

Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 21 July 2015 (7.15 – 9.15pm)

Present: Group A – Christian, Other Faiths & Beliefs

Peter Kendrick (PK) – Chair

William Doris (WD)

Mike Freedman (MF)

Audrey King (AK)

Saleem Sheikh (SS)

Group B – Church of England

Colin Powell (CP)

Joanne Powell (JP)

Rev Kate Tuckett (KT)

Group C – Teacher Associations

Neil McManus (NM)

Group D – Local Authority

Cllr Laxmi Attawar (LA)

Cllr Abdul Latif (AL)

Cllr Imran Uddin (IU)

Co-opted

Asad Malik (AM)

LA Adviser

Keith Shipman (KS) – Merton Education Inclusion Manager

Others

Leo Hanmer (Clerk)

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ITEM		ACTION
1	<p>Apologies for absence Received from: A S Bahra M Keenan (see item 2 below) P Lom</p>	
2	<p>Introductions and welcome PK welcomed everyone to the meeting and there were introductions round the table. It was noted that Maria Keenan was a new Merton SACRE member, replacing Kate Seamer who had resigned earlier in the year. MK was the Head of Pelham Primary School and had just come to the end of her term chairing the Merton Primary Headteachers Group. It was understood that she would be representing the NAHT.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of the last meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 9 June were approved.</p>	
4	<p>Matters Arising</p>	
a	<p><u>Item 4(a) - Directory of Places of Worship in Merton</u>: PK reported that a draft had been circulated and comments had been received. Updating was still in progress. PK drew attention to the fact that the directory was organised in alphabetical order by faith or belief, but there was also a contents list showing the places of worship by location. Members were urged to email any further comments to PK so that the draft could be finalised and sent out to schools.</p>	All members
b	<p><u>Item 4(b) – RE Quality Mark</u>: KS reported that this had not yet been discussed by Merton Headteachers, but it had been flagged up as an agenda item for a future meeting.</p>	Ongoing
c	<p><u>Item 5 – Membership update, Vacancies</u>: Following MK’s appointment, there were now 3 vacancies as follows: Hinduism (Group A) NASUWT (Group C) Voice (Group C)</p>	
	<p>AK reported that she had given LH the email address of a contact for Hinduism at the Shree Ghanapathy Temple and LH confirmed that she had now included that person on her circulation list for SACRE mailings.</p>	
	<p>KS undertook to pursue the matter of representation for the 2 Group C vacancies.</p>	KS
d	<p><u>Item 5 – Membership update, Attendance</u>: PK confirmed that the review of the constitution would start over the summer holidays.</p>	PK, KS & LH
e	<p><u>Item 6(D) – Humanism; & Item 6(E) – The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community</u>: PK explained that the Committee had not met. The issues flagged up for referral to the Committee would therefore need to be addressed in the discussion of the Revised RE Syllabus – see under Item 5 below.</p>	

ITEM		ACTION
5	Revised RE syllabus – review the latest draft	
A	<p><u>Agreed Syllabus Conference</u></p> <p>PK introduced this item by explaining that once the process of revising the RE syllabus had been completed, there would need to be an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC). The ASC was a statutory body, separate from SACRE, which was legally required to recommend the agreed syllabus to the Local Authority.</p> <p>Given that the ASC's statutory requirements – including the voting arrangements - were legally complex KS suggested that SACRE members might find it helpful to be briefed orally in advance by a representative from the local authority's legal team. This was agreed and KS undertook to make the necessary arrangements.</p>	
B	<p><u>The Diversity of Religion in Merton</u></p> <p>A short document with this title was tabled at the meeting. KS explained that it had been designed to be helpful to schools. Using data obtained from the 2011 Census it had been possible to build up a picture of the diversity of religion in Merton and to compare it with London and with England as a whole. The findings had also revealed a changing picture when compared with the 2001 Census, and provided a context for the planned inclusion of Humanism in the new syllabus.</p> <p>Members agreed that the document was interesting, and agreed that it would be helpful to include it in the revised syllabus, subject to careful checking and proof-reading.</p>	<p>KS</p> <p>PK</p>
C	<p><u>Revised RE syllabus</u></p> <p>Members had received an email copy of the latest draft prior to the meeting, and copies were also tabled. PK made reference to new content as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humansim • The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community • Updated resources and websites • Changes to assessment arrangements & the replacement of levels 	
	<p>PK then led a page by page scrutiny of the text. Members took this opportunity to highlight typographical/spelling errors and inaccuracies/inappropriateness within the content. More substantive points were noted as follows:</p>	
i.	<p><u>Page 4: Acknowledgements.</u> Teachers who are RE leads will be sent a copy of the final draft for comment.</p>	
ii.	<p><u>Page 84: Expected levels of attainment.</u> KS undertook to redraft this section given that levels were no longer being used for assessment. All other references to levels (eg page 158; 169 + 170; 176-184 etc) would also need to be removed.</p>	<p>KS</p>
iii.	<p><u>Page 85: KS3 Units of Work.</u> A decision was still needed on how to incorporate Humanism. It was agreed that the best way was to add Humanism to the list of Additional Study Units on page 116. Content would be drafted and SACRE members would have an opportunity to review it.</p>	<p>PK</p>
iv.	<p><u>Page 116: list of Additional Study Units (KS3).</u> It was agreed that it might be more helpful to move this to the beginning of the section in KS3 Units – ie insert before page 87.</p>	

