



**The Merton
Standing Advisory Council
on
Religious Education**

**Annual Report
for 2014 - 2015**

March 2016

I am pleased to send you Merton SACRE's Annual Report for the academic year 2014-2015. Every SACRE is required to publish a report and make it available to schools and the wider public.

The main focus for SACRE over the last year has been:

- Getting the Directory of Places of Worship in Merton up and running and online.
www.merton.gov.uk/learning/directoryplacesworship.pdf
- Getting the new Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education to the point of being launched in July 2016.
- Broadening our role to support schools with a range of questions related to RE and the faith community in Merton.

Merton is a unique and religiously diverse community to grow up in. Our children need to be helped to navigate this local as well as global world. This year we have continued to see the challenges of global terrorism and parallel risk in stereotyping that RE as a subject, and RE teachers in particular, do so much to challenge. We will seek to continue to help schools to understand and celebrate the diverse faith presence in Merton.

Peter Kendrick
Chair of Merton SACRE
May 2016

SACRE MEETINGS

Peter Kendrick was re-elected chair at the autumn meeting of SACRE. Three meetings were held during the academic year and minutes are available from the LA.

The SACRE had a very busy year refreshing and redesigning the Agreed Syllabus for Merton

The key issues debated were:

- changes in assessment;
- how to reflect the diversity of the Muslim population of Merton within the syllabus;
- the request to include Humanism;
- feedback from schools on better use of the whole document including advice to teachers;
- corrections to religious language and spelling as used by a faith group;
- inclusion of new sections on the diversity of Merton's population;
- referencing British Values and the Prevent duty;
- building on previous key learning;
- referencing key language in each unit; and
- improving the ease of use of each unit.

It was agreed to go forward with a detailed syllabus that offers teachers lots of support and advice.

The SACRE responded to the emerging National Picture on RE through Lord Nash's letter and the Charles Clarke review, and were briefed on the changes with regards to British Values and Ofsted expectations.

The 'Directory of Places of Worship' was refreshed across the year by each faith group. The 'Visits and Visitors Policy' was also refreshed to be included in the syllabus and directory.

The SACRE also responded to international events by offering advice to schools with regards to the Paris bombings.

Meetings were held in the Civic Centre, but were also hosted by the Sikh SACRE members at the Khalsa Centre in Tooting, and by the Muslim members at the Morden Islamic Centre. Beecholme School also hosted a SACRE meeting. SACRE members would like to thank all hosts for their hospitality. The aim of holding meetings in different education and faith or belief venues is to evidence the inter faith agreement of the SACRE: to support children of all faiths and beliefs or none to be educated about all the main local religions and belief groups.

www.merton.gov.uk/learning/schools/standing-advisory-council-on-religious-education.htm

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Merton Schools

[http://www.merton.gov.uk/learning/merton revised agreed syllabus 2008a.doc](http://www.merton.gov.uk/learning/merton%20revised%20agreed%20syllabus%202008a.doc)

This is the old syllabus and will be updated on the website by July 2016.

STANDARDS

SMSC, British Values, faith and culture references in school Ofsted reports inspected 14 - 15

St Marks Primary school

SMSC a strength

The curriculum promotes the school's values through a range of interesting and well-planned activities. This promotes British Values well and ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding

The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school takes every opportunity to broaden pupils' skills in these areas in lessons and assemblies. As a result, pupils contribute well to the ethos of the school and have an excellent understanding of living in modern Britain.

Garfield Primary school

SMSC a strength

Pupils enjoy learning and are proud of their achievements and their school. They treat each other respectfully and show much appreciation of different cultures and religions.

The school's substantial promotion of children's rights informs the teaching of all subjects. Pupils learn a great deal about different religions and cultures, often in very stimulating and thought-provoking ways. They explore ideas about democracy, the rule of law and liberty in ways that promote tolerance and mutual respect. Such work prepares pupils for life in modern Britain very well. It also illustrates the school's very strong promotion of equal opportunities and how it successfully guards against discrimination.

Poplar Primary School

SMSC a strength

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in all aspects of the school's work. The curriculum is exciting and gives pupils a range of experiences beyond the school environment. It prepares them well for life in modern Britain

The curriculum prepares them well for life in modern Britain. For example pupils learn about other faiths and cultures through their numerous visits to different places beyond the school. Pupils learn about democracy by electing their school council and going to the Houses of Parliament. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through all aspects of the school's work. Pupils celebrate different religious festivals and through their visits to different places of worship such as the synagogue they enhance their understanding further.

There are instances of exemplary behaviour, for example in lessons and during the Year 6 performance. Children learn to work well together right from the time they start school. Friendship across all ethnic and religious backgrounds is strong. There is a good emphasis on mutual respect and tolerance for others' views.

