

Evaluating The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Guidance

2012

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Abbreviations

ACL	Adult and Community Learning
BIS	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
EA 2010	Education Act 2010
ECM	Every Child Matters
fbfe	National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education
FE	Further Education
LSIS	Learning and Skills Improvement Service
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
SFA	Skills Funding Agency
SMSC	Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural
SMSCG	Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Guidance
WBL	Work Based Learning

Evaluation of the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Guidance:

Executive Summary

a. Introduction

- a.1. The National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education(**fbfe**) is a national, independent, inter-faith charity, working with the learning and skills sector, faith and local communities and national and local faith/belief based groups. **Fbfe** exists to support the learning and skills sector respond positively to issues of faith and belief.
- a.2. Guidance on spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education for the learning and skills sector was published by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) in March 2010. The research outlined in this report was commissioned by LSIS to evaluate the extent to which:
- the guidance has been recognized and implemented in colleges
 - the context in which SMSC is delivered in colleges has changed since 2010
 - the guidance has proved appropriate for the diversity of management, teaching and learning situations found in settings such as work-based learning (WBL) and adult community learning (ACL)

and identify what further action is required to facilitate the evolution of SMSC in colleges.

b. Changing Context

- b.1. Since the guidance was published the context in which SMSC education is delivered in colleges has changed significantly, and continues to change, in response to:
- the Equalities Act 2010 and the obligations placed upon colleges by the Public Sector Equality Duty
 - priorities of the new coalition government designed to create “a freer more user-focused further education and skills sector that can make a major contribution to economic recovery”.(BIS 2010)
 - a new Ofsted Inspection Framework for Learning and Skills, which has removed most of the previous specific references to SMSC and the limiting grade for equality and diversity

- trends in religion and culture, whereby faith has become political, associated with division and conflict and therefore an issue to be avoided by education providers.

c. Results from Further Education Colleges

- c.1. Responses were sought through a questionnaire, which was circulated to a random sample of 50 colleges and achieved a better than average response rate of 30%. Responses from 7 colleges were followed up with a face to face structured interview. An evaluation of the evidence received in response to the key questions posed to colleges is presented below.
- c.2. How have colleges responded to the SMSC guidance.?
- c.3. Overall reactions to the guidance appear to be favourable. An overwhelming majority of respondents (85%) acknowledged that the guidance was easy to understand and that it complemented existing activities in the college (92%). Around half of respondents reported that it had either been discussed by the governing body (46%) or the senior management team (54%). Cross-reference analysis confirms that these trends were strongest in colleges where responsibility for SMSC was delegated to a college chaplaincy and included in the college's equalities plan. Having a college chaplaincy, or a specific equality and diversity management responsibility, does appear to act as a catalyst for promoting and developing the SMSC agenda.
- c.4. Responses confirmed that SMSC provision was most commonly provided through student tutorials (85%), enrichment activities (77%) and pastoral care support services (62%).
- c.5. How are resources allocated to SMSC education?
- c.6. Most respondents (77%) reported that responsibility for SMSC was allocated to one person or a team. Tracking of SMSC responsibilities was most usually undertaken through self-assessment processes (85%) and preparation for inspection (62%). A small minority, (15%) reported that SMSC was included in their performance management processes. 46% reported that financial resources for SMSC were not specifically identified, but included in a wider generic budget heading.
- c.7. A majority of colleges reported that their SMSC education activities included significant consultation with, and involvement of, key stakeholders such as students (77%), staff (54%) and local communities (62%).

c.8. What additional resources are needed to further support the implementation of the guidance?

c.9. The greatest need identified by respondents was for more staff training and resources, such as toolkits, to support staff training (77%). Significant numbers of respondents also identified the need for increased financial (54%) and human (39%) resources to support SMSC education.

d. Results from Work Based Learning (WBL) and Adult Community Learning (ACL) providers.

d.1. Questionnaires seeking initial reactions and comments on the guidance were circulated to 10 WBL and 10 ACL providers, achieving a response rate of 25%. Three respondents agreed to a follow up qualitative interview.

d.2. All the responses from both ACL and WBL providers stated that they had not previously seen the SMSC guidance. However all reported an initial reaction that the guidance was easy to understand, and 60% indicated that they intended to use it. 20% confirmed that the guidance complemented work they were already undertaking. When asked whether or not SMSC was acknowledged in any way in their institution, 80% said that it was. When asked to explain how, responses showed that for most it meant addressing the social, moral and cultural aspects to equality, rather than the specific faith and belief dimension. These findings suggests that for many SMSC is currently an undeveloped aspect of provision.

d.3. Respondents also commented upon the implications of the different circumstances in which learning as delivered in ACL and WBL compared with colleges, particularly the preponderance of part-time staff and students and the involvement of employers.

d.4. When asked about the type of support required to assist the implementation of the SMSC guidance, respondents referred most frequently to staff training and materials to support training, more human resources and strategies to increase student and community involvement.

e. Recommendations

e.1. The National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education (fbfe) should collaborate with sector stakeholder organisations and providers to:

- emphasise to the Learning and Skills sector the value of SMSC's potential contribution to Equality and Diversity, college vision and mission and the preparation of students as future employees, supervisors, managers, parents and citizens.
- produce appropriate SMSC guidance for the WBL and ACL sectors in partnership with sector stakeholder organisations and providers
- address the apparent absence of SMSC from the delivery of accredited courses
- develop a database of SMSC good practice and resources hosted on the fbfe web site

f. The potential of SMSC education to benefit students and provider organisations could be increased by :

f.1. F.E. Colleges

- maintaining work to implement the responsibilities arising from the Equalities Act 2010 and the associated public sector duties, particularly with regard to faith and belief
- ensuring that responsibilities and resources are allocated for the inclusion of SMSC education in accredited courses, tutorials and enrichment activities.

f.2. ACL providers

- implementing the responsibilities arising from the Equalities Act 2010 and the associated public sector duties, particularly with regard to faith and belief
- developing SMSC learning opportunities which are consistent with the needs of learners and the characteristics of teaching, learning and management in this sector.

f.3. WBL providers

- developing the capacity and resources necessary to ensure the effective inclusion of equalities, SMSC issues and citizenship skills in the specifications for all courses.

Evaluation of the Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural Guidance for the Learning and Skills Sector

1. The Guidance: A Brief Overview

1.1. The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Guidance (SMSCG) was developed for the learning and skills sector by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) on behalf of the department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS). A copy of the guidance is attached as Appendix D. The guidance was completed and published March, 2010. This guidance seeks to highlight the relevance of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development for the learning and skills sector, and to provide support on how to plan, deliver, and assess appropriate SMSC development. As such it recognises the multi-racial, -cultural and –faith background values of communities in contemporary Britain and attempts to traverse the ethical and moral maze to generate a framework within which the further education sector can develop appropriate responses.

1.2. In so doing it covers new ground because at the wider public sector level there were, at the time of development, no complementary guides which could be referenced. Nor in further education is there the mandatory delivery of spiritual, moral, social and cultural matters which successive Education Acts since 1944 have required in schools.

1.3. The nature of the guidance, therefore, is advisory and non-prescriptive. It takes its cue from SMSC guidance written for schools and the numerous equality based guides and good practice codes

generated over the forty plus years of equalities' development in the UK. These attempt to set a framework for developing the necessary structural, procedural, and process changes to enhance and embed equality responsibilities. More importantly in trying to delineate the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the learner environment, as well as the wider public sector, the guidance actually also amplifies the often just-below-the –horizon background values that provide the motivation for enhancing equality development.

1.4. The guidance was originally intended to provide strategic guidance for:

- Educational institutions in learning and the skills sector
- Those responsible for the planning, delivery, monitoring and assessment of provision to promote the SMSC development of learners and trainees by learning and skills providers

1.5. Unfortunately, due to budgetary restrictions, hard copies of the guidance could only be distributed to further education colleges. Hence the purpose of this evaluation is to determine the impact of the guidance on further education colleges, and to gain an idea of the relevance of the guidance to those areas omitted, i.e. work based learning providers and adult and community learning providers.

1.6. The structure of the guidance, therefore, reflects the overall intent at persuasion through recourse to dialogue and the need to respond positively to the then current and impending equalities' legislation, as well as the supporting government initiatives. In terms of the latter, at the time of developing the guidance, six important initiatives were identified as either complementing the SMSC guidance, or assisting in enhancing the achievement of the SMSCG aims:

- Learner voice initiatives generally, but also particularly under the auspices of the equalities' legislation, reinforced the need to engage with the sector over SMSC issues

- Government learning and skills initiatives then stressed the need for a broader curriculum approach away from a narrow employability skills one to that which included necessary 'soft skills', such as the value base of SMSC
- Developing properly the SMSC agenda could help providers better achieve the Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes
- The OFSTED Common Inspection Framework had then a substantive SMSC component, as well as a complementary equality and diversity expectations where the failure to achieve the relevant standard in the latter, could result in a limiting grade.
- The then existing raft of equalities' legislation included the UK adaptation of the EC Directive on faith and belief, and whilst that lacked the public sector duty component of the race, sex and disability anti-discriminatory acts, the Equality Act, 2010 and its specification of a faith and belief protected characteristic, was on the horizon.
- The community cohesion agenda and the 'Prevent' agenda and the obvious contribution that SMSC issues could play in their achievement.

1.7. In sum the guidance was not intended as a stand-alone initiative, but as one that could be explicitly integrated with a number of interdependent anti-discriminatory and learner enhancing measures in the learning and skills sector. It was also unique in trying to map out what could be described as a reference vista of likely background elements to SMSC issues so that those at whom the guidance was aimed could have a resource and vocabulary to be proactive on these issues. Supporting this, in the guidance's appendix, was an aide memoir comprised of likely action points linked to the Common Inspection Framework and other assessment models that could be considered if the guidance was to be implemented properly by the relevant institutions.

1.8. The success of the guidance, in terms of acceptance and implementation, depended, in part then, on the stability and continuance of the supporting framework within which it was situated. To a large extent this has, however, changed.

2. The Equalities' Legal Framework

2.1. The Equality Act, 2010, recognises nine protected characteristics.

2.2. The protected characteristics

- The following characteristics are protected characteristics :
 - age
 - disability;
 - gender reassignment;
 - marriage and civil partnership;
 - pregnancy and maternity;
 - race;
 - religion or belief;
 - sex;
 - sexual orientation.

2.3. The Act prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination , as well as victimisation and harassment.

2.4. The General Equality Duty

2.4.1. The public sector equality duty is made up of a general equality duty supported by specific duties. The general equality duty applies to 'public authorities'. Further advice about who this includes is provided in the next section.

2.4.2. In summary, those subject to the general equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

2.4.3. These are often referred to as the three aims of the general equality duty. The Equality Act explains that the second aim (advancing equality of opportunity) involves, in particular, having due regard to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

2.4.4. It states that meeting different needs includes (among other things) taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities. It describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It explains that compliance with the general equality duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others.

2.5. The Specific Duties

2.5.1. The specific duties were created by secondary legislation in the form of regulations. These relate to the specific duties for England (and non-devolved public authorities in Scotland and Wales). In summary, each listed authority is required to:

2.5.2. Publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the general equality duty. This needs to be done no later than 31 January 2012, and at least annually after that, from the first date of publication. Schools pupil referral units, and colleges were required to do this no later than 6 April 2012. This information must include, in particular, information relating to people who share a protected characteristic who are:

- its employees
- people affected by its policies and practices.

2.5.3. Public authorities with fewer than 150 employees are exempt from the requirement to publish information on their employees.

- 2.5.4. The general equality duty is not prescriptive about the approach a public authority should take in order to comply with their legal obligations. The specific duties are limited to requirements about publishing equality information and objectives.
- 2.5.5. Case law on the previous equality duties is still relevant to the public sector equality duty. The following principles, drawn from case law, explain that in order to have due regard properly to the general equality duty aims, each public authority should ensure that:
- 2.5.6. Those who exercise its functions must be aware of the general equality duty's requirements. Compliance with the general equality duty involves a conscious approach and state of mind. General regard to the issue of equality is not enough to comply.
- 2.5.7. The general equality duty is complied with before and at the time a particular policy is under consideration, as well as at the time a decision is taken. A public authority subject to the general equality duty cannot satisfy the general equality duty by justifying a decision after it has been taken.
- 2.5.8. It consciously thinks about the need to do the things set out in the general equality duty as an integral part of the decision-making process. Having due regard is not a matter of box ticking. The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.
- 2.5.9. It has sufficient information. A body subject to the general equality duty will need to consider whether it has sufficient information about the effects of the policy, or the way a function is being carried out, on the aims set out in the general equality duty.
- 2.5.10. It takes responsibility for complying with the general equality duty in relation to all its functions to which the general equality duty applies. Responsibility for the general equality duty cannot be delegated to external organisations that are carrying out functions on its behalf.
- 2.5.11. It consciously thinks about the need to do the things set out in the general equality duty, not only when a policy is developed and decided upon, but when it is being implemented. The general equality duty is a continuing one, so public authorities may need to review policies or decisions in light of the general equality duty, for example if the make-up of service users changes.

