

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2018 (7.15pm – 9.10pm)  
At the Wimbledon Mosque**

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

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

**Group B – Church of England**

Andrew Williams (AW)  
Marcus Cooper (MC)

**Group C – Teacher Associations**

Maria Keenan -NAHT

**Group D – Local Authority**

Cllr Laxmi Attawar (LA)  
Cllr Mike Brunt (MB)

**LA Adviser**

Keith Shipman (KS) – Merton Education Inclusion Manager

**Others**

Elizabeth Nassé (EN) Clerk

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SS and the Imam welcomed the group to the Mosque. The Imam discussed ideas on how to promote the understanding of mainstream Islamism in schools and suggested that it would be helpful to include some faith-based consultation with students, possibly as part of the PSHE curriculum. All agreed that it would be helpful for the Imam to continue to link with school leaders. The Chairman of the mosque introduced himself to the group during the meeting.

KS thanked SS for organising the venue at short notice and for hosting the meeting.

## MERTON STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

| ITEM |  | ACTION          |
|------|--|-----------------|
| 1    | <p><b><u>Apologies for absence</u></b><br/>           Apologies for absence were received from:</p> <p>Waleed Ahmad - Ahmadiyya Muslim Association<br/>           Debra Beale - NUT<br/>           Ajaib Singh Bahra – Sikhism (post meeting note)<br/>           Gheeta Maheshwaran - Hinduism<br/>           Councillor Hayley Ormrod - LA<br/>           Jane Savill – C of E</p>   |                 |
| 2    | <p><b><u>Introductions</u></b><br/>           MB introduced himself as Chair and SS as Vice Chair. All attendees introduced themselves and Marcus Cooper was welcomed as a new member.</p> <p><b>The meeting was quorate.</b></p>  |                 |
| 3    | <p><b><u>SACRE membership admin</u></b><br/>           MB reported that Councillor Hayley Ormrod had been appointed as a LA representative, in place of Abdul Latif.<br/>           EN reported that no vacancies had been filled since the last meeting.</p> <p><b>Ongoing actions: EN to follow up possible Buddhist faith representation; MC to contact the Diocese about possible Catholic representation; SACRE members to contact the Baiha'i faith community to try and arrange representation if possible.</b></p> <p>AK reminded the group that the SACRE constitution required action if representatives did not attend several meetings without explanation.</p>  | EN/MC<br>others |
| 4    | <p><b><u>Minutes of the last SACRE meeting 20<sup>th</sup> February 2018</u></b><br/>           The minutes were agreed as a true record and MB signed them. The signed copy was retained by EN for filing.</p>  |                 |
| 5    | <p><b><u>Matters arising from the last meeting:-</u></b><br/>           Reference in previous minutes in brackets; actions to be carried forward and new actions in bold.</p> <p><i>(Item 6) Carried forward action: KS/SS to liaise with John Shelley (Designated Officer) to arrange a meeting with an Imam. Done –date to be agreed.</i></p> <p><i>(Item 6) Carried forward action: KS will explore the idea of having an inter faith event with Secondary Heads. Done and discussed in item 9.</i></p> <p><i>(Item 6) Action update: MF to contact 'Muslim Women of Merton' to enquire whether they would like to learn more about the teaching systems that the synagogue has established. MF reported that although he had been in initial contact with the group, he had not heard from the group since. KS added that he will be meeting the group in the near future and will remind them of MF's offer of assistance.</i></p> <p><i>(Item 6) Ongoing action: KS/MF/WA to arrange use of venues for next RE Coordinators meetings. AK and AW commented that the communication about the meetings was not clear to SACRE members. KS reminded members that SACRE</i></p> |                 |



