

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9th July 2019 (7.15pm – 8.45pm)
At the Merton Civic Centre – Committee Room B**

Present Group A – Christian, Other Faiths & Beliefs

Mike Freedman (MF) -Judaism
Waleed Ahmad (WA) – Ahmadiyya Muslim Association

Group B – Church of England

Jane Savill (JS) (from 8.25pm)
Andrew Williams (AW)
Marcus Cooper (MC) (from 8.00pm)

Group C – Teacher Associations

Debra Beale (DB) - NUT

Group D – Local Authority

Cllr Mike Brunt (MB) (from 7.30pm)
Cllr Laxmi Attawar (LA)

LA Adviser

Keith Shipman (KS) – Merton Education Inclusion Manager

Others

Elizabeth Fitzpatrick (EF) (from 8.15pm) - Head of School Improvement, Merton
Elizabeth Nassé (EN) Clerk

ITEM	ACTION
<p>1 <u>Apologies for absence</u> Apologies for absence were received from:</p> <p>Cllr Hayley Ormord (HO) Geetha Maheshwaran (GM) David Hurst (DH) prospective Catholic rep. Saleem Sheikh (SS) Audrey King (AK)</p>	
<p>2 <u>Welcome and introductions</u> LA welcomed everyone to the meeting and chaired until MB arrived. The meeting was quorate.</p>	
<p>3 <u>SACRE membership admin and proposed amendment to Constitution</u> Admin - The following vacancies were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhism • Free Churches • Roman Catholic (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) • NAHT - all noted that Maria Keenan had resigned (from the end of the academic year.) • NASUWT <p>DB advised that the ATL union no longer existed so should be removed from the records.</p> <p>Proposed amendment to Constitution KS tabled a proposal from the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE) that the 2016 Merton SACRE Constitution be amended. The extract from the email from Shaun Burns (Primary Religious Education Adviser, SDBE) read (in relation to Page 2 of the Constitution):</p> <p><u>"Group B</u> <i>The Church of England.</i></p> <p><i>Three representatives, at least one of whom should be nominated by the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education."</i></p> <p><i>The Southwark Diocesan Board of Education has always been the nominating body for all the Church of England representatives as the Church of England's education body for the diocese which covers the borough of Merton.</i> <i>We would therefore like to ask that the phrase "at least one of" is removed so that this is made clear in the current Merton SACRE Constitution please.</i> <i>This paragraph would therefore read:</i></p> <p><u>'Group B</u> <i>The Church of England.</i></p> <p><i>Three representatives, whom should be nominated by the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education.'</i></p> <p>Members agreed to the proposed change. Action: MB/EN to arrange amendment of the Constitution.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">MB/EN</p>

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<p>4 <u>Minutes of the last SACRE meeting – 12th February 2019</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 12.2.19 were approved and signed by MB. EN retained the signed copy for filing.</p>	
<p>5 <u>Matters arising from the last meeting not addressed elsewhere: -</u> Reference in previous minutes in brackets; new and carried forward actions in bold.</p> <p>(Item 3) EN to update membership records, MB/KS/EN to review replacement union representatives and SS to forward Buddhist Faith contact details – carry forward.</p> <p>(Item 5) - MB will agree new dates for Peter Kendrick’s thank you event – afternoon tea with the Mayor. Done -all agreed that it had been a successful event.</p> <p>(Item 6) - KS to circulate the C of E Mental Health and Wellbeing guidance to all schools in the borough. KS reported that he had circulated the guidance to schools and it had been discussed by secondary Heads.</p> <p>(Item 6) - MB/KS to discuss whether mental health issues are within SACRE’s remit and whether members would like to receive a CCG presentation on the approach to whole school mental health. KS reported that he hadn’t discussed this with MB. After a short discussion all agreed that mental health in schools was not within the remit of SACRE, so no presentation was needed.</p> <p>(Item 6) - KS to circulate Leadership of Character Education document to schools. KS confirmed that this had been sent to schools and that it had been discussed at a routine meeting with secondary Heads; feedback had been very positive.</p> <p>LA asked for further description about character education. KS explained that it was the way in which schools educate children and young people in developing character, for example moral purpose, knowing right from wrong and their place in society; it is also linked to developing young people’s resilience and ability to cope with life. KS added that the new Ofsted framework now focusses on learning beyond the traditional results focussed curriculum; character education is a part of this. KS commented that although the focus of Ofsted may have broadened, the DfE are still judging results. Discussed further in Item 8.</p> <p>(Item 6) - KS to discuss possible ways of celebrating successes with Elizabeth Fitzpatrick and ask primary heads about their interest in character education. See comments above.</p> <p>(Item 7) - KS to advise GM of the date of the next RE coordinators meeting – to be held at the Shree Ghanapathy Temple. Done.</p> <p>(Item 8) - SACRE sub-group of KS, AW and DB to meet with RE leads to progress a faith dialogue project. Done and discussed in Item 6.</p> <p>MF gave an update on the Board of Deputies accreditation scheme for vetted speakers (previous Item 7 -Judaism). MF explained that the scheme was now in use and MF is part of a team of mentors that teach representatives how to present. KS asked whether the scheme had been advertised to schools. MF replied that the Board had generally been responding to requests from schools and other organisations and a list of vetted speakers would be built up over time.</p>	<p>MB/KS /EN</p>

