

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019 (6.30pm – 8.00pm)  
At St Matthew's C of E Primary School**

**Present    Group A – Christian, Other Faiths & Beliefs**

Mike Freedman (MF) -Judaism  
Audrey King (AK) – Humanists UK  
Saleem Sheikh (SS) - Islam

**Group B – Church of England**

Andrew Williams (AW)  
Marcus Cooper (MC)

**Group C – Teacher Associations**

Not represented.

**Group D – Local Authority**

Cllr Mike Brunt (MB)

**LA Adviser**

Ewan Morrison (EM) – School Improvement Inspector, Merton

**Others**

Farooq Ahmed – Wimbledon Mosque (attended with Saleem Sheikh)  
John Shelley – Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) Merton  
Elizabeth Nassé (EN) Clerk

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Gary Quinn (GQ), Headteacher of St Matthew's showed members around the school. GQ highlighted the school's new vision - 'Friendship, Discovery, Prayer' and explained how the C of E character of the school is promoted along with welcoming and providing for children of other faiths; there is a strong culture of inclusion and respect within the school. GQ also described the strong community spirit of the school and the emphasis placed on supporting others through their charitable activities. MB thanked MC and GQ for organising and hosting the meeting.

ITEM	ACTION
<p><b>1</b>      <b><u>Apologies for absence</u></b>  Apologies for absence were received from:</p> <p>Cllr Hayley Ormrod  Debra Beale  Laxmi Attawar  Jane Savill  Ajaib Singh Bahra  Waleed Ahmad  Keith Shipman</p>	
<p><b>2</b>      <b><u>Welcome and introductions</u></b>  MB introduced himself as Chair and welcomed everyone to the meeting. All attendees introduced themselves.</p> <p><b>The meeting was not quorate.</b></p>	
<p><b>3</b>      <b><u>John Shelley (JS) Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)</u></b>  JS handed out leaflets about LADO procedures in Merton and explained that he was visiting schools and organisations across the borough to raise awareness of the LADO role. JS added that he had worked in Merton for 18 years and had been working as the LADO for 2 years (he replaced Dawn Haughton who addressed SACRE members at their meeting on 21.2.17).</p> <p>JS explained that the LADO role existed to manage situations where allegations have been made against staff working or volunteering with children. The role is linked with the Police, Health, Education and Social Care services.</p> <p>JS advised members that if they have any concerns about a member of staff or volunteer then they should contact the LADO service, even if in practice the concern does not meet the criteria for referral; this can include concerns about a member of staff's private life or a breach of a position of trust.</p> <p>JS stressed that the LADO does not investigate allegations but liaises with the parties involved. The LADO also offers support to staff or volunteers who have been subject to an allegation. The service responds on the day that a referral is made.</p> <p>JS explained that there are three levels of outcome for referrals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substantiated – this may result in dismissal or referral to a regulatory body.</li> <li>• Unsubstantiated – no evidence is in place to prove or disprove the allegation (most cases are in this category).</li> <li>• Unfounded – there is no evidence or there is evidence of a false/malicious allegation.</li> </ul> <p>JS explained that some cases can extend over a long period, especially if there is police involvement and scrutiny of IT equipment is needed. JS receives approximately 200 referrals per year, and most are from the education sector or Early Years.</p> <p>JS referred members to Chapter 7 of the 'London Child Protection Procedures' for more detail (available online) and invited questions.</p> <p>MB asked how many referrals are school based and whether they arise from all age groups.</p>	

## MERTON STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ITEM		ACTION
	<p>JS replied that about 60% of referrals are from the education sector, across all year groups. Referrals sometimes arise when staff are trying to manage the behaviour of young people who have emerging special educational needs. Also, some referrals arise from residential placements.</p> <p>AW asked how frequently a referral becomes a criminal matter. JS replied that it was infrequent.</p> <p>SS commented that in some religious schools there may be cultural differences in what is acceptable practice; it is difficult to address this with some staff. JS suggested that even if a case ends up being unsubstantiated, the scrutiny of the referral process should help to moderate such behaviour.</p> <p>SS asked whether JS visits different settings across the borough. JS confirmed that he did and will review safeguarding policies and procedures if needed.</p> <p>MB asked what support would be given to young people whose cases were dropped because of parental pressure, for example. JS replied that a Social Worker would often be involved in these cases.</p> <p>MB thanked JS for his presentation.</p>	
4	<p><b><u>SACRE membership admin</u></b></p> <p><b>Admin</b> - The following vacancies were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buddhism (<b>SS to refer to Mr P.Lom</b>)</li> <li>• Free Churches</li> <li>• Roman Catholic (<b>MB to liaise with David Hurst to confirm whether he'd like to become a member or follow up with the parish priest of St Peter and Paul, Mitcham or consider representatives from the Polish community</b>)</li> <li>• NAHT and NASUWT (<b>EM to enquire at Primary Heads meeting and possible NASUWT contacts</b>)</li> </ul>	<p>SS</p> <p>MB</p> <p>EM</p>
5	<p><b><u>Minutes of the last SACRE meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019</u></b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 9.7.19 were agreed, for approval at the next meeting.</p>	
6	<p><b><u>Matters arising from the last meeting not addressed elsewhere: -</u></b></p> <p>Not reviewed – incomplete actions to be added to next agenda.</p>	
7	<p><b><u>Dates of RE Coordinators meetings</u></b></p> <p>EN advised that details had been emailed to members. The next meetings are:- 27.11.19 – at the Wimbledon Synagogue. 4.3.20 - 'Prevent' duties at the Chaucer Centre.</p>	
8	<p><b><u>Future SACRE projects – feedback from launch</u></b></p> <p>AW reported that the project 'Our Faith, Our Belief' had been launched on 2<sup>nd</sup> October at the Council Chambers. AW added that 11 students (one of whom has no faith) had taken part from several local schools; RR6 (Rutlish School and Ricards Lodge High School), Ursuline, Wimbledon College and St Mark's Academy; more participants may join as knowledge about the project spreads.</p>	

## MERTON STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

## ITEM

## ACTION

AW explained that after introductions the group had formed four discussion groups and set ground rules around confidentiality and respect. AW added that one of his PGCE students had helped in facilitating the discussion. Four themed discussion events will take place in different places of worship over the academic year:-

- 'Background of faiths' at Mitcham Parish Church
- 'How faith shapes life' at the Ahmadiyya Muslim Mosque
- 'Beliefs and doubts' at the Hindu Temple
- 'Faith and contemporary issues' at the Wimbledon Synagogue

The project will close at an event before the summer term SACRE meeting on 7.7.19; feedback will be sought on whether it should be run again. All agreed that it would be helpful for SACRE members to hear feedback from the participants.

AW commented that it was pleasing to have seen the project come to fruition and added that he had received some very insightful comments on the importance of the project from the students; they were a credit to their schools.

**9      Any other business**

AK suggested that the review of the agreed syllabus should be added to the next agenda as the previous review had been a significant and lengthy piece of work for SACRE.

AW observed that the Merton agreed syllabus was a good model and MB added that the next review should be less onerous, as the framework is now in place.

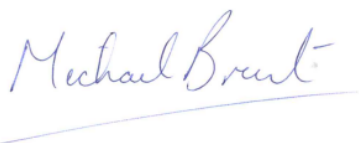
AW reported that Roehampton University will be offering a new qualification; a Certificate of Education for teaching in in C of E Primary Schools. The qualification will focus on ethos, governance and leadership, but not theology. Twenty students are interested in qualifying, with an aspiration to teach RE.

**10     Dates of next meetings**

The proposed dates and venues for the next SACRE meetings are:

**7.15pm, Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020 - Synagogue (MF to confirm)**

**4.30pm, Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – Civic Centre – (KS to confirm following finalisation of the faith dialogue project).**



Chair of Merton SACRE.....

date.....7.7.20.....

(signed electronically because of Covid 19 restrictions)