairperson and vice chairperson in consultation with the clerk to SACRE, Director of Education and Professional Officer. Any voting member of SACRE shall be entitled to propose items for an agenda.
23. In the case of any member not being able to attend a Council meeting, a substitute may be nominated by the body which that person represents, provided that the substitute meets the eligibility criteria and the Education Directorate of the LA is notified in advance of the meeting.
24. A meeting of the Council will be deemed to be quorate if at least one member of each of the three representative groups is present.
25. The validity of proceedings of the Council shall not be affected:
 - a. by a vacancy in the office of any member of the Council or
 - b. on the grounds that a member of the Council appointed to represent any denomination or association does not, at the time of the proceedings, represent the denomination or association in question.
25. The representative groups on the Council, other than that representing the Authority, may call, at any time, for a review of the agreed syllabus current in the Authority. At such time an Agreed Syllabus Conference shall be constituted and convened.
26. The Council shall consider its annual report at the first meeting to be held in each academic year. Upon the Council's ratification of the report it shall proceed to publication.
27. The clerk to the SACRE shall arrange for copies of the annual report to be sent to all county schools within the Authority, to DfES, the National Library and to such other individuals and institutions as the LA sees fit.