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v. <u>Page 119: Syllabus for KS4</u> . It was agreed that this section should be included in the KS4 Introduction on page 117.	
vi. <u>Page 121: Visiting places of worship</u> . It was suggested that the introduction might include a reminder about the need for sensitivity when pupils are visiting a place of worship of a faith other than their own.	
vii. <u>Page 127</u> : Concerns were expressed by some members about the suggested activities that might be undertaken by pupils following a visit to a place of worship, particularly those relating to AT2. The general feeling was that a preferred approach might be to suggest that children should feel empowered and encouraged to respond to their visit; and to list some possible activities. Teachers should also be reminded of the general need for sensitivity, particularly if a child had visited a place of worship of a faith that was not their own. PK undertook to redraft this section in light of the discussion.	PK
viii. <u>Pages 136-140: Bibliography</u> . In addition to the need for careful proof-reading, it was also noted that there was no recommended reading for KS3.	PK
ix. <u>Page 147: Visits to schools by people from a faith or belief community</u> . PK asked members to look at this section and let him have any comments. KS added that a recent survey of schools had revealed that staff were aware of the risks about the potential to influence young minds and were therefore concerned about who was coming into their schools and talking to their youngsters. In discussion a number of suggestions were made including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. SACRE members could be asked to recommend a list of people who would be suitable for going into schools. b. Schools could ring the places of worship listed in the Directory to ask them for suitable speakers. c. There could be a central contact point for schools to approach for advice. d. The Directory of Places of Worship in Merton booklet could be expanded to include a list of suitable speakers. <p>CP and NM both indicated that they would be happy to provide some suggestions (individuals and organisations), whilst SS and IU both indicated a willingness to form a sub-group to look into the matter in more detail.</p>	All members
x. <u>Page 191 (and elsewhere in the document): Islam</u> . There was broad agreement among members that a key purpose of the syllabus was to reflect the diversity of religions and beliefs in Merton and to highlight that between and within these religions and beliefs there were different traditions, communities, understandings and buildings. It was against this background that references to Sufism had been deleted (no significant presence in Merton) and that references to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community had been added.	CP & NM SS & IU
xi. <u>Page 195: The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community</u> . It was noted that this would not appear in the section on key beliefs, but would instead form an Appendix to the	

ITEM		ACTION
	<p>document, with cross references included where necessary in the main body of the syllabus. The current text would be re-drafted.</p> <p>xii. <u>Page 215-221: Pupils books.</u> It was agreed that the column showing approximate costs should be deleted.</p> <p>xiii. <u>Page 227: Resource centres.</u> It was suggested that people's names should not be included.</p>	<p>IU/AM</p> <p>PK</p> <p>PK</p>
D	<p><u>Next Steps</u> PK asked all members to review the sections relevant to their interests and to email him with details of any corrections or changes needed.</p> <p>He also suggested that it would be helpful for quality assurance purposes if colleagues could look at sections not directly related to their own interests and feedback any comments.</p> <p>The next step would be to produce a revised draft without the mark-ups. This would reduce the size of the document and make final revisions easier.</p>	
6	<p>Date, time and venue for the next meeting To be confirmed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The meeting closed at 9.15pm</i></p>	