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<p>WA added that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association also had a bank of approved teachers who had studied comparative education. WA added that they respond to requests, but the offer may not be publicised enough.</p> <p>KS reminded members that ideally approved speakers would also have knowledge of the Merton agreed syllabus. Members discussed whether vetted speakers could talk about their own denomination without necessarily having specific knowledge of the syllabus and agreed that it would depend on the nature of each request. All agreed that any presentations should not be divergent from the syllabus.</p> <p>Action WA/MF to email details of approved speakers (with awareness of the syllabus) to KS for sharing with schools.</p> <p>KS handed copies of the agreed syllabus to those who hadn't already received them.</p>	<p>WA/MF/ KS</p>
<p>6 <u>Future SACRE projects – a faith dialogue project</u></p> <p>AW reported that a working group of AW/DB/KS and members of staff from interested schools had met in April at Roehampton University. The proposal is to adapt the format of the higher education 'Conversation for the Soul' project. Ursuline, Wimbledon College, St Mark's, South Thames College have expressed an interest in taking part. Active members of local faith groups will also be invited to join but their involvement will be routed through one of the participating schools.</p> <p>AW explained that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will be for Year 12 (Lower 6th) students. • Students will work together in small groups (of four) rather than in pairs. • There will be a launch event (autumn term), out of which the conversation groups will emerge. SACRE members will be advised of the launch date. • There will be four twilight (4.30pm) discussion events (one in the autumn term, two in the spring term and one in the summer term), to be held in different places of worship – e.g. the Hindu Temple, the Synagogue, Mitcham Parish Church and the Wimbledon Mosque. (WA offered the AMA as a possible venue). • Each session will include an introduction to the place of worship and resources will be provided to promote discussion (a different theme will be suggested for each session). • There will be a closing session in the summer term for students to share learning and insights. • Teachers will need to support young people throughout, to help maintain the structure of the project. <p>Members discussed the proposals and raised the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of participants are unknown, but it is likely that six schools will take part with perhaps six students from each school. • Support for the project would be needed from chaplaincy services or heads of 6th Form or RE and would be reliant on them having capacity. • The project would need to be promoted and the reasons for taking part made clear. Dates for each session would need to be agreed well in advance and be included on the flier. • Ideally the launch session will take place before 10th October and will be 	

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reported on at the autumn term SACRE meeting. It was agreed that the launch event should take place in the Council Chamber.

- MF advised that holy days should be avoided (end September/October) and WA added that Eid should also be avoided (June).
- Success of the project will depend on diversity of the group and adjustments may be needed if particular faith groups are over or under represented.
- It needs to be made clear on materials that students of no faith are welcome to take part.
- AW confirmed that some of his PGCE students would assist with the project, starting in September.
- It is important to consider how the outcomes of the project will be fed back into schools; this could be formal - participants could act as ambassadors within their schools or informal, by word of mouth.
- It is important that SACRE also receives the feedback; the final session will be held just before the SACRE meeting on 7th July 2020, so that SACRE members can attend.

WA asked what the objective of the project was. AW replied that it offered students the opportunity to gain an insight into different perspectives, to understand each other and to understand society. KS added that the exploratory nature of the learning experience would also be helpful in preparing young people for university.

Actions: The working group (AW/DB/KS) to agree dates and KS to book the Council Chamber for the launch. Flier/ resources out early September and session venues and dates to be confirmed asap.

AW/DB
/KS

Post meeting note – the launch event will be held at the Council Chambers, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX 5pm, Wednesday 2nd October 2019.