SMART Centre Pupil Referral unit

Section 8 inspection - no references are made to RE or SMSC

Raynes Park High School

The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through lessons, tutor time and trips. Staff make students aware of the importance of British values and ensure that they are well prepared for life in modern Britain

Lonesome Primary School

SMSC a strength

Leaders and governors are successful in helping pupils meet the school's core values as encapsulated in 'The Lonesome Charter', particularly to respect others, listen to each other and care for the world

The curriculum focuses sharply on developing core skills and also gives a firm base for pupils' personal development. Half-termly topic themes are studied by the whole school but followed in different ways by each year group. They then exhibit this work for parents. The theme 'Who are we?' led to Year 4 pupils posing the question and planning their study of 'What makes us human?'

Staff take every opportunity to build and develop an understanding of key values into pupils' daily lives. The school is working towards becoming a UNICEF 'Rights Respecting School'. This has supported pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as their understanding of what it is to be British. Pupils are knowledgeable about democracy. They realise the importance of the rule of law and are understanding of others.

Merton Park Primary

The curriculum contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Learning in school is complemented by frequent visits to develop pupils' understanding in depth.

The school prepares pupils very well for life in modern British society. The school's policies have been developed with Unicef's 'Rights of the Child' at their heart. Consequently, pupils understand their rights and responsibilities very well. They know it is important to show respect for others and that freedom of speech and the democratic process should lie at the heart of decision-making. They have written their own 'charters' for the playground and the classroom, which detail the values they uphold.

Parents, pupils and teachers all agree that the school is a harmonious community, where children and adults of different faiths, cultures and backgrounds work and play together extremely well.

RISE Education - an independent school offering alternative education

SMSC a strength

Students' personal development is promoted well and, as a result, they appreciate that people's beliefs and cultures differ. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain

The school places a high priority on promoting fairness, tolerance and mutual respect so that all students have an equal opportunity to learn and improve. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Personal development and citizenship sessions help students to overcome their feelings of frustration and failure. These, together with a range of interesting activities, help students to gain an understanding of democracy, the rule of law and an appreciation of British values. In this way, they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Staff act as good role models so that students learn how to respect and get along with one another. The students have many opportunities to learn about people from different cultures, backgrounds and beliefs. For example, in their personal development sessions, students have attended a local studio to produce a radio advertisement based on social justice issues. Through working together, they improve their communication skills and self-confidence, and have presented their recordings to their previous schools and parents and carers.

Bond Primary school

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted. British values are emphasised effectively through, for example, teaching pupils about local history and about the British judicial system. As a result, pupils understand their rights and responsibilities as British citizens.

FACE Youth - an independent school offering alternative education

SMSC a strength

Leaders and managers ensure that students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through a well-considered programme of activities that students enjoy.

The school promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students well. Staff place great emphasis on morality and upstanding moral behaviour. Staff act as good role models; they take every opportunity to discuss moral issues with students, both during lessons and break times. v Leaders and managers ensure that students are well prepared for life in modern Britain through learning about British culture, services and institutions during personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), history and trips. The trips have included a magistrate's court, a fire station, and the poppy display at the Tower of London. Students have taken part in discussions with visiting police officers and watched a play on knife crime presented by a visiting drama group. v Students learn about other cultures and faiths well through religious education, PSHCE and trips, for instance to a local mosque. Students come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and frequently share their experiences and customs with each other. For example, Traveller and Polish students discussed their own cultures during 'check-in' and lessons, so helping other students understand and appreciate diversity and equality.

Harris Academy Morden

SMSC a strength

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. As a result they mature into considerate and thoughtful young adults who have a very good understanding of life in modern Britain.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a real strength of the academy. Leaders have planned a far reaching and extensive programme which ensures that students are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. During the inspection students were observed discussing the issues associated with terrorism and extremism during their tutor periods. An outstanding example of stretching all students intellectually is the CIT (Cake, Intellectual Discussion and Tea) programme. Students respond to a thought-provoking question, such as 'Why animals have stripes'; students are invited to tea and cake after school where the question is debated. The students really value this programme and the opportunity to debate in depth. v Leaders very effectively ensure that there is no discrimination

RELIGIOUS STUDIES EXAMINATIONS 2014 - 15

GCSE

In 2015, there were 1058 entries for RE GCSE in Merton, slightly down from the number of entries in 2014. However Merton schools still have a much higher than national average entry for GCSE full course RE: 69% of year 11 students in Merton are entered in comparison with the national rate of 46%.

It should be noted that where schools are entering all their pupils, not just those who have opted for RE, they are still achieving a higher pass rate than national.

The GCSE pass rate at A - C grades has gone down marginally, but is still well above the national average.