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| <p>members are helping to organise the meetings and that members are welcome to attend.<br/>The next one will take place at Christ Church; Jane Savill (JS) will organise the venue.</p> <p><b>New action: KS will advise SACRE members of RE Coordinators meeting dates via EN.</b></p>   | <p>KS/EN</p> |
| <p><i>(Item 7) Action: EF/KS to draft a letter (congratulations on SIAMS report) to Bishop Gilpin. KS reported that he was unsure whether EF had sent a letter, but would check. All agreed that if it had not been sent, then letters of congratulation should be sent by the Chair of SACRE.</i></p> <p><b>New Action: KS to check whether a congratulatory letter has been sent. If so, a similar one to Holy Trinity should be sent. If not, letters should be sent from SACRE (signed by MB).</b></p>   | <p>KS/MB</p> |
| <p><i>(Item 10) Action: Item to be added to agenda for next SACRE meeting and KS to investigate whether the original questionnaire and responses are available. KS reported that no previous responses were available and suggested that SACRE should evaluate the impact of the agreed syllabus by asking HTs or RE leads for feedback. All agreed that it would be useful to hear from RE leads rather than HTs, as they would know how the syllabus is being implemented in practice. MF reported that during visits to the Synagogue schools had referred to topics from the syllabus; providing evidence that it is being used. Members discussed what kind of questions should be asked of RE leads and the following questions were identified:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you using the syllabus?</li> <li>• Is it useful and what difference is it making?</li> <li>• Do you have any associated training needs or need more advice or input from faith leaders to support teaching of the syllabus?</li> <li>• What do your pupils think of the syllabus?</li> </ul> <p><b>New Action: To develop questions that are structured to give useful feedback and form the basis of discussion with primary and secondary RE coordinators.</b></p> | <p>KS</p>    |
| <p><i>(Item 11) Action: AW will bring information about the 'Conversation of the Soul' peer to peer project to the next SACRE meeting. Done – discussed in item 9.</i></p>   |              |
| <p><i>(Item 12) Action: MB suggested that a thank you to Peter Kendrick should include a letter or address by the Mayor and requested that KS explore how this can be arranged.</i></p> <p><b>New Action: MB reported that now the new Mayor had been elected he would follow this up.</b></p>   | <p>MB</p>    |
| <p><i>(Item 12): AW reported that South Thames College (Merton, Sutton, Kingston and Wandsworth) are keen to establish Chaplaincy for the college and are now looking at how it would be funded. Initially this service may be set up in partnership with local settings, but the hope would be to eventually have a dedicated Chaplaincy service for the college.</i></p> <p>AK added that she, MF, GM and a representative of the Buddhist faith had attended a</p>  |              |

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|      | <p>faith fair at the college; SACRE members who had attended reported that it was generally very positive, but it could have been organised and publicised more effectively.</p> <p><b>6</b>     <b><u>SIAMS Report</u></b><br/> The SIAMS report for Holy Trinity C of E VA Primary School was circulated prior to the meeting.<br/> MC advised members that SIAMS inspections take place every five years and look for self-evaluated evidence in the same way that Ofsted do. MC explained that Holy Trinity was the last Merton school to have been inspected using the current framework; from September 2018, the framework will change and an 'Outstanding' judgement will become harder to achieve.<br/> MC stressed that Holy Trinity had achieved a very strong 'Outstanding' judgement, based on the school's values, Christian distinctiveness, its inclusivity and leadership and management.<br/> LA asked whether the SIAMS inspection looks just at the Christian aspects of the school.<br/> MC replied that the inspection covers the teaching of other faiths and looks at how accepting a school is of families of other faiths or no faith and how it provides good quality education for all. MC added that the SIAMS inspection process now places more focus on the wellbeing of the whole school community. In response, KS also drew attention to the final line of the first section of the report:<br/> 'RE is very well led and makes a significant contribution towards the distinctive character of the school, fostering a real understanding and respect towards those of other faiths and cultures.'</p> <p>MC added that a letter of congratulation from SACRE would be appreciated by schools and that it would also help schools to understand the role of SACRE</p> <p>MC advised that no Merton schools were scheduled to have a SIAMS inspection in the next academic year.</p> <p>MB asked whether there were any opportunities for schools not subject to SIAMS inspection to learn from the inspection process.<br/> KS explained that RE coordinators generally share learning about the curriculum rather than governance, leadership and management and collective worship. MC added that feedback from the SIAMS reports and other material is shared amongst C of E schools; also there is some very useful Diocesan material on supporting staff and children's mental health in schools.</p> <p>KS explained that there was little inspection of RE by Ofsted, as they don't report on curriculum areas; any reference to RE is limited and is generally covered in comments about spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) learning. MC suggested that this may begin to change.</p> <p><b>Action: MC to share SIAMS/Diocesan related material at the next SACRE and circulate via EN prior to the meeting.</b></p> |        |
| 7    | <p><b><u>Schools' experiences of visiting places of worship</u></b><br/> KS reminded members that there is guidance in the agreed syllabus and in the directory of places of worship about school visits and asked whether there had been any feedback.<br/> MK replied that she had received feedback at a meeting with Headteachers and had</p>  | MC/EN  |