- 2.5.12. Although a body subject to the general equality duty is not legally required to keep records of its consideration of the aims of the general equality duty in making decisions, it is good practice to do so and it encourages transparency. If a body is challenged it will be difficult to demonstrate that it has had due regard to the aims of the general equality duty if records are not kept.
- 2.5.13. Whilst the regulatory strength of the previous race, women's and disability duties is no longer explicitly written into the new duties, the good practice from those, such as impact assessments and equality schemes, remain good frameworks within which to translate the new duties into policy and practice.

3. Evaluation Framework

3.1. The reasons for undertaking an evaluation of the guidance are as follows:

- The recognition that the context in which the guidance was originally developed and distributed had changed, and was still changing
- The need, therefore, to reconfigure the impetus for the guidance's implementation in the light of these changes
- The need to assess the impact on, and relevance of, the guidance for further education colleges
- The need to gauge the extent to which the guidance is recognised in colleges
- The need to gain an idea of how the guidance is implemented in colleges
- The need to pick up on good practice examples, especially if the guidance played a part in their development
- The need to find out which improvements are necessary to the guidance in order to maintain its relevance
- The need to ascertain which other resources need to be developed and made available to ensure the continuing evolution of SMSC in the sector
- The need to evaluate the appropriateness of the guidance for learning and skills providers such as work based and adult learning.

3.2. As far as possible the basis to the evaluation was dialogical. That is to say it involved a melding of facts and values of key stakeholders within an evaluators' appreciation of the power context in order to arrive at a picture of the current status of the guidance.

4. Changing Context

- 4.1. Securing the development and implementation of policy or change in practice, especially if these originate externally to institutions, depends on the groundswell of momentum that can be garnered. Legislatively grounded changes, or those that emerge from crises derived enquiries, usually have the greatest impetus for change within a short time period. Others that do not have this advantage, such as the SMSC agenda, rely on ensuring they can mutually support and enhance other complementary initiatives and become part of the mosaic of resources for good practice. There is therefore an admixture of inclusion in relevant regulatory frameworks, such as OFSTED, linkage to corresponding policies, e.g. ECM, the faith and belief component of the equality legislation, and the voluntary willingness of individual institutions in wanting to place SMSC as a priority. Within this scenario the relationship and equilibrium between voluntaristic action and the force of regulatory expectations is important. For example, as the evaluative research for this project shows, having the achievement of good equalities' standards as a determinant to being awarded a limiting grade by OFSTED was quite influential in ensuring that learning and skill providers addressed that responsibility.
- 4.2. The context in which the SMSCG was developed and launched has changed considerably in a number of areas. Part of the evaluation involved examining this and assessing to what extent this was likely to have an impact on the SMSC agenda. A major impetus for this has been the change in government which has seen also a change in priorities reflected in a number of initiatives within the learning and skills sector, as well as in the complementary areas. These can have an adverse impact on the pursuit and implementation of the SMSC agenda in the learning and skills sector, and the question is to what extent the guidance, and/or its strategic, needs to be altered to ensure that it does not slip down the priority ranking.
- 4.3. Information on the changes and their effects, or likely effects came from both secondary sources, and primary evidence from the evaluative research .:

4.4.Changed Government Priorities

4.4.1. The coalition government's policy on further education calls for a "freer, more user-focused further education and skills system which could make a major contribution to economic recovery." (BIS 2010) Learners are placed at the heart of the new changes together with a reconfigured programme of vocational courses in which an increased level of apprenticeships is prominent. However, a substantive element of the new freedoms entails removing "a wide range of restrictions and controls on college corporations, putting colleges on a similar footing to charities operating within the independent/private sector." (BIS, 2011) Reducing the level of secondary arm government agencies in the learning and skills sector also forms part of this streamlined vista. In sum, less financial resources, less regulation, and enhancing learners employability through increasing the opportunities for them to upgrade their work skills, seems to be the order of the day. The question is whether or not there is room in the changes being envisioned, developed and implemented, for also augmenting those skills deemed necessary for full, inclusive citizenship, in itself another government priority.

4.5.Austerity

4.5.1. The public sector financial cutbacks introduced as a result of the new government's austerity measures have significant implications for colleges' resources, as well as affecting the ability of students to pursue further education options. On-going research into the effects of the cutbacks indicate that the impact is being felt in three key areas:

4.5.2. *Learners:*

4.5.3. The abolition of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and the poor implementation of its replacement, the 16-19 bursary, is directly affecting the ability of students to complete their studies and the likelihood of potential students undertaking further education study. Indications are that enrolment for the 2012/2013 academic year are going to be down by

15%. It is students from the poorest areas that are being hardest hit, and the wider social cost of this can be evidenced through the inquiries into, and reviews of, the summer 2011 disturbances in major urban areas in the UK. (Guardian, 2010, 2011, 2012, NUS/UCU, 2011)

4.5.4. As one newspaper reports:

One year on from the scrapping of the education maintenance allowance (EMA), the replacement 16-19 bursary is proving hopelessly inadequate, with staying-on rates plummeting and Barnados warning that young people are "skipping meals to afford the bus to college". It has become increasingly clear as the year has gone on that the scheme is a shoddy, ill thought-through mess that is both degrading to students and appallingly targeted. Analysis by the Guardian also suggests that it has led to a postcode lottery in financial help for the poorest students (Guardian, 2012)

4.5.5. *Courses*

4.5.6. Staff in colleges indicate that, as a direct result of the budgetary reductions, there was a reduction in the number of courses offered, increases in group sizes and, a decrease in the number of hours per course. More importantly the majority of staff involved in this piece of research indicate that the 75% reduction in enrichment funding means that activities directly falling under that funding category are being cut. Tutorial time has also been cut in many institutions. Many of the implementation activities associated with the SMSC agenda and the guidance in particular, such as pastoral care and tutorial time will be directly affected by these changes. (NUS/UCU, 2011)

4.5.7. *Staffing*

4.5.8. Indications are that the financial cutbacks will result in redundancies for both teaching and support staff groups in FE colleges. (Guardian, 2012, Nus/UCU, 2011)

4.5.9. Regulatory Frameworks

4.5.10. There are two regulatory frameworks covering the learning and skills sector. The first pertains to OFSTED and the other to the rules governing funding via the Skills Funding Agency.

4.5.11. At the time of developing the guidance, the 2009 Common Inspection Framework for post 16 gave education SMSC significant prominence which, when allied to the very clear equality expectations contained in the framework, made for a fairly robust level of responsibilities placed on providers shoulders. The 2011 revised framework has had most of those elements removed, including the key one that makes the failure to achieve required equality standards a basis for awarding a limiting grade. (OFSTED, 2010)

4.5.12. The rules governing the European social fund element of the SFA contain certain gender and equal opportunity criteria. However, given the structural changes made to the regional arrangements, it is not clear how rigorously this component will be monitored. (SFA, 2012)

4.5.13. Although the 2012 Ofsted Inspection Project no longer contains explicit references to SMSC, nor a limiting grade on equality and diversity, fbfe has received written assurances that SMSC provision will be a factor which inspectors will be required to consider in their judgements on Teaching and Learning and Leadership and Management. It is to be hoped that the remaining protected characteristics are similarly treated.

4.6. Changed Status of FE Colleges

4.6.1. BIS has re-designated FE colleges as private sector organisations. In effect this could mean that they are no longer subject to the public sector duty. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is of the view that because they deliver public services that are publicly funded, colleges are still subject to the duty. However, the change is cast in terms

of putting them on a similar footing as charities operating within the independent and private sector. There is still a question about what happens should such private sector organisations decide that the duty no longer applies.

4.7. Public Sector Equality Duty

4.7.1. The Equality Act, 2011 came into effect in April, 2011. Whilst there was some disquiet over the strength and likely effectiveness of the proposed public sector duties in the draft bill, the final version of the Equality Act 2010 public sector duty, and allied specific duties, have been considerably weakened from their original intention, and in comparison with the equality duties stemming from the old race, gender and disability pieces of legislation. There is now a greater degree of voluntarism associated with the requirements of the duties. For example, equality impact assessments are no longer explicit and mandatory ones, but, instead, have to be inferred as good practice. (EA, 2010) Until these confusions are resolved, colleges remain required to undertake the actions outlined in para 2.5.2.

4.8. Employability

4.8.1. Both the previous government, and the current, have placed, and are placing ever greater emphasis on employability. That is to say that in general the causes of unemployment are seen to reside more in the skill and other relevant work related qualities of individuals, rather than in structural causes. There is a double-bind that operates under such circumstances: whilst taking on more responsibility for employability should equate with having the broad range of skills and competences to enable individuals to engage constructively with the wider world, the reality of employability in educational institutions often translates into a narrowing of the curriculum and a crowding out of content not directly deemed relevant. As the research shows, this appears to be happening with SMSC matters. Where it retains a firm foothold appears to be related to the extent to which its merits can be converted into business benefits. Despite the strong case made in the SMSCG that elements of religious and cultural literacy are essential for employability, the drive to link curriculum content for the 16-19 year old learners more closely to

employment chances, runs the risk of squeezing out the spaces for the development of SMSC interventions. (BIS 2010, 2011, 2012)

4.9. Religion and culture

4.9.1. Religion and culture, have over the past decade and a half, occupied the public arena in a way that has intertwined belonging and exclusion, especially over issues such as the war on terror. This has put certain religions unfavourably in the spotlight. Claims and counter claims are made about the essential religious nature of the UK, i.e. whether or not it has been, is, and always will be a Christian country. This has also brought to the fore questions about the role of religion and faith in what is claimed to be a secular society. Assertions about secularism displacing religion, made by politicians, muddies the waters by allowing spectators to the debate to assume that secularism equals atheism. In contradistinction claims are then made about the need for a muscular faith framework which is in effect exclusionary because a single religion becomes associated with the nation. As a result faith becomes political, associated with division and conflict, and therefore an issue to be avoided by education providers. . However this is based on a misunderstanding of secularism which in broad terms simply means that issues of faith and belief are private affairs and that in the public sphere no one faith or belief should be given a privileged position. For colleges, as educational institutions this raises issues about the nature of secularism within education, the place of non-religious world-views, and the extent to which colleges should encourage discussion of faith and belief issues as a contribution to community cohesion and the personal development of students. This is more in keeping with the spirit of the Equality Act 2010. (SSRC, 2009)

4.9.2. In sum the political, policy and legislative environment that now impacts on SMSC is quite different to that which existed when the guidance was developed. In acknowledging that difference, the key question that arises is about how SMSC issues and the guidance in particular, can be repositioned to maximise the advantages of the altered context. Part of the answers to this can be seen in the results of the primary research component of the evaluation exercise.

5. Evaluation Methodology

5.1. Three sectors of learning skills were included in the evaluation research: further education colleges, work based learning providers; adult learning providers. In terms of adult learning, given the diversity of the sector which involves a range of differing types of provider, a decision was taken to limit the evaluation to public sector providers. There were four avenues of information gathering pursued. These were:

- Primary source based quantitative survey
- Primary source based back up qualitative interviews
- Primary source qualitative interviews with provider associations
- Secondary source relevant information on SMSC in the learning and skills' sector

5.2. Random samples from lists of FE colleges, work based learning providers and adult learning providers were devised to identify potential participants of, respectively, 50, 10 and 10 learning and skills' sector educational providers.

5.3. Three interviewing schedules were devised: a quantitatively based structured questionnaire for further education colleges; a quantitatively based structured questionnaire for work based and adult learning providers; an aide memoir for the qualitative interviews. (See appendices A, B, and C)

5.4. The questionnaires were structured to try to elicit information from the following areas:

- The initial impact of the guidance
- The institutional recognition of the guidance
- The resources allocated to support the implementation of the guidance
- SMSC and/or SMSCG derived good practice
- Recommended changes to the guidance

- Additional institutional resources required to support the further development and implementation of the guidance

5.5. Within both structured questionnaires participants were asked if their respective institutions would like to be involved in a follow up qualitative interview. In anticipation of a possible low response from those sectors which had not previously been included in the guidance distribution constituencies, a contingency element was built into the research process. This involved using the various provider associations as a possible conduit to the relevant information.

5.6. Information gathering took place over three months. Whilst it was initially envisaged that this process would be shorter, account had to be taken of the fact that participants actually took longer to respond to the invitation to take part. This involved a fairly lengthy process of re-contacting those initially included in the samples, and, in some case, re-issuing the questionnaires.

6. Results

- 6.1. Overall fifteen FE colleges responded, and two each of work based learning and adult learning providers did the same. Of these seven FE colleges and one each from the WBL and ALC providers indicated that they would be prepared to do a follow-up qualitative interview. Response rate for the FE colleges was 30%, which for a postal survey, is better than average.
- 6.2. Geographically, there was a fairly even spread of respondents from across England with 39% from the South east, 23% from the North West, 23% from the Midlands and 15% from the West.
- 6.3. Both work based learning providers were from the North, whilst for adult learning providers there were two from the South east and one North. This is an overall response rate of 25%. Three of these agreed to a qualitative follow-up interview. Interviews were also conducted with relevant work based learning associations and with local authority adult learning departments.

6.4. Further Education Colleges

6.4.1. Initial Impact of the Guidance

- 6.4.2. The initial impact of the guidance was quite important because that could determine how it would be used in the institution. The question allowed for multiple answers. The important answers are those that displayed clusters with the largest values.

