

Education Briefing Paper

Guidance from Carmarthenshire's Standing Advisory Council for Religion, Values and Ethics / Religious Education

Information

Each local authority in Wales must convene and sustain a [Standing Advisory Council \(SAC\) for Religion, Values and Ethics \(RVE\) and Religious Education \(RE\)](#). The main role is to support and monitor the quality of the provision of RVE and RE, and the statutory Daily Acts of Collective Worship (DACW), in maintained schools within the county. Please see legal requirements and guidance below.

Jennifer Harding-Richards supports Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Swansea with RVE development and co-ordinates networks and professional learning for all stakeholders in the region.

Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) - all learners up to and including year 10:

- RVE is mandatory for all pupils; there is no parental right to withdraw.
- RVE is a statutory requirement of the Curriculum for Wales and is mandatory for all learners from ages 3-16.
- RVE must be delivered objectively, critically and pluralistically.
- RVE sits within the Humanities AoLE with the five statements of what matters which will contribute to learners realising the four purposes of the curriculum.
- RVE should be given parity with the other subjects within the Humanities area.
- In designing the RVE curriculum, practitioners must pay due regard to the Welsh Government RVE Guidance as well as the [Carmarthenshire RVE Agreed Syllabus](#).
- The RVE curriculum must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Wales are mainly Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Wales, and must also reflect the fact that a range of non-religious philosophical convictions are held in Wales.

The phased roll-out of the Curriculum for Wales will continue, and the right to withdraw will be removed for year 11 learners in September 2026.

Religious Education - all learners currently in years 11-13:

- Parents/ carers still have the right to withdraw their child/ren from RE. Schools should have a protocol to support with this process should it be needed.
- RE must be delivered in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus for RE (2008 'legacy' agreed syllabus).
- RE must be included in the curriculum for all registered learners except learners in nursery provision, aged 19 or over, or over 16 who are receiving part time education.
- RE must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

Collective worship (adapted from Estyn 2017)

- Applicable to all pupils as legislation is unchanged and longstanding.
- Schools must provide collective worship daily for all registered pupils aged 5 and above.
- Most acts of collective worship should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character; this means that they should reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief.
- Collective worship can take place at any time during the school day.
- Collective worship can be provided to pupils in any sized group, for example, as a class, a year group, a phase group or a whole-school community.
- Collective worship should take account of the family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of the pupils involved.
- A parent can request that their child is excused from collective worship and schools must agree to such requests. Parents do not have to give reasons. Pupils who are excused must be supervised by the school. The school may, in agreement with parents, provide alternative arrangements for worship for one or more pupils that are excused, but is not obliged to do so. The school prospectus should refer to parents' right to request that their child is excused from collective worship and outline relevant arrangements.
- Pupils in sixth forms can excuse themselves from collective worship.
- Teachers have the right to withdraw from collective worship. However, the school must ensure that collective worship is still provided daily for all pupils.
- Updated guidance and examples for compliant and meaningful Collective Worship is being developed by members of Carmarthenshire SACRVE and will be published during the Autumn Term.

Actions

- Consider which monitoring processes the governing body have in place to ensure that statutory expectations for RVE, RE and DACW detailed above are met, and that related learning experiences are meaningful and develop pupils through the four purposes.
- Ensure your RVE/RE and DACW leads have sufficient time and support to fulfil their roles well, including accessing the networks.
- Contact Jennifer Harding-Richards if support is needed or if you have practice that you feel would support other schools.

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