

## THE CITY OF NEWPORT SACRE

**DATE:** JUNE 8<sup>th</sup> 2016

**REPORT TO:** STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**PURPOSE:** UPDATE ON NATIONAL CURRICULUM REVIEW

### Background

Professor Donaldson's report and recommendations can be found in the document *Successful Futures - Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales*.

Recommendation 9 states: *Religious education should form part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience, and should remain a statutory curriculum requirement from reception.*

In October 2015 'A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life' document was released which outlines the plan for taking forward Professor Donaldson's recommendations

Pioneer schools and stakeholders will have a say in the shape of the curriculum.

The first stage for **Curriculum Pioneers** would be a high level definition of an Area of Learning and Experience framework. Detail around content would follow on from this initial phase.

**New Deal Pioneers** would focus on the pedagogy and leadership needed to deliver the requirements of the new curriculum as it develops

### Current situation April 2016

The National Advisory Panel for RE (NAPfRE) has begun the process of drawing up a guidance document called *What makes good RE* for submission to the pioneer network for consideration when working on the shape of the RE curriculum. There have been three meetings to work on this Nov '15, April '16 and May '16.

At the April meeting NAPfRE were joined by two representatives from the Curriculum Division of Welsh Government. **Manon Jones** who is responsible for the pioneer schools and two areas of learning and experience (ALE), Humanities and Language and Literacy and **Abi Williams** who will be responsible for Religious Education and ITC. Manon Jones outlined the process and steps they are currently following.

**Step 1:** Representatives from the pioneer schools have attended a few induction events and are currently working in four working groups in order to develop the structure of the new curriculum:

- Learning beyond the classroom
- Assessment and progression
- Cross curricular responsibilities (literacy, numeracy and digital competence)
- Welsh dimension, international perspective and wider skills

There are 18-20 representatives in each group, many of whom are members of schools' senior management teams. WG is collecting information from the pioneer schools to identify which areas of learning, disciplines, sectors (e.g. primary, secondary, Welsh medium) need most attention.

**Step 2:** Representatives from the pioneer schools will work within areas of learning and experience (ALE) in order to consider the 'big questions' of curriculum development, eg. what is the scope of each ALE? What are the connections between ALEs? There will be a balance of FP, primary and secondary practitioners.

**Step 3:** Representatives from the pioneer schools will consider the strands within each area of learning and experience. Subsidiarity is an important principle but WG hopes that other 'good practice' schools will be involved at this stage to contribute their appropriate expertise and good practice. However the WG library service is gathering evidence of successful curriculums from around the world. They are prepared to work with bodies (such as NAPfRE and WASACRE) that can advise.

**NAPfRE agreed to do the following for WG**

- prepare a briefing paper for WG in order to outline the particular issues relating to RE within a new curriculum. NAPfRE identified three areas
- share any useful documents, action research case studies or examples of good practice which might help the pioneer schools.
- identify schools which exemplify good practice.

The timeline (and other documents/presentations) can be found on the following websites.

English: : <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/curriculum-for-wales-curriculum-for-life/?lang=en>

Cymraeg: <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/curriculum-for-wales-curriculum-for-life/?skip=1&lang=cy>

# NAPFRE BRIEFING PAPER FOR WELSH GOVERNMENT (DRAFT)

Please note this is in draft format

## RE in the present curriculum

Currently RE is not a National Curriculum subject but sits within the 'basic curriculum'. It is statutory for all registered pupils at a school except those in nursery classes, ie. reception to post 16 inclusive.

RE is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus in all maintained and voluntary controlled schools. Since 2008, all agreed syllabuses in Wales are based on the Welsh Government *National Exemplar Framework for RE*. All local authorities are required to have a SACRE whose role is to monitor the provision of RE in accordance with the agreed syllabus for that local authority.

*Successful Futures* recommends that "religious education should form part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience, and should remain a statutory curriculum requirement from reception" (p114).

### Questions for consideration:

- What is the intention regarding the position of Religious Education in the new curriculum?
- If Religious Education sits within the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience - as Donaldson proposes- does this mean that there is an intention to no longer require LAs to have a locally agreed syllabus?
- How will this impact on SACREs?

## Withdrawal

Schools have a statutory obligation to provide Religious Education. Present legislation allows parents to exercise their right to withdraw their child/children from Religious Education

### Questions for consideration:

- Is there an intention to remove the withdrawal clause for RE?
- What will be the implication of the removal of the withdrawal clause?

## RE for nursery settings

Currently legislation states that religious education is not statutory for children in nursery classes. However this is an anomaly within the Foundation Phase where all other areas of learning are for 3 to 7 year olds. Without a change in legislation this anomaly would continue within the new *Successful Futures* 3-16 curriculum.

### Questions for consideration:

- Will legislation be changed in order to create consistency for Religious Education to be able to sit within the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience?