

Bridgend County Borough Council

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education/Standing Advisory Council on Religion, Values and Ethics

Revised to coincide with the implementation of Curriculum for Wales from 2022-2023 school year onwards.

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) in Bridgend is established in accordance with sections 390-397 of the Education Act 1996 and guidance contained in the Welsh Circular 10/94 as updated. In addition, the Standing Advisory Council on Religion, Values and Ethics (SAC) in Bridgend is established in accordance with the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 (see Annex 1).

Constitution

Terms of reference

1. To advise the local authority on matters connected with collective worship in county schools.
2. To advise the local authority on matters connected with religious education, or religion, values and ethics which is given in accordance with the agreed syllabus.
3. To decide when, within the five-year statutory time scale, the local authority should review its agreed syllabus.
4. To consider with the local authority and the Agreed Syllabus Conference any changes required to the agreed syllabus.
5. To consider, with the local authority, the support offered to religious education and religion, values and ethics 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:
 - specify any matters on which it has advised the local authority;
 - broadly describe the nature of the advice;
 - set out its reasons for offering advice on any matters which were not referred to it in the first place by the local authority; and
 - record the membership of SAC/SACRE and the dates of meetings held.
8. To participate in the local authority's statutory complaints procedures in those instances where the complaints relate to religious education or religion, values and ethics and/or collective worship.

9. 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

10. The council shall comprise three groups representing:
 - such Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the local authority will appropriately reflect the religious traditions in the area and also such persons who represent holders of non-religious beliefs in the same way as they permit the appointment of persons who represent holders of religious beliefs; (section 390(4)(a) of, and paragraph 4(2)(1) of Schedule 31 to, the 1996 Act and in accordance with the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021);
 - such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the local authority, ought to be represented having regard to the circumstances of the area; and
 - the local authority.
11. The Council may also co-opt members.
12. Membership of the Council shall be for a period of four years. Any outgoing members may be re-appointed.
13. Membership of the Council is subject to the condition that the local authority has taken all reasonable steps to assure itself that the persons appointed are representative of the denominations, organisations, associations in question.
14. Members representing associations of teachers must include teachers of religious education and/or religion, values and ethics.
15. Individuals may be removed from the Council if they cease to be representative of the denomination, organisations, association, or of the authority they were appointed to represent.
16. Any member of the Council may at any time resign their office.
17. Any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without apology will cease to be a member. An individual who is so disqualified shall not be precluded from being reappointed by the appropriate nominating body.

Proceedings

18. The local will appoint a clerk to SACRE/SAC.
19. The Council meets on, at least, one occasion during each school term.

20. The Council shall elect from its membership a chairperson and vice chairperson at the first meeting in each school 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.
21. If both the chairperson and the vice-chairperson are absent from a meeting, a person to take the chair for the meeting shall be appointed upon the collective consent of the members present at the meeting. Should the chairperson or vice-chairperson arrive during the rest of the meeting, the appointed substitute will hand over to them as soon as the item under discussion on their arrival is completed.
22. 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.
23. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote.
24. The agenda for each meeting shall be determined by the chairperson and vice chairperson in consultation with the advisor to SAC/SACRE, clerk to SAC/SACRE, and Local Authority Professional Officer. Any voting member of SAC/SACRE shall be entitled to propose items for an agenda.
25. The SACRE/SAC may, if it so wishes, arrange the attendance at a meeting of a specialist speaker who is not a member of the SACRE/SAC.
26. Each or any of the representative groups may require the attendance of a specialist speaker who is not a member of the SACRE/SAC, but only for the period during which any relevant matter is under consideration and provided that at least ten working days' notice of such requirement is given to the clerk for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting.
27. 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 and Family Support Directorate is notified in advance of the meeting.
28. 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.
29. The validity of proceedings of the Council shall not be affected:
 - by a vacancy in the office of any member of the Council; or
 - 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, organisation or association in question.
30. The representative groups on the Council, other than that representing the local authority, may call, at any time, for a review of the agreed syllabus current in the local authority. At such time, an Agreed Syllabus Conference shall be constituted and convened.

31. 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.
32. The clerk to the SAC/SACRE shall arrange for copies of the annual report to be published on the local authority website, sent to all schools within the local authority to Welsh Government and such other individuals and institutions as the local authority sees fit.

ANNEX 1

The Standing Advisory Council on Religion, Values and Ethics (SAC)

The constitution, functions and working arrangements of Bridgend SAC shall follow those of Bridgend SACRE, as stated above. The two committees will coexist until 2025 and for the efficiency and integrity of both committees, meetings will be held at the same time, with all business dealt with as appropriate to each committee.

These arrangements will continue until the Curriculum for Wales has been implemented to all relevant year groups, at which time Bridgend SACRE will be dissolved and Bridgend SAC will continue.