Impressions of SMSCG

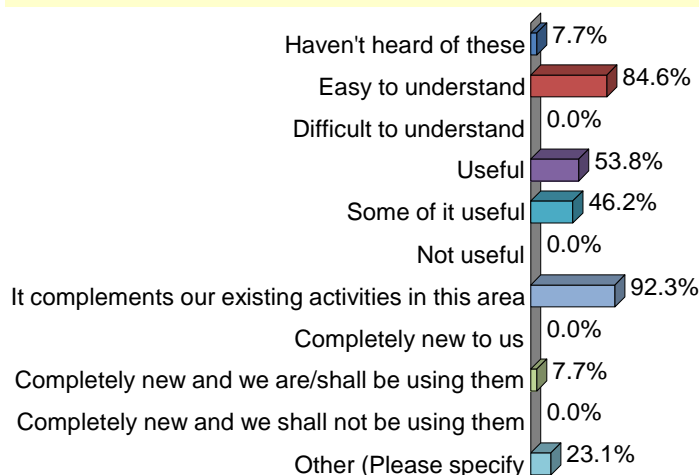


Figure 1 Impressions of SMSCG

6.4.3. Overall the impact of the guidance appears to be favourable. The largest response clusters were around acknowledging that the guidance was easy to understand (85%), and that it actually complemented similar activities in the college (92%). In terms of its usefulness, information clusters hovered around the 50% mark.

6.4.4. What's important is that the guidance actually complemented work that was already being undertaken in the colleges. This might suggest that the resources and bases for continuing the SMSC work under the changed current circumstances might be stronger than anticipated, or that those resources were available then because the context was more supportive.

6.5. Does Recognising the SMSCG as being Complementary to the Organisation's Own Work on SMSC have any Influence?

6.5.1. The answer here is that it appears to be to some extent. For example there are large information clusters around complementarity and inclusion, or intending to include, linked to whether or not the guidance is included in the equalities' plan, and for whether or not the plan has been endorsed or discussed at SMT. Around the issue of financial resources allocation, there are largish clusters linked to all of the budget options, i.e. specific allocation, equalities' budget inclusion, and other generic budgets' inclusion. Similarly when one examines educational provision, the

element of complementarity finds that there are large information clusters for the different types of educational services.

6.5.2. Part of the measures to ascertain the success or not of policy initiatives, especially those that are equality based, is to try to assess the extent to which they are embedded in the institution's everyday functioning. The evaluation looked at three factors:

- Who had responsibility
- Where was it approved and/or discussed
- What resources were allocated to it

6.6. Responsibility for Taking the Guidance Forward.

6.6.1. Analysis of those identified as being responsible for SMSC and SMSCG matters in the respective colleges showed that those charged with chaplaincy (40%) were the largest, followed by student services (27%) and equalities and diversity (27%). Only 7% said that the principal had the overall lead.

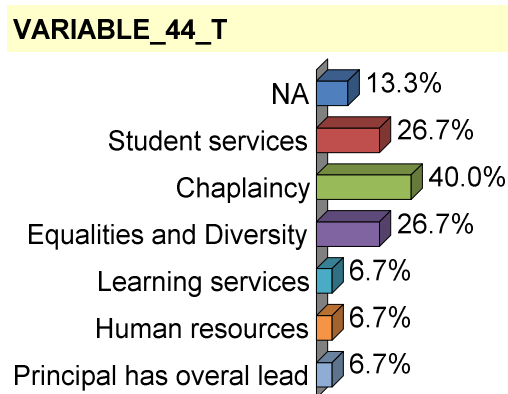


Figure 2 SMSC Responsibility Area

6.7. Does it matter who has responsibility for SMSC issues?

6.7.1. The analysis tends to suggest that where the responsibilities are delegated to the chaplaincy function, then there appears to be more progress. For example where the SMSCG was actually endorsed by the governing body and senior management team (SMT), then the largest proportion of those responsible are to be found in the chaplaincy function. Hence 38% and 33%, of such endorsements, respectively, were where the SMSC responsibilities fell to the chaplaincy. Similar patterns can be discerned in relation to the allocation of resources. Thus where there was a specific allocation of finance for SMSC, 25%, the largest, could be linked back to the chaplaincy function. Similarly in terms of SMSC being a time tabled subject and being part of a qualification accredited course, all of those who said so were in the chaplaincy area. This tendency could also be seen in relation to engagement where those with a chaplaincy responsibility were more likely to be spread across the whole spectrum of listed activities, e.g. 33%+ engaged with staff, students and local communities. Finally, in terms of tracking SMSC through the accountability processes, those from learning services are more likely to include it in the performance appraisal system whilst those in the chaplaincy function are more likely to track it through self-assessment and preparation for OFSTED

6.8. Recognition of the Guidance

6.8.1. There was a series of questions designed to gauge the extent of recognition of the guidance in the college. The priority given to the implementation of equalities' based initiatives in the public sector is usually assessed in accordance with the extent to which it can be seen to be owned by those with the major responsibilities and decision making powers.

6.8.2. In terms of recognition markers, then, participants were asked whether or not the guidance had received any form of endorsement by the governing body and senior management team, and whether or not it was included in the overall college strategy; the equalities' plan; and community cohesion plan.

- 6.8.3. Overall about fifty per cent of participants said that their two most senior decision making bodies had endorsed the guidance in some way. Thus 46% said that the guidance was either fully endorsed or discussed at the governing body level, whilst at the senior management team level, this broke down into 54% for the same categories.
- 6.8.4. Recognition in relation to inclusion in key policies of the institution shows that 39% had included it in their overall college strategy, or business plan, 39% in their equalities' plan, and 15% in their communities' cohesion plan. However, another 20%, on average, intended to include it in those policies. Many of the colleges did not have a community cohesion plan, but had that dimension built into their equalities' strategy.
- 6.8.5. Some of the participants pointed out that the overall issue, i.e. SMSC, was already acknowledged elsewhere, in their equalities and/or safeguarding plans, for example, and thus would not necessarily appear in their strategy.
- 6.8.6. It can be said, on the bases of the results, that the issue of SMSC is recognised by FE colleges, explicitly included in key policies and/or has been discussed at the key senior decision making fora. For example, 46% said that they had either been endorsed or discussed at the governing body level, whilst 54% said similarly with regards to senior management team approval. Likewise 44% said that the guidance had either been included or that they were intending to include it, in the college's strategy plan. There were higher figures for inclusion in the equalities' plan.

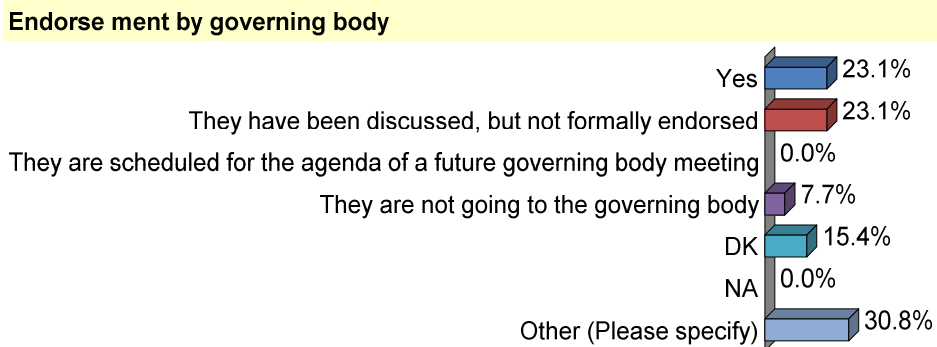


Figure 3 Endorsement by Governing Body

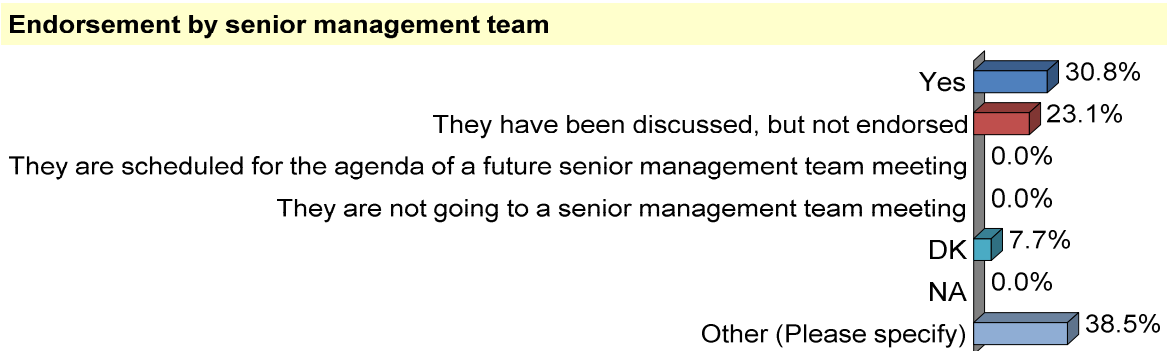


Figure 4 Endorsement by SMT



Figure 5 SMSCG in College Strategy

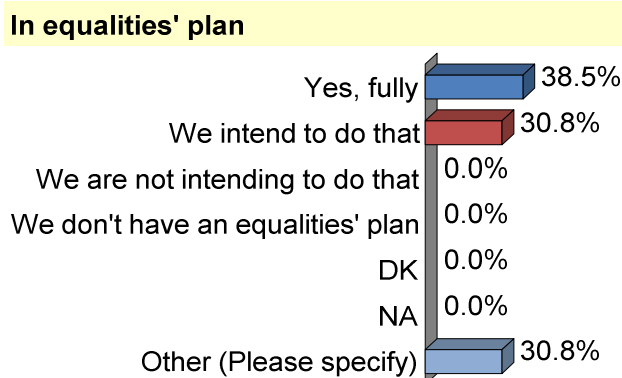


Figure 6 SMSC in Equalities' Plan

6.8.7. Whilst the guidance has been included in this recognition, ideally it would have been hoped that the recognition levels were higher than 60% in all the different elements used as measures. Those that participated in the qualitative interviews, on the whole, confirmed that the guidance had been useful in helping to crystallise the organisational response to SMSC issues. However, delegation of the responsibility at times went down the line to other managers or sections, who then had to pursue the promotion and implementation often alongside a host of other duties. Much, appears to depend, on the extent to which those sections could influence the organisations in the pursuit of equalities, and SMSC, in particular. Recognition of the broader equalities' context, it was felt, was very important, but that had to be tempered, often, by the realisation that the financial situation was resulting in more responsibilities being accrued by individual post holders.

6.9. Does recognition by the senior decision making fora matter?

6.9.1. The answer to this question is that it appears it does. Where participants indicated that they had included SMSC or the guidance in their equalities' plan, then endorsement of SMSC by the governing board (67%), and by the SMT (67%), seem to be influential.

6.10. *Does Inclusion of SMSC in the Equalities' Plan Matter?*

6.10.1. It would appear that it does. Where there is the explicit inclusion of SMSC in the equalities' plan, then that makes it more likely that specific learning development for staff will occur. For example where there was inclusion then the spread of learning activities, including recognition in the performance appraisal process, was greater than where there was the intention to include it at some future date. A similar pattern emerges for the types of engagement undertaken in relation to SMSC. Where there is inclusion in the equality plan, then there is the likelihood of engagement taking place with the full spectrum of stakeholders.

6.11. *Resource Allocation*

6.11.1. One of the criteria for assessing whether or not a policy initiative is properly recognised is that of trying to gauge the level of resources allocated to it. In this case questions were asked that addressed financial, human and allocated time resources.

6.11.2. Because the questions allowed for multiple answers, tendencies are illustrated by the size of response clusters.

6.11.3. Thus the largest cluster regarding the allocation, or not, of financial resources, showed that 46% said they placed the SMSCG under a generic budget heading. The other largest clusters were to be found under the equalities' budget (31%). Only 23% said that they allocated a specific budget for the SMSCG.

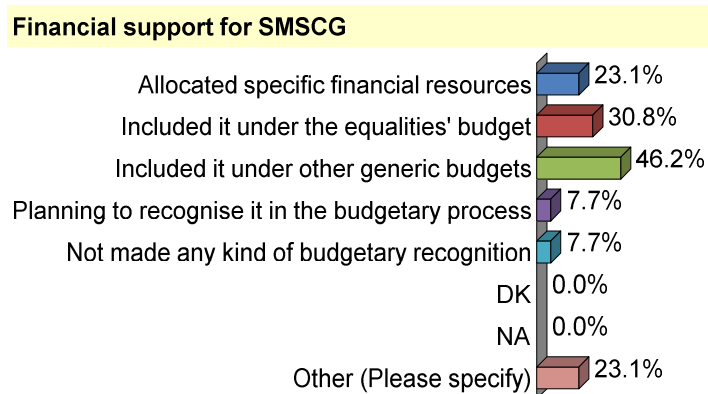


Figure 7 Financial Support

6.11.4. In terms of human resource allocation the largest cluster (77%) said that they either allocated this to one person or a team.