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| <p>heard that most visits were very positive. However there were two issues that make visits unsuccessful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of organisation by the setting which is hosting a visit.</li> <li>• Lack of understanding of the age related needs of groups of children; leading to lack of engagement and sometimes stress.</li> </ul> <p>MB asked whether it would be possible for a representative from a setting to visit a school prior to the visit.</p> <p>MK replied that this would possible in some cases, especially if the school had an established link with a church, for example. MF commented that it may be difficult for some smaller faith groups to do this, because of capacity issues.</p> <p>KS asked the group whether they considered schools should report back to SACRE if visits were unsuccessful. All agreed that it would be useful for SACRE to receive such feedback but noted that the best way to improve visits would be for the feedback to be received directly by the setting. All agreed that preparation by the school and place of worship would help to minimise problems and that it would be helpful to share experiences amongst settings.</p> <p>The group discussed whether SACRE should develop a standard feedback form and include it as an appendix to the agreed syllabus or directory; the feedback could be shared at RE coordinators meetings. LA suggested that it would be helpful to give pupils the opportunity to feed back as well as school staff.</p> <p>MC commented that there could be some feedback from C of E schools, with established links with churches that could be used as a starting point for formalising the process for other settings.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Action: MF to send material that the synagogue uses for supporting and evaluating school visits to EN for circulating.</b></p>  | <p><b>MF/EN</b></p>  |
| <p><b>Action: SACRE members to feedback on school visits at next SACRE meeting.</b></p>   | <p><b>All</b></p>  |
| <p><b>8</b></p>   | <p><b><u>SACRE support for RE teachers</u></b></p> <p><b>Feedback from the session 6.6.18</b></p> <p>KS reminded the group that SACRE had agreed to support RE teachers by facilitating sessions at different places of worship. KS reported that the planned RE coordinators session on 6.6.18 at the Hindu temple had not been successful as no one at the temple was aware of the plans in GM's absence. JS is arranging the hosting of the next RE Coordinators meeting at Christ Church; KS stressed that teachers need to feel confident that the session is going to be useful.</p> <p><b>Future sessions –action plan from Prevent scrutiny</b></p> <p>KS explained that as a result of the action plan from the Prevent scrutiny RE teachers will take part in a session delivered by Equaliteach; this will cover British values and the teaching of RE; it will be held at the Chaucer Centre.</p> <p>KS explained that the LA is also exploring setting up a 'Faith in Us' project (led by Anne Long) around Islamophobia; two schools have expressed an interest so far. The project will include working directly with (primary school) children in a series of workshops; funding may be secured from the Hate Crime board. MB reported that there may be some similar funding available from the Deputy Mayor.</p> <p>KS added that the Hate Crime board has also suggested a project to develop a video for young people looking at faith and getting along with each other.</p> <p>KS commented that there is not much evidence of Islamophobia in Merton schools,</p> |

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|      | <p>but some parents are resistant to allowing their children to visit Mosques. MF added that he sometimes experiences some parents not allowing their children to visit the Synagogue.</p>   |        |
|      | <p><b>Secondary RE leads</b><br/>           KS reported that he now has a contact list for all Merton secondary school (including academies) RE leads and intends to ask them what sessions would be of interest to them. A possible project was discussed in Item 9). KS added that there is no RE lead for the Morden Harris academy; it does not teach GCSE RE but offers it as part of PSHE teaching.<br/>           AK raised concern that St Mark's academy does not follow an RE syllabus. MC offered to investigate how RE is taught at the school.</p>  |        |
| 9    | <p><b><u>Future SACRE projects – a faith dialogue project</u></b><br/>           AW tabled a leaflet on 'Conversations for the Soul' –a programme that allowed individual students at Kingston University to meet face to face with another student of a different faith over a series of meetings.<br/>           AW suggested that the programme and materials could be adapted to suit different ages of students/children. AW added that there may be some 3<sup>rd</sup> year RE teacher undergraduates at Roehampton University who would be willing to facilitate a similar scheme in a secondary or primary school.<br/>           KS reminded the group that the Ursuline school had also run a very successful inter faith event and that they had offered to share their experiences of organising it. Members discussed the age groups that could benefit from a faith dialogue project and agreed that it would need to be for students of Year 5 and above; some younger groups would need facilitation by adults. MC commented that parents would need to be briefed carefully on such a project and what the aims of it would be.<br/><br/>           KS/MK added that the video made about faith at Pelham Primary school (by children in Year 1 to Year 6) had been a simple and engaging way of promoting inter faith dialogue.<br/><br/> <b>Actions: KS to set up a meeting with Ursuline and AW for further discussion with secondary RE leads. KS to discuss a faith dialogue project with primary RE leads and possibly link with Roehampton students, once undergraduate school placements have been assigned.</b></p> | KS/AW  |
| 10   | <p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b><br/>           None.</p>   |        |
| 11   | <p><b><u>Dates of next meetings</u></b><br/>           The suggested dates for next year's SACRE meetings were;<br/> <b>7.15pm, Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018.</b><br/> <b>7.15pm, Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2019.</b><br/> <b>7.15pm, Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019.</b><br/><br/>           Proposed venue for 9<sup>th</sup> October meeting – Hindu Temple, Effra Road. To be confirmed. <b>Action GM to enquire about availability.</b></p>   | GM     |
|      | <p>Chair of Merton SACRE... <i>Michael Abunb</i> ..... date. <i>12/2/19</i> .....</p>  |        |