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2017-2018 SACRE Annual report

KS presented the draft report for 2017-2018 and noted that part of SACRE's remit is to ensure the quality of RE in schools. KS explained that because RE is not formally reported on he had included relevant extracts from Ofsted reports from all the inspections carried out in 2017-2018 (e.g. comments around spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) aspects, RE and assemblies). KS highlighted some of the extracts, noting the positive the comments around ethos, diversity, difference, faiths, beliefs, cultures, places of worship, online safety, remembrance, respect and tolerance. KS noted that a couple of the extracts commented directly on RE and that there seemed to be more focus on understanding of others than there had been in previous years.

MC asked whether SIAMS inspections were included in the report, as some of them include some useful description. KS/EF replied that the inspection reports were reviewed by SACRE but were not included in the annual report. It was noted that SACRE had not reviewed any Catholic inspection reports. All agreed that it would be useful for SACRE to review all 'Section 48' reports.

KS discussed some of the RE exam data:

- GCSEs were graded under the new system (1 to 9), so it was difficult to compare with the previous year.
- 73% of Year 11s took RE, which was 50 less than the previous year.
- The number of pupils attaining a level 5 or higher was better than the national

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<p>average.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of pupils attaining an 8 or 9 was in line with national average. • The number of pupils taking A' Level RE had fallen from 48 to 31. • The number of pupils attaining B or higher was well above national average. • The number of pupils attaining A* was in line with national average. <p>MB noted that some of the A' Level total figures needed correcting.</p> <p>KS highlighted that only about 30% of primary RE leads had attended the RE coordinators meetings. This has been identified as an area for development and was discussed further in Item 8.</p> <p>Action: KS to finalise the report and EN to forward to NASACRE and DfE.</p>	KS/EN
<p>8 <u>New Ofsted Framework; Implications for SACRE</u></p> <p>Elizabeth Fitzpatrick (EF) explained that the new Ofsted framework will be used from September 2019; the main implication on RE is in the judgement area of 'Quality of Education'. The curriculum will be reviewed in the context of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intent – developing a curriculum that is particular to the needs of the children in each school. • Implementation - quality of teaching and the structure and sequencing of the curriculum. • Impact. <p>EF explained that Merton (School Improvement) is reviewing the quality of support for foundation subjects in preparation for the new Ofsted framework. An area for development is the training of RE leads (particularly primary RE leads) to improve their expert subject knowledge. The borough is proposing to provide an RE subject development course (delivered by the Merton Special School Alliance) and to strengthen RE coordinators meetings; release time for attendance will be addressed and effectiveness of the sessions will be improved by responding to needs and feedback. KS commented that the RE coordinators sessions had improved over 2018-2019.</p> <p>EF invited questions and comments on the proposal:</p> <p>DB/MC asked for further explanation about the Merton Special Teaching Alliance. EF replied that it was an alliance of Perseid and Cricket Green (outstanding Merton special schools). Its teaching support services are not solely for special schools; many schools use them. EF added that the proposed RE support will focus on the borough's non-faith schools.</p> <p>MC asked whether the Alliance training would be free and whether the Alliance has specialism in RE. MC added that the teaching of RE in SDBE schools is very strong. EF replied that there would be a small charge; the courses are generally run at cost. Expert trainers would be sourced from outside the Alliance.</p> <p>AW/MC offered support from Roehampton University and from the SDBE, if needed.</p> <p>KS stressed that any training delivered by the Alliance must be in line with the agreed syllabus.</p> <p>EF explained that Ofsted will continue to inspect RE and collective worship in non-</p>	

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faith schools; this will be done through the 'Section 48' process in most faith schools.

KS suggested that the Ofsted judgement area of 'Personal Development' may also be influenced by the impact of a school's religious and character education.

DB explained that Ursuline's recent mock Ofsted inspections had focussed on the lived experience of pupils and how the school can ensure that pupils leave school as well-rounded individuals. DB added that although it may initially be difficult for teachers to depart from the focus on results, Ursuline is developing its enrichment activities and a broader curriculum to support the new focus. KS commented that unlike Ursuline, some schools have historically provided a narrow experience for pupils; these schools may achieve good exam results but may now be judged ineffective for failing to provide broader learning.

MC added that the Jubilee Centre in Birmingham is also doing a lot of work around character education. MC noted that Ofsted will look at what is being taught and why it is being taught. MC added that some schools, especially non-faith schools, may find this difficult to articulate.

KS suggested that Ofsted may now report more on the quality of RE, as it has an impact on the new judgement areas. EF added that adjustment in capacity and expertise may be needed for Ofsted to do this.

9 **Any other business**
None.

10 **Dates of next meetings**

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

7.15pm, Thursday 10th October 2019 – C of E school (MC to confirm)

7.15pm, Tuesday 11th February 2020 - Synagogue (MF to confirm)

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

Chair of Merton SACRE.....

date.....