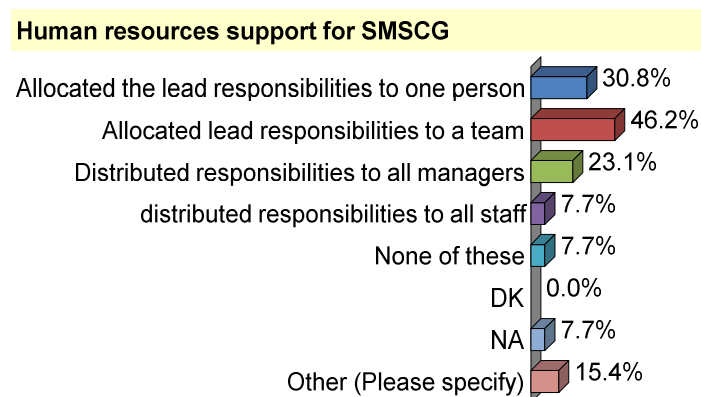


Figure 8 HR Support

6.11.5. In relation to the allocation of internal resources to support the implementation of the SMSCG, one of the largest clusters linked to learning development for staff, was that of running one off seminars and briefings on the issue. Another cluster (31%) involved including SMSC in the learning development programmes for all staff.

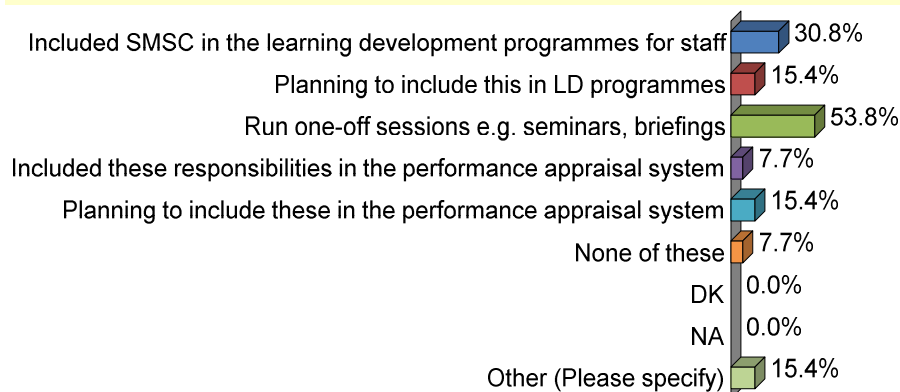
LD support for SMSCG

Figure 9 LD Support

6.11.6. The impact on educational provision concentrates on three main identified forms of activity: 85% inclusion in student tutorials, 77% inclusion in enrichment activities, and, 62% for inclusion in pastoral care support services for students. There was only a 8% information cluster around those citing that it was a specific timetabled element or that it was included in courses for accredited qualifications.

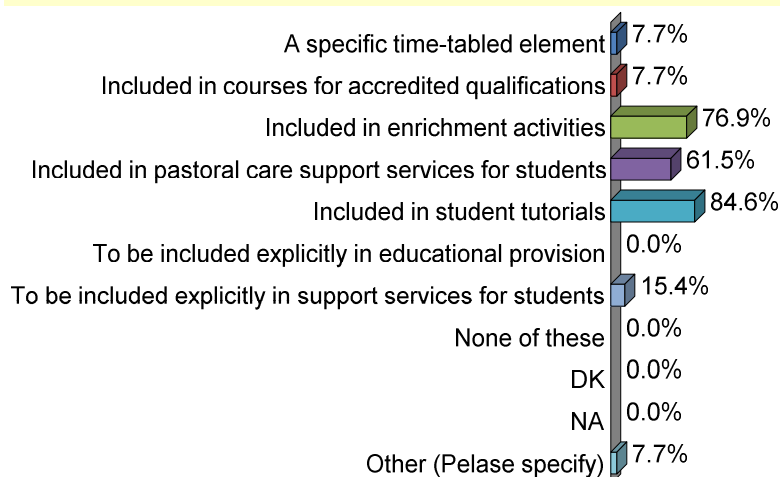
Educational provision and SMSC

Figure 10 Educational Provision

6.11.7. Engagement covers those activities that involve consultation with the major constituent stakeholders, in this case the students, staff and local communities. Responses from colleges indicated that there was a fair degree of this activity. Thus there were clusters around engagement with

students (77%), engagement with communities (62%), and engagement with staff (54%).

Engagement and SMSCG

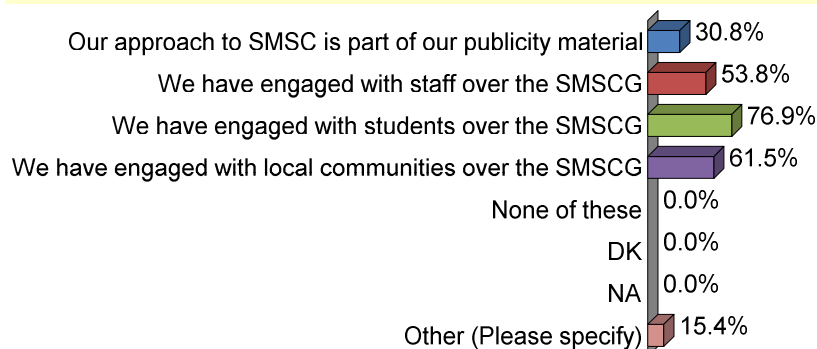


Figure 11 Engagement & SMSCG

6.11.8. Finally, in terms of tracking SMSC responsibilities through the college processes, the largest clusters were to be found in relation to the following: self-assessment processes (85%), and preparation for OFSTED (62%). Only 15% said that SMSC was included in their performance management processes. This confirms the importance of the previous OFSTED framework with its explicit writing in of equality expectations and linking this to a limiting grade if insufficient progress was made. Many in the qualitative interviews, especially those with equalities and chaplaincy responsibilities, expressed concern that the new framework, with the equality dimension diminished, might act as a disincentive to the continuing development of those responsibilities.

Tracking SMSC responsibilities

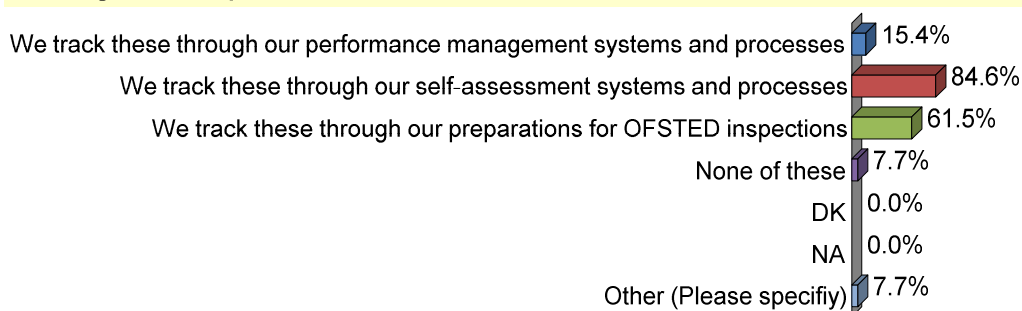


Figure 12 Tracking SMSC Responsibilities

6.11.9. Overall it would appear that SMSC matters and the guidance are fairly well embedded in colleges. On the basis of the figures it can be argued that SMSC stands on the cusp of being seen as a priority, provided the supporting context is there. The information from the qualitative interviews appear to support this. There are three developing scenarios. Those with specific substantive equality responsibilities, in the form of equality manager or adviser posts, highlighted the expanding work on equalities and SMSC that had been undertaken up to the advent of the austerity programmes. Financial cutbacks were having a direct effect on the level of equality resources. Vacant equality posts were unlikely to be filled, and enrichment activities, the opportunity for many SMSC interventions, were being severely curtailed. The participants with chaplaincy responsibilities highlighted similar issues, but stressed that their position of prominence in the relevant colleges meant that they were in a relatively strong position to take forward the faith and belief component, ensuring that in the process other areas of equality were carried forward as well. In one case, the changing supportive context to equalities pursuance was being rebalanced through mapping the impact profile of faith and belief interventions in the college, and work being undertaken in an advisory capacity with other institutions, such as neighbouring universities. In other words increasing the emphasis on the pragmatic benefits accruing from having an explicit SMSC dimension. The last scenario is exemplified by one senior manager who, despite the severe impact of the financial cutbacks, and the perceived de-emphasising of equalities by the new government, was adamant that equalities and SMSC would remain a priority because, with an intake of over 90% from ethnic minority communities, it could not be otherwise.

6.12. *Good Practice Examples*

6.12.1. Forty six per cent of those participating felt that there were no specific SMSC initiatives they could tell us about. However, fifty four per cent cited a number of examples of good practice.

6.12.2. The vast majority of the respondents indicated that work on SMSC matters were being undertaken in the college before the advent of the guidance and that, therefore, the latter was seen as a useful complement rather than a totally new initiative. Whilst, in terms of the information gathered, the work overall can be seen as unevenly developed, there were

examples of good practice which can serve as beacon type references and resources for others. These were either one off learning development events aimed at learners and/or staff, or systemic ones supporting the development of the SMSC agenda in colleges. Key examples are as follows: establishing a multi-faith chaplaincy; inter-faith learner events; establishing an inter-faith learner group; distributing guidance to all staff, backed up by INSET training; religion awareness quizzes; multi-faith room; using the SMSC framework to discuss contemporary issues with learners, e.g. 'terrorism'; respect weeks; tackling far right extremism; regular performance review of equalities, including SMSC; impact analyses of SMSC, and so forth.

6.13. *Equality Impact*

6.13.1. Thirty nine per cent of respondents said that they had included SMSC and/or the guidance in their equalities' plan. Another 31% indicated that they intended to do the same. However all said that they had amended their equality plan, or similar, to take account of the religion and belief protected characteristic specified in the EA 2010. Supplementary to this, 39% indicated that the guidance had been useful in helping them to address the new protected characteristic, whilst another 54% felt it was still too early to say whether or not the guidance would help.

6.13.2. The qualitative interviews allowed some opportunities to flesh out the contours the development and sustaining of equalities, as well as the position of SMSC within that. There were three broad categories of equality framing: those that had equality and diversity specific resources, i.e. post(s) specifically dedicated to that area of responsibility, those that had a strong chaplaincy function, and those that had neither. There were also three associated broad strands of development of the SMSC dimension, including the guidance. Those that had equality specific resources tended to situate SMSC within a fairly robust equality infrastructure in which each of the spiritual, moral, social or cultural strands could be a coalescing axis for action. Where the chaplaincy function strong, the spiritual element, in the shape of faith and belief, was the cutting edge for initiatives, usually dragging in its wake other forms of undertakings associated with the social, moral or cultural aspects. Where there was neither equality specific resources nor a chaplaincy function, those responsibilities tended to fall to middle management posts where, on

the whole, SMSC matters were incorporated into the equality strategy as and when necessary.

6.13.3. The contour of equality and SMSC pursuit in these responses is confirmed by the further analysis undertaken of the survey data. The analysis tends to suggest that where the responsibilities are delegated to the chaplaincy function, then there appears to be more progress. For example where the SMSCG was actually endorsed by the governing body and SMT, then the largest proportion of those responsible are to be found in the chaplaincy function. Hence 38% and 33%, of such endorsements, respectively, were where the SMSC responsibilities fell to the chaplaincy. Similar patterns can be discerned in relation to the allocation of resources. Thus where there was a specific allocation of finance for SMSC, 25%, the largest, could be linked back to the chaplaincy function. Similarly in terms of SMSC being a time tabled subject and being part of a qualification accredited course, all of those who said so were in the chaplaincy area. This tendency could also be seen in relation to engagement where those with a chaplaincy responsibility were more likely to be spread across the whole spectrum of listed activities, e.g. 33%+ engaged with staff, students and local communities. Finally, in terms of tracking SMSC through the accountability processes, those learning services are more likely to include it in the performance appraisal system whilst those in the chaplaincy function are more likely to track it through self-assessment and preparation for OFSTED.

6.13.4. When asked whether or not there had been any occurrences of conflict between aspects of the SMSC agenda and other strands of equality, only 23% indicated that there had been some element of conflict as a result of this. All of these involved a tension between religion and belief and sexual orientation. Solutions to this were sought primarily in terms of facilitating more discussion amongst those directly affected, but ensuring that in so doing there is an effective management of such situations within the framework of the EA 2010. However, the question that arises is whether or not the legislative need for public sector organisations to make faith and belief an equality priority alongside the other protected characteristics, will result in more issues with the potential for conflict, arising.

6.14. *Amending the SMSCG*

6.14.1. In terms of the answers to the structured questionnaire, only 48% offered suggestions on how the guidance could be better amended. However all of those involved in the qualitative interviews put forward helpful suggestions. In the main these referred more to the development of the SMSC agenda rather than direct amendments to the guidance. Most felt that the guidance was good as an overall strategy which could be referred to. Emerging from this some felt that as an everyday operational document that it was perhaps too 'wordy' and that a complementary bullet pointed, regularly updated actions' list would help, especially for those not directly involved in policy matters, but more in operational service areas. The 'self-auditing' element of the guidance could be a basis for this. All of those putting forward suggestions were agreed that there needs to be more examples of good practice that could be shared. This included recognising and using those colleges which were more advanced in this area. In a development from this, some wanted quick and easy access to good practice help, and/or support activities that might be taking place. Mention was made of the need for a continually updated web based resource which could meet these needs, including, from most, relevant toolkits. Other suggestions covered using complementary web based resources, such as podcasts and 'Youtube' as easily accessible conduits to good practice examples.