The grade breakdown shows that higher proportions of Merton students achieved the top A* - A grades than nationally, and smaller proportions achieved the C – U grades. This is a trend that has continued for a number of years.

| Numbers achieving at each grade (2014/15) | A* | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | U | Total Number of Entries |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|---|-------------------------|
| Merton | 161 | 244 | 250 | 186 | 90 | 53 | 33 | 29 | 9 | 1058 |

| Percentages achieving at each grade | A* | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | U | A*-A | A*-C | A*-G |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|
| Merton 14/15 | 19.5 | 23.1 | 17.6 | 8.5 | 5.0 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 0.9 | 0.3 | | 79.5 | 98.9 |
| Merton 13/14 | 16.5 | 24.3 | 22.2 | 16.9 | 8.1 | 5.1 | 3.3 | 2.5 | 1.2 | 40.7 | 79.8 | 98.8 |
| National 14/15 | 11.0 | 18.9 | 23.3 | 18.9 | 11.6 | 7.2 | 4.4 | 2.6 | 2.1 | 30.0 | 72.1 | 97.9 |

A level

Entries are up at the highest level Merton has had. The pass rate has continued at 100%; A*-A and A-B grades have improved significantly from 2013/14 and are now well above national outcomes.

| Centre | NOE | A* | A | B | C | D | E | A*-A | A*-B | A*-E | QCA Av Pts |
|----------------|--------|-----|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|-------|------------|
| National 14/15 | 21,273 | 5.6 | 19.1 | 30.1 | 25.3 | 13.7 | 5.1 | 24.7 | 54.8 | 98.9 | |
| Merton 14/15 | 57 | 3.5 | 26.3 | 40.4 | 21.1 | 5.3 | 3.5 | 29.8 | 70.2 | 100 | 237.4 |
| Merton 13/14 | 34 | 2.9 | 11.8 | 35.3 | 38.2 | 8.8 | 2.9 | 14.7 | 50.0 | 100.0 | 225.88 |

AS level not progressing to A2

57 students in Merton took AS level in the sixth form: this represents a big increase from the nine in the previous year, demonstrating the healthy growth of interest in the subject. These results however are not as strong as A level RE overall. AS level is being phased out.

| Centre | NOE | A | B | C | D | E | U | X | A-B | A-E | QCA Av Pts |
|----------------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|---------------|
| National 14/15 | | 20.4 | 22.7 | 23.3 | 16.1 | 9.6 | 7.5 | 0.4 | 43.1 | 92.1 | 101.0 |
| Merton 14/15 | 57 | 18.6 | 8.5 | 32.2 | 27.1 | 5.1 | 6.8 | 1.7 | 27.1 | 91.5 | 97.4 |
| Merton 13/14 | 9 | | 11.1 | 22.2 | 33.3 | 22.2 | 11.1 | | 11.1 | 88.9 | 83.33 |

Source: Statistical First Releases/LA RAISE online summary data

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) FOR TEACHERS

Training workshops were run for subject leads, and SACRE members attended. An RE teacher was funded an honorarium to support the syllabus production.

COMPLAINTS CONCERNING RE

No complaints were received under Section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988 regarding Religious Education in Merton schools.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Determinations

There are no determinations in Merton

GENERAL

Links with other agencies

Merton SACRE is a member of NASACRE and a representative attends national meetings. Full reports are given at the SACRE meetings so that all members are aware of current topics and issues. Members of SACRE are also representatives on the Merton Inter-Faith group and this facilitates communication between the two committees. A member of SACRE attended the NASACRE AGM meeting in Birmingham and reported back to SACRE

List of organisations to which the SACRE report is sent

A copy of this report will be placed on the SACRE section of the Merton LA website and relevant officers will be informed www.merton.gov.uk/learning/schools/standing-advisory-council-on-religious-education.htm
The National Association of SACREs) NASACRE will also receive a copy.

Contacts

If you have any issues that you would like to raise with the Merton SACRE, please contact the Merton LA Advisor to the SACRE keith.shipman@merton.gov.uk or the Chair, Peter Kendrick scrc@lineone.net.

Appendix 1: SACRE Membership

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

MEMBERSHIP- as at December 2015

Group A – Christian, Other Faiths & Beliefs

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Buddhism | Mr P Lom |
| Free Churches | Mr P Kendrick (Deputy Mrs S Rogers) |
| Hinduism | Ms G Maheshwaran |
| Humanism | Ms Audrey King |
| Islam | Mr S Sheikh (Deputy Mr M Khan) |
| Judaism | Mr M Freedman |
| Roman Catholic Church | Mr W Doris |
| Sikhism | Mr A J Singh Bahra |

Group B – Church of England

| | |
|--------|---------------|
| C of E | Mr C Powell |
| C of E | Ms J Powell |
| C of E | Rev K Tuckett |

Group C – Teacher Associations

| | |
|----------|---------------------|
| ATL | Mr N McManus |
| NAHT/SHA | Ms M Keenan |
| NASUWT | Vacancy |
| NUT | Rodney Kay-Kreizman |
| Voice | Vacancy |

Group D – Local Authority

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Conservative Group | Cllr A Latif |
| Labour Group | Cllr I Uddin |
| Labour Group | Cllr L Attawar |

Co-opted

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Ahmadiyya Muslim Association | Mr A Malik |
| Baha'i Faith | Ms A Golmohamad |
| | |

Others

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Local Authority Advsier | Mr K Shipman |
| Clerk | Ms L Hanmer |