6.14.2. The fast changing environment of the learning skills sector was also identified as a reason for some of the change suggestions. In particular impacting issues such as the financial situation, the non-renewal of equality specific resources in colleges, the perceived demotion of equalities in the OFSTED regulatory framework, and so forth, meant that picking up the challenge of SMSC will, increasingly be left to individual managers and allied stakeholders. There is a need, therefore, to ensure that they have ready access to support resources to help them take forward equality responsibilities.

6.15. Additional Resources

6.15.1. In part the suggestions for improving the SMSCG are supported by the answers participants gave to the question asking them what further resources they wanted to help pursue the SMSC agenda. Again, since there are multiple answers to the question posed, the largest response clusters are more relevant.

6.15.2. Thus the largest cluster is to be found around the need for more training resources, such as toolkits (77%). Further large clusters are those related to more training (62%), more financial resources (54%) and more human resources (39%). By far, the greatest need however, appears to be that for more training support.



Figure 13 Support Resources

7. The SMSCG and the Adult And Community, and Work Based Learning Providers

7.1. Environment

7.1.1. Whilst the full gamut of adult learning covers a range of educational contexts, from higher education to the independent sector, including voluntary groups, this evaluation focuses primarily on what was termed ‘informal adult education’, but in the public sector.. This has now been classified by the coalition government as ‘community learning’. It covers “a broad range of learning that brings together adults, often of different ages and backgrounds, to pursue an interest, address a need, acquire a new skill, become healthier or learn how to support their children.” The Coalition Government has put on record its commitment to lifelong learning, “Adult learning has a really important role to play in encouraging active citizenship..”, and, “Education for education’s sake – learning how to learn – benefits the economy in the long term. Philistinism is bad economics. It is also fundamentally unacceptable.”. (BIS, 2011) The government have embarked on a review of community learning highlighting a number of key possible reform areas, including access, funding and infra-structure. In 2011 the announcement was made of an intention to pilot “different locally-based ‘community learning trust’ models in 2012/13 to channel BIS funding for community learning and lead the planning of local provision in cities, towns and rural settings.” These trusts are seen to be able to embody the government’s vision for community learning which is:

- Maximise access to community learning for adults, bringing new opportunities and improving lives, whatever people’s circumstances.
- Promote social renewal by bringing local communities together to experience the joy of learning and the pride that comes with achievement.
- Maximise the impact of community learning on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities. (BIS, 2011)

- 7.1.2. Written explicitly into the assessment criteria for proposals is the need for there to be a clear statement about how equalities and diversity are part of the considerations in relation to the changes envisaged.
- 7.1.3. It is recognised that community learning providers cover public, not for profit, private and volunteer arrangements. This evaluation concentrated on the public element in the form of specialist adult learning colleges and local authority adult learning departments, by far the largest provider agencies. Both of these areas should have been, in theory, exposed to, and participated in, development of the larger organisation's response to the public sector duties' responsibilities. Taken together then, there is an expectation that the public sector based adult learning provision will have the equality infra-structure to have picked up on the SMSC agenda, as well as the new government's expectation that such issues will be explicitly addressed in the changes being pursued.
- 7.1.4. Work based learning interventions in the learning and skills sector come through a range of organisations, including higher and further education institutions. This evaluation focusses primarily on the independent work based learning providers. Work based learning describes a multiplicity of approaches by which one can learn through work. Over the past few years government initiated reviews, such as the Leitch Review and the Wolf Review, with their emphasis on the need to increase and improve the level of skills in the workforce generally, but particularly in the immediate post-15 age group, have increased the scope for learning providers whose services are more closely linked to work place improvements. As such work based learning "is commonly taken to refer to structured learning opportunities which derive from, or which are focused on, the work role of individuals within organisations." They involve, in principle, a collaboration between the employer, provider, and learner-worker. The extent to which equalities, and in this case, SMSC, is written into the learner development actions, is dependent upon the employer recognising the need and writing that into the specification, the learner demanding it, the explicit strength of the regulatory framework, i.e. OFSTED, and the capacity of the provider to be able to deliver that dimension.
- 7.1.5. The guidance was not circulated to the ACL and WBL sectors. For the agencies participating, then, the first many of them saw of the guidance was when it arrived with the questionnaire.

7.2. Initial Impression of the Guidance

7.2.1. For both the adult learning institutions and work based learning providers, the impressions of the guidance showed that all found it easy to understand. Whilst the guidance was new to all, 60% indicated that they would be using it. Only 20% said that it complemented the work they were undertaking, indicating that for many SMSC had not been addressed. All said it was either useful, or partially useful. There is a basis then for taking forward SMSC in these areas either through the guidance as it stands, or through amended versions more suitable to those respective environments.

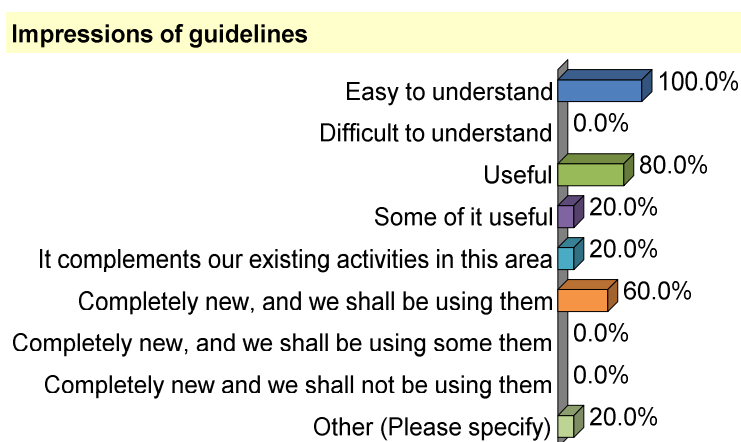


Figure 14 ACL/WBL Impressions of SMSCG

7.3. Acknowledgement of SMSC

7.3.1. However, when asked about whether or not SMSC was acknowledged in any way in their organisation, 80% said that it was. When asked to say how, the responses showed that for most it meant addressing the social, moral and cultural background aspects to equality, rather than the specific faith and belief dimension. Examples include the following:

‘As an Adult Learning provider we do not necessarily use the term SMSC. However SMSC development is addressed to some extent actively in our equality and diversity strategy. The College offers courses that are designed to promote wider cultural understanding. In 2010/11 these included: " Black History " Colonialism, Slavery and South Yorkshire " What is Fair Trade? " International Development "

Refugees, Myths and Media " Understanding Equal Opportunities " Exploring globalisation " Women of the World " Understanding Mental Health " Introduction to race, ethnicity and diversity The college celebrates and promotes diversity through a changing programme of displays to mark such events as: " Black History Month " Disability History Month, " Lesbian, Gay and Transsexual History Month, " World Religion Day " International Women's Day/Women's History Month " World Health Day " World Day for Cultural Diversity and Development " World Environment Day " World Refugee Day During Disability History Month, a number of events were held to encourage wider understanding of disability issues across the College Community, for example, the screening of a film about living with Dyslexia and a Human Library event where students volunteered to share their experiences of different disabilities.'

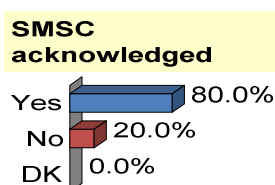


Figure 15 ACL/WBL Acknowledgement of SMSC

7.4. Amendment of Equality Policy

- 7.4.1. All the participating agencies had adapted their equality policy to take account of the new EA 2010 protected characteristics, including the faith and belief element. However, only 20% said that the guidance had helped in amending that policy. The rest felt that it was too early to say.

7.5. Conflicts?

7.5.1. Clashes between differing aspects of the equality dimension was acknowledged by 20%. The issues here were that of staff recognising and owning the area of sexuality in relation to their everyday responsibilities, particularly monitoring and collection of data related to sexuality, i.e. a refusal on the part of some to actually undertake such monitoring. This was part of an on-going discussion by the equality specialists in those institutions with the staff groups

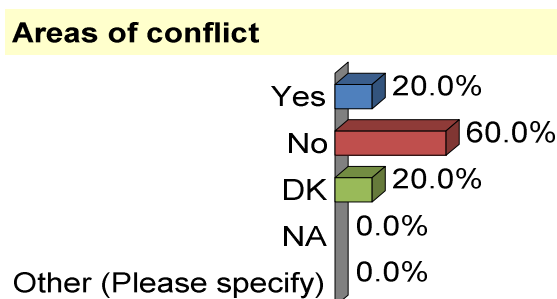


Figure 16 ACL/WBL Conflicts

7.6. Improvements to guidance

7.6.1. In terms of improving the guidance and making it more relevant to their organisation's needs, most of those taking part had suggestions for taking the guidance forward. Examples included the following:

- It should be part of work based learning and we should get this information and support in the same way that FE can access it. I didn't know about it but when I'd read the booklet I asked a Chaplain at an E&D conference and he said their brief had been FE only.
- A specific section for Adult Learning Providers
- More operational guidance and more linkage to good practice elsewhere

- Executive summary so that frontline staff can use; can then place it on moodle. Use of other media, such as podcasts, and e-learning, would help.

7.6.2. When asked about what type of support might be useful to help implement the SMSC agenda, and guidance in particular, there were large clusters around training, especially the need for toolkits, more human resources, and also the desire to see more student and community involvement and support, more so than in the same answers provide by the FE colleges.

7.7. Implementation Support



Figure 17 ACL/WBL Support Resources

7.8. Other information

- 7.8.1. Finally participants were more prepared to provide further information about SMSC and their general concerns.
- 7.8.2. For some the OSTED recognition of their achievements vis-à-vis equalities was an incentive to build in the dimension of SMSC and the guidance was seen as a good and invaluable help in this. For others developing equalities and diversity was interpreted as a slow process. As a result SMSC was, up to that point, a background issue never explicitly drawn out. In this particular case, an adult learning college, the nature of the student population was seen as a particular problem because many attended for only a few hours a week. Nevertheless developing a proactive stance on SMSC was being worked into their equalities planning, even if the college felt that it would have to wait for issues to arise. Others, however, had fairly well developed structures for dealing with what had been up to recently, the main equality priorities, viz. race, gender and disabilities. SMSC had not really been considered by them. Within this a few raised the issue of teachers seeing such initiatives as adding to their workload and that more balance was needed.
- 7.8.3. In the qualitative interviews a number of other important issues were raised. Firstly there was the acknowledgement that the financial cutbacks were having a knock on effect on the institutions' abilities to take forward equalities. An example was proffered by one of the WBL providers that a lack of money meant not being able to pay for external chaplains to work with students. Mention was also made of the government's mixed messages on equality and faith, and the uncertainty this was generating. There was the fear that a 'less tight' message on the importance of equalities could be seen as a green light for downscaling the response to such responsibilities. As with the situation for further education colleges, the commitment to such work might increasingly come down to the voluntaristic action of dedicated individuals, rather than to systemic embedding. Finally there was a reiteration of the importance of, and impact made by, the previous OFTED regulatory framework in which equalities' development was linked to a limiting grade. It was stressed that this was a real incentive for organisations to get to grips with such issues, especially those, such as independent WBL providers, who might drift in and out of the public sector depending on which contract they are undertaking.

8. Conclusion

8.1. There are four elements to the conclusion which are set out below.

8.2. Has the context in which the Guidance was first developed changed?

8.2.1. The answer to this is in the affirmative; the changes can be seen to be less supportive to the SMSC agenda and its immediate equalities' paradigm. The austerity programme introduced by the Coalition government, and the impact on the learning skills sector, as evidenced by the cutbacks in student support, enrichment budgets, and staff reductions, are having a knock-on effect. The diminished equalities' regulatory framework currently being used by OFSTED is likely to disincentivise the sectors' institutions willingness to enhance equalities and SMSC initiatives. Apropos the latter, whilst there is a separate written assurance from OFSTED about the intention to include SMSC as an explicit element in their inspections, there is a complementary need to ensure that this extends to the other protected characteristics. The final version of the public sector duties of the Equality Act 2010 is much weaker than anticipated and certainly less strong than its predecessors. Government messages on equality seem contradictory, and on faith unnecessarily nationalistic. Taken all together it would appear that there is, with regards to equalities' work in the public sector, and thus for SMSC, a move back towards a more voluntaristic approach, reminiscent of the pre-public sector duty era, and therefore, a move away from clear normative expectations of suitable action.

8.2.2. What is required, then, is a carrying forward of the Guidance, and the overlapping contexts in which it directly nestles, SMSC and equalities, by maximising the potential of the new equality duties, reconnecting to more relevant government policies and initiatives, such as the equality and diversity criteria for the proposed new community learning trusts, and cementing, expanding and facilitating SMSC networks in the learning and skills sector. This will enable the maximum amount of stakeholders the quick and easy access to resources that can underpin the everyday implementation of the Guidance.

8.3. What is the current status of the Guidance?

8.3.1. It is clear from the results of the primary research evaluation that the guidance has been well received by FE colleges, and is viewed favourably by the relevant institutions in the ACL and WBL provider sectors, even though they were not part of the original distribution profile. It is seen as being both accessible and useful, especially as a strategic initiative in the SMSC field which can complement the work already being undertaken, or be a framework for endeavours still to be carried out. However, taking it into its next evolutionary phase will require a few addendums to align it better with the ACL and WBL sectors, an updating of the changing context, and an expansion of the types of media through which the practice implications can be more easily made available.

8.4. What has the implementation of the Guidance and SMSC initiatives revealed?

8.4.1. Evaluating the Guidance and the prominence of SMSC matters in the constellation of functions undertaken by institutions in the learning and skills sector reveals a number of interesting and inter-connected threads. The first is that having an explicit stand-alone chaplaincy and/or equality and diversity function does appear to act as a catalyst for promoting and developing the SMSC agenda and related equality infra-structure. This is certainly true for FE colleges and there is an intimation of that in the ACL and WBL sectors, where the presence of, or access to, equality resources has, in the first instance, supported equalities' progress, if not SMSC issues directly. In the FE sector those colleges with these functions appear to have been more successful in ensuring that, for example in the case of the guidance, it was approved by the senior decision making bodies, had earmarked financial, human and learning resources allocated, and that there was an above average engagement level of activities with key stakeholders.

8.4.2. Likewise the SMSC dimension was also included in the institution's overall strategy and equalities' plan. This inclusion also appeared to influence the embedding actions outlined above. In other words, one reinforces the other.

8.4.3. Importantly, as demonstrated by one college with a very well developed chaplaincy function, the relevance and need for a SMSC dimension can be translated very effectively from strategy into the everyday implications, for most courses. It provides a ‘real-world’ footing that helps to realise that achieving a multi-racial and -cultural society is built on an accretion of small reciprocal acknowledgements, dialogue, and action.

8.5. What type of additional help is needed to secure the further embedding of the SMSCG

8.5.1. What is clear from the responses from all three areas, particularly the ACL and WBL ones, is the need for more training interventions. Particular emphasis was placed on the need for resources, such as toolkits. The other area of support flagged up was the need for more support from, and engagement with, communities, students and staff. To some extent this is reinforced by the equality duties, and the stated intentions of the government in relation to community learning. Within the learning and skills sector there does not appear to be any guidelines or overall expectation that engagement programmes are necessary and essential. However, the higher education sector is developing an engagement model based on these assumptions. This envisages institutions developing a strategy on engagement that includes a sense of purpose, leadership at all levels, reward and recognition for staff and students, listening and learning, involving the public, involving students, and, joining it all up. Engagement then, is not simply exiled to the equalities’ periphery, but is fundamental to the overall orientation of the institution.

8.5.2. Finally to the participants’ perspectives on the further help required, can be added the need for a clearer statement of support for equalities and the issue of SMSC from the government, and a translation of this into the various support and regulatory bodies, particularly OFSTED.

9. Recommendations

9.1. Learning Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)

9.1.1. The core of the guidance should remain the same, but with either an amended contextual section, or a separate forward which updates the situation.

9.2. National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education (fbfe)

9.2.1. The following should be developed to support and promote the guidance in the learning skills sector:

- Electronic distribution of the Guidance to all relevant institutions and association bodies in the ACL and WBL sectors
- A shorter action point good practice guide based on the guidance's audit recommendations
- Similar guides for the ACL and WBL sectors and developed in conjunction with relevant stakeholders from those sectors
- A database of good practices and associated institutions in the sector
- Address the apparent absence of SMSC from accredited courses
- Web based facilities for information exchange and e-learning toolkits
- Derived from these, relevant subject based resources, such as podcasts

9.2.2. The uniqueness of the guidance should be used in order to promote it in the first instance, and the good practice guides, once developed, in the other areas of the public sector.

9.3. Government

- 9.3.1. The relevant government departments in the form of the Home Office and BIS needs to make it unequivocally clear to the learning and skills sector about the importance and priority status of equalities.
- 9.3.2. This should be reflected in the reinstatement of equalities as an explicit component of the OFSTED framework for the learning and skills sector educational providers.
- 9.3.3. BIS needs to needs to make it clear to the learning skills sector educational providers that the curricula for vocational skills programmes is inclusive of those required for good citizenship

9.4. FE Colleges

- 9.4.1. The further educational college sector should ensure that:
 - Work on developing and implementing the responsibilities accruing from the EA 2010 and the public sector duties, particularly the faith and belief strand, is used as a means to enhance existing equality infra-structures
 - Despite the austerity measures, equality and chaplaincy specific resources are renewed; space is maintained on, or built into, courses for the inclusion of SMSC matters, including citizenship skills;
 - Engagement programmes with learners and communities are maintained and developed further

9.5. Public Sector Adult and Community Learning

- 9.5.1. The adult and community learning public sector should ensure that:

- Work on developing and implementing the responsibilities accruing from the EA 2010, particularly the faith and belief strand, is used as a means to develop or enhance existing equality infra-structures
- Commissioning activities have the SMSC dimension included
- Equality learning development interventions for staff are tailored to the employment characteristics of this sector and have the SMSC dimension included
- Engagement activities with learners and communities are tailored to the characteristics of the service and used as a means to develop the profiles of needs with regard to SMSC

9.6. Work Based Learning Sector

9.6.1. Commissioners of WBL programmes should ensure that:

- Citizenship skills, including equalities and SMSC matters, are part of the specification for all programmes being contracted in

9.6.2. Providers of WBL programmes should ensure that:

- They have the capacity and resources to respond properly to such requirements

Neville Adams

Yvette Adams

January, 2013

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Appendix A

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Guidance for Further Education: An Evaluation

a) Institution +

b) Address

c) Tel. Number

d) Name of person
completing
questionnaire

e) Work address, if
different to main
institution's one
above

f) Tel. Number

g) e-mail address

h) Job Title

i) Key responsibilities

A Impressions

The Guidance can also be accessed from this link:

<http://www.lsis.org.uk/Documents/Publications/SMSC%20Web.pdf>

**1. What were your
initial impressions
of the SMSC
Guidance
(SMSCG)?**

(Please select more than one box, if appropriate)

Haven't heard of these

Easy to understand

Difficult to understand

Useful

Some of it is useful

Not useful

It complements our existing activities in this area

Completely new to us

Completely new, and we are/shall be using them

Completely new and we shall not be using them

Other (please specify)

B Recognition

2. Has the SMSCG been endorsed by your institution's governing body?

(Please select one box)

Yes

They have been discussed, but not formally endorsed

They are scheduled for the agenda of a future governing body meeting

They are not going to the governing body

Other (Please specify)

Don't know (DK)

Not applicable (NA)

3. Has the SMSCG been endorsed by your institution's senior management team, or equivalent?

(Please select one box)

Yes

They have been discussed, but not formally endorsed

They are scheduled for the agenda of a future senior management team meeting

They are not going to the senior management team meeting

Other (Please specify)

DK

NA

4. Have the responsibilities arising out of the SMSCG been included in your

**institution's
strategic plan, or
equivalent?**

(Please select one box)

Yes, fully

We intend to do that

We are not intending to do that

Other (Please specify)

DK

NA

**5. Have the
responsibilities
arising out of the
SMSCG been
included in your
institution's
equalities' plan, or
equivalent?**

(Please select one box)

Yes, fully

We are planning to do that

We do not plan to do that

We don't have an equalities' plan

Other (Please specify)

DK

NA

6. Have the responsibilities arising out of the SMSCG been included in your institution's community cohesion plan, or equivalent?

(Please select one box)

Yes, fully

We are planning to do that

We do not plan to do that

We don't have a community cohesion plan

Other (Please specify)

DK

NA

7. Has your equalities' plan been amended to take account of the protected characteristics, which are specified in the Equality Act, 2010, including the new 'religion or belief' one?

(Please select only one box)

Yes

No

Other

DK

NA

8. If 'yes' to question ..
above, has the
guidance helped in
addressing the
'religion and belief'
equality strand?

(Please select only one box)

Yes

Too early to say

No

Too early to say

DK

NA

C Implementation

9. In supporting the
implementation of
the SMSCG, has
your institution
initiated any of the
following?

9a In terms of financial
resources

(Please select more than one box, if appropriate)

Allocated specific financial resources

Included it under the equalities' budget

Included it under other generic budgets

Planning to recognise it in the budgetary process

Other (Please specify)

Not made any kind of budgetary recognition

DK

NA

9b In terms of human resources

(Please select more than one box, if appropriate)

Allocated the lead responsibilities to one person

Allocated lead responsibilities to a team

Distributed responsibilities to all managers

Distributed responsibilities to all staff

Other (Please specify)

None of these

DK

NA

9c In terms of learning development (LD) and continual professional

**development (CPD)
activities**

(Please select more than one box, if appropriate)

Included SMSC in the learning development programmes for staff

Planning to include this in the LD programme

Run one-off sessions, e.g. seminars, briefings

Included these responsibilities in the performance appraisal system

Planning to include these in the performance appraisal system

Other (Please specify)

None of these

DK

NA

**9d In terms of educational
provision SMSC is:**

(Please select more than one box, if appropriate)

A specific time-tabled element

Included in courses for accredited qualifications.

Included in enrichment activities

Included in pastoral care support services for students

Included in student tutorials

To be included explicitly in educational provision

To be included explicitly in support services for students

Other (Please specify)

None of these

DK

NA

9e In terms of engagement

(Please select more than one box, if appropriate)

Our approach to SMSC is part of our publicity material

We have engaged with staff over the SMSCG

We have engaged with students over the SMSCG

We have engaged with local communities over the SMSCG

Other (Please specify)

None of these

DK

NA

9f In terms of tracking our SMSC responsibilities

(Please select more than one box, if appropriate)

We track these through our performance management systems and processes

We track these through our self-assessment systems and processes

We track these through our preparations for OFSTED inspections

None of these

Other (Please specify)

DK

NA

10. If the SMSC responsibilities have been allocated to a post holder, or team, can you please say which one(s)

11. In relation to SMSC issues has your institution

**developed any
useful initiatives you
would like us to be
made aware of?**

**12. In relation to the
SMSC agenda have
there been any
issues of concern, or
conflict, that have
occurred with the
implementation of
other equality
areas? (For
example, religion
and sexual
orientation)**

(Please select only one box)

Yes

No

DK

NA

13. If 'yes' to '12' above, can you briefly outline these, and how they were resolved.

D	Improvements
----------	---------------------

14. How would you like to see the SMSCG amended to make it more relevant to your institution's needs?

15. In pursuing the implementation of the SMSCG, do you think your institution needs any of the following?

(Please select more than one box, if appropriate)

- A revised and improved SMSCG*
- More training*
- Better training*
- More training resources, e.g. toolkits*
- More financial resources*
- More human resources*
- Better management processes and systems*
- Better leadership by the governing board*
- Better management leadership*
- Better government leadership*
- More student involvement*
- More community and user involvement*
- More employee involvement*
- More student support*
- More community support*
- None of these*
- Other (Please specify)*

16. Would your institution be prepared to take part in a follow up qualitative exercise as part of this evaluation?

(Please select only one box)

Yes

No

17. Is there any other relevant information pertaining to the SMSCG or SMSC issues in FE that you wish to tell us?

Thank you for your time in completing this. Please return to Neville Adams by the ... Friday, 4th November, 2011 at the following e-mail address:

nada01@claranet.co.uk

Appendix B

SMSC in FE Colleges: An aide memoir for the qualitative interview

1. History

- *When did SMSC emerge as an issue in your college*
- *How did this occur*

- *How was this dealt with*
 - ◆ Check to see if SMSCG was first trigger
 - ◆ Check on ‘complementing’

2. Current situation

- *What is current status of SMSC, and SMSCG in particular, in college?*
 - ◆ In decision making for a
 - ◆ In policy systems
 - ◆ In procedures
 - ◆ In accountability systems
 - ◆ In curriculum
 - Check on ‘complementing’
 - Linkage to EA 2010

- *How is it recognised*

- ◆ In terms of resources
 - ◆ In terms of publicity
 - ◆ In terms of confidence of raising issues
 - Check on rationale
 - Check on specific staff resources and what they are
-
- *How involved are the following stakeholders*
 - ◆ Governors
 - ◆ Employees
 - Check role of specialist employees, such as Chaplains
 - ◆ Students
 - ◆ Communities
 - ◆ Partners
 - ◆ Contractors
-
- *Key Episodes in College and SMSC*
 - ◆ Good practice
 - ◆ Clashes
 - ◆ Lessons learnt
-
- *Inhibitors*
 - ◆ Political context
 - ◆ Racism
 - ◆ Sexism
 - ◆ Heterosexism

3. Prognosis

- *Future in College of SMSC(G)*
 - ◆ Political environment
 - ◆ Impact on decision making
 - ◆ Impact on students

- *What's needed to sustain SMSC(G)*
 - ◆ Political resources
 - ◆ Human resources
 - ◆ Financial resources
 - ◆ Material resources

Appendix C

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Interventions in Work Based and Adult Learning Providers: An Evaluation

j) Institution

k) Address

l) Tel. Number

**m) Name of person
completing
questionnaire**

**n) Work address, if
different to main
institution's one
above**

o) Tel. Number

p) e-mail address

q) Job Title

r) Key responsibilities

A **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Guidance**
(SMSCG)

We would like to ask a few questions about the FBFE's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Guidance (SMSCG) which was circulated to your institution with the original letter informing you about this evaluation project. The Guidance can also be accessed from this link:

<http://www.lsis.org.uk/Documents/Publications/SMSC%20Web.pdf>

1. What were your
initial impressions
of the SMSC
Guidelines
(SMSCG)?

(Please tick more than one box, if appropriate)

Easy to understand

Difficult to understand

Useful

Some of it is useful

Not useful

It complements our existing activities in this area

Completely new, and we shall be using them

*Completely new, and we shall be using some
them*

*Completely new and we shall not be using
them*

Other (please specify)

B SMSC Interventions

**2. Are SMSC issues
acknowledged in
any way in your
institution?**

Yes

No

Don't Know (DK)

3. If 'yes' to question '2' above, can you briefly say how?

4. Has your equalities' plan, or have your equality actions, been amended to take account of the protected characteristics, which are specified in the Equality Act, 2010, including the new 'religion or

belief' one?

(Please select only one box)

Yes

No

Other (Please specify)

DK

Not Applicable (NA)

**5. If 'yes' to question
'4' above, has the
guidance helped in
addressing the
'religion and belief'
equality strand?**

(Please select only one box)

Yes

Too early to say

No

Other (Please specify)

DK

NA

**6. In relation to the
SMSC agenda have
there been any
issues of concern, or**

conflict, that have occurred with the implementation of other equality areas? (For example, religion and sexual orientation)

(Please select only one box)

Yes

No

Other (Please specify)

DK

NA

7. If 'yes' to '6' above, can you briefly outline these, and how they were resolved.

C	Improvements
----------	---------------------

8. How would you like to see the SMSCG amended to make it more relevant to your institution's needs?

9. If your institution were to adopt and pursue the implementation of the SCMSG, do you think you would need any of the following types of support?

(Please select more than one box, if appropriate)

A revised and improved SMSCG

- More training*
- Better training*
- More training resources, e.g. toolkits*
- More financial resources*
- More human resources*
- Better management processes and systems*
- Better leadership by the governing board*
- Better management leadership*
- Better government leadership*
- More student involvement*
- More community and user involvement*
- More employee involvement*
- More student support*
- More community support*
- None of these*
- Other (Please specify)*

10. Would your institution be prepared to take part in a follow up qualitative exercise as part of this evaluation?

(Please select only one box)

Yes

No

11. Is there any other relevant information pertaining to the SMSCG or SMSC issues in FE that

you wish to tell us?

Thank you for your time in completing this. Please return to Neville Adams by the 18th Nov., 2011 at the following e-mail address:

nada01@claranet.co.uk

Appendix D

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Guidance

SMSC Report

Planning and delivering spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) support in the learning and skills sector:

Guidance for learning and skills providers

LSIS LEARNING AND SKILLS IMPROVEMENT SERVICE



Acknowledgements

The Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) on behalf of the department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) developed this guidance. The project team – Margaret Adjaye (LSIS), Kemal Ahson (Lifeworld Ltd), John Breadon (Church of England) and John Wise (The National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education) – would like to thank the following members of the Steering Group for their comments and support – Mark Chater (Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency), Andrew Copson (British Humanist Association), Bernadette Joslin (Learning and Skills Network), Vicky Cox (National Association for Managers of Student Services in Colleges) Sue Lakeman (Champion Principals' Group), Kat Luckock (NUS), Alan Murray (All Faiths and None), Lynne Sedgmore (157 Group), Evan Williams (Association of Colleges), and Peter Green (Ofsted, observer). The project team would also like to thank the individuals, stakeholders and learning and skills providers that contributed to this guide through the consultations held in November and December 2009. Finally, a thanks to the staff from the organisations presented in the six case studies here (Fareport Training Organisation Ltd, Hartlepool College of Further Education, Hull College, Leicester College, North Warwickshire & Hinckley College, and Salford City College).

This document provides an introduction to SMSC development and delivery for the learning and skills sector. Nothing in this report constitutes legal advice.

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Foreword

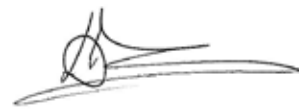
The commitment to ensure young learners across the learning and skills sector have exposure to the fullest possible range of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues is a critically important one.

Over and above the qualifications being studied for, it is vitally important learners are able to function in society and able to take into account the diverse array of beliefs and cultures they will encounter every day.

As well as the obvious social and, indirectly, financial benefits that result from equipping young people to be part of a vibrant, cohesive society, awareness of these kinds of issues is also ever more important in securing employment. Increasingly, academic or vocational achievement alone will not be enough to secure a job; successful candidates will be those who can demonstrate they are aware of and sensitive to a range of different spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues.

This guidance highlights how learning and skills providers can incorporate spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues into their learner offer – an aspect of Ofsted’s Common Inspection Framework.

Help us to help you make a difference.



Martin Bell

“This guide seeks to highlight the relevance of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development for the learning and skills sector, and provide support on how to plan, deliver and assess appropriate SMSC development.”

Introduction

Overview

This guide seeks to highlight the relevance of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development for the learning and skills sector, and provide support on how to plan, deliver and assess appropriate SMSC development.

The main focus of this guide is on provision for 14-19 learners¹ in college, work-based learning (WBL) and offender learning settings. It is also relevant to provision for older learners and trainees, such as in general further education colleges, local adult learning and community colleges.

The guide provides guidance for people responsible for the planning, delivery, monitoring and assessment of provision to promote the SMSC development of learners and trainees in learning and skills providers including:

- governors
- senior managers
- learner support managers
- personal tutors

Crucially, it recommends that organisations involve their learners in, and consult them on, SMSC development activities.

The guide is suggestive in approach as it highlights the context, resources and examples of good practice in the area of SMSC development and delivery. It is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive and recognises that individual learning and skills providers will engage with and develop this agenda according to their particular circumstances.

The structure of this guide is as follows:

- The remaining part of Section 1 provides the context and rationale for SMSC development and delivery for learning and skills providers.
- Section 2 details the major characteristics of SMSC development relevant for the learning and skills sector including information on the core attitudes and strands of SMSC development.
- Section 3 contains information, guidance and prompts for organisations to put SMSC provision into practice in a number of areas, such as institutional values, vision and leadership, resources and management, provision and assessment, staffing, monitoring and evaluation, and wider community involvement.
- Section 4 provides six case studies (Fareport Training Organisation Ltd, Hartlepool College of Further Education, Hull College, Leicester College, North Warwickshire & Hinckley College, and Salford City College) of how SMSC development has been developed and delivered in the learning and skills sector.
- The Annexes have a list of references and additional resources for learning and skills providers, an overview of the place of SMSC in Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework, and SMSC checklists for providers.

Why deliver on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?

The importance of SMSC development is recognised by the fact that it is a duty in the compulsory phase of education. However, although it is also an important element in the overall development of learners, in the learning

¹ 'Learners' is used here as a generic term and refers to pupils, students, trainees and adult learners.

and skills sector the integration of SMSC matters into learning provision is not established as there is no statutory duty to promote it. Nevertheless providers in the learning and skills sector do have an over-arching responsibility to respond flexibly to national and local circumstances, the needs of learners, and the pressures exerted by partners and stakeholders.

Adopting a pro-active approach to SMSC development is consistent with the educational and economic mission of the learning and skills sector. In particular it helps to:

- equip learners with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary for their futures as citizens and employees
- promote equality, diversity and equal opportunities
- respond to the views of learners.

The development and delivery of SMSC support should stem from an organisation's vision, values and purposes, particularly those associated with the equality and ethical frameworks required of employees and learners.

Curricula in vocational disciplines should reflect approved vocational qualifications which, in turn, reflect national occupational standards. However, they should ensure learners are aware of the implications of cultural change and religious and non-religious beliefs for the services they will provide. Awareness of how to live in a pluralist and multi-cultural society is emerging as an important soft skill required by employers. Tutorial and enrichment curricula have pivotal roles to play in preparing young people for life in 21st century society by creating spaces to discuss and develop

knowledge of contemporary social and moral issues (many of them sensitive and controversial) and their impact on local communities.

Apart from those institutions with a specific faith or religious character, it is not the function of learning and skills providers to promote any single religious or non-religious belief or moral code. But as educational institutions, they do have some responsibility to help learners become aware of, and challenge, ignorance, prejudice and discrimination.

Learner voice

The role of SMSC development is consistent with listening to learners and providing opportunities for them to explore their views on, *inter alia*, faith, belief, moral issues and culture in a safe but challenging environment. Learners welcome the recognition of, and engagement over, their views on faith, belief and culture. They also consider it important for learning and skills providers to respond to the practical implications of these beliefs and celebrate a diversity of backgrounds, provided, of course, that the identities claimed are not done so by excluding others. By providing opportunities for SMSC development, institutions are responding to the views of learners themselves and providing opportunities for learners to influence the shape and scope of provision. For example, student surveys undertaken in 2007 for the national enquiry into spiritual and moral development in further education, *Making Space for Faith*, found that over 70 per cent of learners believed that learning and skills providers and workplaces should provide support and services for students and trainees who hold different

values, beliefs and faiths. (NEAFE/CEL, 2007). New equalities legislation also brings into focus the need for learning and skills providers and workplaces to provide reasonable levels of support and facilities for learners of different religious or belief commitments.

Government policy and research

Both the Foster Report (*Realising the potential, a review of the future role of further education colleges, 2005*) and the White Paper (*Raising skills, improving life chances, 2006*) emphasise the primacy of the learning and skills sector's economic mission but challenge a narrow skills-based approach to learning and skills and recognise the importance of colleges (and learning and skills providers generally) as drivers of social justice and equality. Alongside delivering the skills needed for employability, providers should help learners develop attitudes and values that provide the basis for a successful and rewarding life. For example, the Nuffield Review of 14-19 Education and Training, England and Wales (2009) sets out six markers illustrative of what an educated 19-year-old should have:

- intellectual development
- practical capability
- community participation
- moral seriousness
- pursuit of excellence
- self-awareness

The strategy unit at the Cabinet Office (2009) has also highlighted the importance of 'soft skills' for young people and their role in helping them gain access to higher education and the professions.

It highlights that an exemplary academic record is no longer a guarantee of success and schools and learning and skills providers need to offer a rich experience for young people that goes beyond qualifications and helps them to create a CV of soft skills. It also highlights the important role SMSC development can play in the overall development of young people. Interestingly, in response to a Unicef report (2007), the children's commissioner for England, Professor Sir Al Aynsley-Green, commented: "We are turning out a generation of young people who are unhappy, unhealthy, engaging in risky behaviour, who have poor relationships with their family and their peers, who have low expectations and don't feel safe." Recent guidance from the National Institution for Health & Clinical Excellence (2009) emphasises the important role which schools and colleges (and learning and skills providers) have in promoting the social and emotional well-being of young people.

Every Child Matters

It is becoming the norm for learning and skills providers, when undertaking self-assessment, to focus on the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda. Here effective SMSC development through curriculum, enrichment and student support services can contribute to ECM outcomes: providing opportunities for young people to develop positive relationships within the institution; addressing issues around anti-social behaviour, bullying, intolerance and discrimination; and enabling young people to achieve social and personal development.

SMSC development offers opportunities for learners to discuss a variety of sensitive and controversial issues. For example ethics in business and politics, homophobia, global terrorism, the consequences of social disadvantage and inequality, and concerns about fragmented communities. SMSC contributions to the five ECM outcomes for learners could include:

- Enjoy and achieve – develop a positive sense of their own identity; and use their imagination and creativity to develop new ideas
- Stay safe – identify the dangers in new and different choices in a changing technological world; and develop skills, such as negotiation and assertiveness, to resist unhelpful pressures
- Be healthy – how to look after their physical, emotional and sexual health; that they can and should make positive choice; and the consequences that some decisions might have on their health and that of others
- Make a positive contribution – understand the multiple roles individuals play; develop the skills and strategies to form effective relationships in a variety of roles; the knowledge and skills to have a real voice, to be heard and take part in community activities; know how to make a difference in a group, community or society; and know how to work effectively with a range of people from diverse cultures and backgrounds and with different access to power and influence
- Achieve economic well-being – understand the qualities and skills needed for adult and working life; handle uncertainty and respond positively to change; understand about the global economy; and manage their own money.

Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework

The Post-16 Common Inspection Framework (2009) notes the importance of SMSC development for learners and SMSC has more prominence than previously. Inspection judgements include the extent to which learners develop the following (see Annex 2 for a complete breakdown of the reporting framework used by inspectors):

- personal and social skills (including SMSC aspects)
- relevant knowledge which contributes to their economic and social well-being
- understanding of community cohesion and sustainable development issues
- evidence learners receive support to recognise diversity and promote equality
- enrichment activities, such as work experience.

The provision of SMSC support can be included in the wider evaluation of equality and diversity which is now a limiting judgement and can affect the grade for leadership and management and the overall effectiveness of a provider.

Equality and diversity, citizenship and community cohesion

The current anti-discriminatory framework (legislation and associated guides) provide a defining context for SMSC development in the learning and skills sector. In addition, the proposed Equalities Bill (2010) will extend the existing duties to promote equality and prevent discrimination by gender, race and disability to cover age, sexual orientation, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender

reassignment. This duty will require public bodies to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations across all these protected characteristics. Recent guidance for the learning and skills sector on equality and diversity demonstrates the need for institutions to be mindful of both existing and emerging equalities strands (LSC/LSIS, 2009).

The promotion of community cohesion is a major government priority, involving collaboration across several government departments. A cohesive community is defined by the Department for Communities and Local Government (2007) as one where:

- there is a common vision and sense of belonging for all
- the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
- strong and positive relationships are developed between people from different backgrounds.

Learning and skills providers have an important role to play in promoting cohesion; that is, providing an environment that understands, values and meets the needs and aspirations of all learners regardless of, for instance, their ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religious or non-religious beliefs, and sexual orientation. Promoting SMSC development provides opportunities for learners to explore and discuss equality and diversity issues and develop positive relationships through their understanding of themselves and others.

It must embrace issues of equalities, citizenship, religious and non-religious beliefs, and the cultural, religious, moral and political literacy necessary for life in a diverse society.

Learning and skills providers are required to consult and work with local stakeholders to ensure their training and support contributes to local economies, partnerships and employment. Organisations should understand community needs and develop a clear strategy for cohesion. The development of SMSC can help by:

- emphasising the importance of learner voices in their learning community and involving them in decision-making processes
- fostering a sense of belonging to a community which values diversity
- providing opportunities to deal with sensitive and controversial issues in an open way
- enabling learners to take the lead on activities within the organisation.

When combined with provision embracing SMSC development, links with local groups, including those defined by age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, religious or non-religious beliefs, can contribute to the recruitment and retention of learners, and the development of cohesion within the provider community.

“Three core attitudes enhance SMSC development: self-awareness, respect for all, and open-mindedness”

2. What is SMSC development?

Core attitudes

In the Education Act 1988, the second aim of the National Curriculum was that ‘The school curriculum should aim to promote pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.’ A similar statutory obligation is not appropriate for the learning and skills sector and this guidance does not advocate any such arrangement. However, at a time when providers in the compulsory and post-compulsory phases are drawing closer together, greater commonality between the sectors, in vision and language, is justifiable and timely.

Three core attitudes enhance SMSC development: self-awareness, respect for all, and open-mindedness (Post-16 Religious Education Non-Statutory Guidance, 2004). Within each of these areas a number of support areas for learners can be identified.

Under the first core area (self-awareness) learners should:

- feel confident about their own views, beliefs and identity and in sharing them without fear of embarrassment or ridicule
- develop a realistic and positive sense of their own spiritual, moral and social ideas
- recognise their own uniqueness as human beings and affirm their self-worth
- become increasingly sensitive to the impact of their ideas and behaviour on others
- recognise their own ignorance and prejudice.

Under the second area (respect for all) learners should:

- develop skills of listening and a willingness to learn from others, even when others’ views are different from their own
- be ready to evaluate critically difference and diversity for the common good
- appreciate some beliefs are not inclusive and be able to consider the issues this raises for individuals and society
- be prepared to recognise and acknowledge their own bias and prejudices
- be sensitive to the feelings and ideas of others.

Finally, for open-mindedness, learners should:

- be willing to learn and gain new understanding
- engage in argument or disagree reasonably and respectfully (without belittling or abusing others) about SMSC questions
- be willing to go beyond surface impressions
- distinguish between opinions, viewpoints and beliefs.

These can be structured for learning and skills providers in the form of a checklist, aide memoire or prompt (see Section 3 and Annex 4 for planning in an organisation). Organisations can also consider how these core attitudes, and the definitions which follow, might be incorporated into existing statements, such as the provider charter, guidance for parents and employers, statements of learner expectations and the Single Equalities Framework.

Spiritual development

Definitions of spiritual development have proved difficult, and often controversial, since they must be acceptable to both religious and non-religious people. They range from the process of acquiring personal beliefs and values and the behaviours that result, to definitions that include emotional aspects of being human, such as feelings and emotions. There is agreement that spiritual development relates to the development of the inner life, and the attribution of meaning to experience. For some, this task may involve drawing upon religious ideas and traditions; for others it may involve drawing upon the humanist tradition. It can include:

- discussing and reflecting on key questions of meaning and truth
- reflecting on important concepts, experiences and beliefs that are at the heart of religious and non-religious worldviews
- developing personal views on such issues
- valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging
- developing the imagination
- developing curiosity about life
- appreciating a sense of wonder at the universe and world in which we live
- developing an understanding of feelings and emotions which gives cause to reflect and to learn.

Moral development

Moral development means exploring, understanding and recognising shared values, as well as developing the ethical frameworks that underpin these values.

This will involve:

- consideration of what is of value, including issues of right and wrong
- developing an understanding of ideas, such as justice, honesty and truth
- reflecting on the sources of moral thinking (religious or non-religious)
- exploring the influence of family, friends, and the media on moral choices
- developing the ability to apply insights to significant social, moral and political issues affecting individuals and communities.

At times this will require acknowledging and working through challenging differences, as well as shared values, in the moral stances derived from different religious and non-religious views of the world.

Social development

Social development involves learners having a political and socio-economic context which enables them to work effectively together and participate successfully in the community as a whole. The community is an environment that encourages the development of the skills and personal qualities necessary for living and working together and functioning in a diverse society. It also covers growth in knowledge and understanding of society, including religious and non-religious beliefs and how social and political institutions function and evolve. Social development covers the development of the inter-personal skills necessary for successful relationships – the quality of personal relationships can define the kind of people we are and, ultimately, the kind of world we live in.

Our capacity to participate effectively in social life is crucial to our well-being and that of the communities we belong to. Some of the areas that are covered include:

- understanding the importance of core values and social ideals, including democracy, human rights, the rule of law, social justice, political and legal equality, tolerance, and a commitment to dialogue and understanding
- valuing diversity and equality in society, including age, disability, ethnicity, gender reassignment, religious or non-religious beliefs, sexual orientation and other characteristics
- considering the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of social and civic conscience
- developing an awareness of environmental issues and the importance of climate change
- reflecting on the role and value of leadership, participation and volunteering (environmental or local history projects, clubs and visits, community action, student council)
- encountering challenging and unfamiliar contexts, such as residential and community-based work, work-related learning and working with professionals and experts.

Cultural development

Cultural development generally refers to developing an understanding of one's own culture and of other cultures locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, and an understanding that cultures are not static. It also means learning to feel comfortable in a variety of cultures and being able to operate in the emerging world culture

provided by television, travel and the internet. Promoting learners' cultural development is linked with encouraging learners to value cultural diversity through, for instance, preventing racism and other oppressive behaviour, such as homophobia. Cultural development must go beyond learning the norms and skills of a group of people; it also involves understanding the processes of cultural development and change and an appreciation of the inter-dependence of different cultures. It will include:

- enabling learners to recognise, explore and understand their own cultural assumptions and values, including religious and non-religious ones
- enabling learners to understand cultural diversity by bringing them into contact with attitudes, values and traditions of other cultures, including religious and non-religious ones
- encouraging an historical perspective by relating contemporary values to the processes and events that have shaped them
- enabling learners to understand the evolutionary nature of culture and the processes and potential for change
- understanding the importance of the arts and creativity in human life and the heights of human achievement
- reflecting on the role of performance for building self-confidence and identity through, for instance, dance and drama, choirs, orchestras, public speaking, and sports.

Benefits and outcomes for learners

There are numerous benefits and outcomes to learners from SMSC development. For example, spiritual development can give learners a strong sense of personal ownership of their thoughts and actions. They can develop a carefully considered understanding of the world in which they live, of the choices that are available to them, their own attitudes towards the opinions and actions of others and how they wish to conduct their own lives. This can build high levels of self-worth.

Moral development can give learners a sense of right and wrong, of the impact their actions will have upon themselves and others, and the ability to stand by their decisions in the face of criticism, ridicule or opposition, or to change them in changing contexts. This can build high levels of self-confidence and determination.

Social development can give learners an understanding of their roles as members of an interactive and complex society and the ability to build and maintain sound relationships. It prompts and enables learners to work with others to take action on issues of concern and make a difference in their local and wider communities. This can build a strong sense of responsibility.

And cultural development can give learners an understanding and appreciation of traditions and values, the ability to participate in group activities and enjoy leisure pursuits. This can build a strong sense of belonging.

3. Putting SMSC provision into practice

Institutional values, vision and leadership

Effective SMSC development is as much about the culture and values of an organisation as it is about the education or services offered. Typically, effective SMSC development takes place in organisations that have shared and explicitly expressed values. In particular:

- recognising that a learner's SMSC development will be influenced by what the organisation stands for and almost everything the organisation does
- establishing a definition of SMSC development for the organisation that is inclusive and acceptable to all regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religious or non-religious belief, sexual orientation or any other characteristic
- understanding what SMSC development commitment involves and having a clear vision for taking it forward
- creating an ethos of openness and trust by listening to the voice of every learner through representational structures
- taking community cohesion beyond the institution through the development of positive relationships with local communities and organisations.

Governors and senior managers will also need to identify the existing, and potential, contribution which SMSC development makes to the vision and purposes of the organisation. Areas that need to be covered include:

- promoting a climate of tolerance, respect, appreciation and understanding of different cultures, backgrounds, values and opinions, and encouraging open discussion of sensitive issues

- preparing learners for their future responsibilities as citizens through an appropriate range of opportunities for discussion, interaction, acceptance of responsibility and practical activities
- preparing learners as future employees by ensuring that vocational courses include essential knowledge and understanding of appropriate cultural, faith, and moral issues
- providing opportunities and support for individual students to develop their understanding and views on SMSC issues and thereby develop a greater appreciation and awareness of themselves as individuals
- establishing an organisational development plan that sets out priorities, timings, milestones, staffing, staff development, resources and lead responsibility for SMSC development.

Senior management can also consider how their organisation's values and vision for SMSC development might be incorporated into existing statements, such as the college charter, guidance for parents and employers, statements of learner expectations and Single Equalities Framework statements.

Strategic leadership

The successful development of SMSC provision to meet these objectives will depend on the support of key staff members. Successful implementation will take place where staff with sufficient seniority and experience (and ideally an interest) co-ordinate and lead both the development of provision and the associated staff development.

The following are features of successful approaches:

- enthusiasm, commitment and resources from senior leadership
- support through a team of experienced and dedicated staff and learners, which includes external stakeholders
- a development plan that includes appropriate staff training activities;
- a 'whole organisation' approach to SMSC development with a blend of opportunities provided
- learners play a central role in shaping and developing the provision.

Organisational prompts:

- *How would developing SMSC support for learners enhance our organisation's mission and values?*
- *What is our organisation's vision and what are our purposes for SMSC development?*
- *How is senior management promoting this vision to the organisation and the wider community?*
- *Who is responsible for leading SMSC development?*
- *How does SMSC development link to learner voice strategies and citizenship education?*
- *Are targets for SMSC education included in the organisational development plan?*
- *What does the organisation's public documentation say about SMSC?*
- *Who co-ordinates SMSC activities?*
- *Who is in the SMSC team (staff, external contributors, others)?*
- *Who is involved in making decisions about SMSC?*
- *What structure and mechanisms are in place to enable staff and learners to take part in decision making?*

Resources and management

Senior management and leaders will be responsible for identifying and allocating resources and staff to the planning and delivery of SMSC development. Many learning and skills providers are already delivering elements of SMSC development – a key opportunity will be to identify and align these to wider SMSC development in the organisation. In addition, learners must be seen as a major resource for SMSC development and delivery and a 'Learner Involvement Strategy' can be used to help develop the SMSC agenda. Regular feedback from senior management can also be used to assess the resources needed. The values of SMSC development need to be reflected in the day-to-day experiences of staff and learners (see Annex 1 for a list of resources).

Organisational prompts:

- *What resources are there for SMSC development and delivery?*
- *How are resources allocated?*
- *How are resources identified?*
- *Are there new resources that would be helpful for SMSC and how are these selected?*

Provision and assessment

Opportunities for promoting SMSC development arise from a number of activities, such as tutorials, enrichment programmes, foundation learning, the curriculum, whole institution events, pastoral support, and volunteering. Elements of SMSC development activities will also occur within programmes covering citizenship, student health and well-being, community cohesion, equality and diversity, and equal opportunities.

Undertaking an audit across all these different activities is a useful starting point for reviewing and planning an organisation's commitment to the SMSC development of learners – for instance, it gives everyone involved an opportunity to discuss and agree priorities. It should involve all staff, learners, and members of the wider community where appropriate. As well as looking at the organisation in terms of institutional areas, it is also important to look at the SMSC strands individually and to benchmark the organisation overall in terms of SMSC development (see Annex 3).

Organisational prompts:

- *What kind of activities does the organisation do that contribute to SMSC?*
- *What kind of provision needs to be created for future SMSC development in the organisation and wider community?*
- *Are there timetabled SMSC development sessions?*
- *What is the potential size and scale of the SMSC programme?*
- *How many learners will be involved in the SMSC programmes?*
- *How are SMSC development opportunities, objectives and actions in the learning framework being addressed?*
- *Are there any barriers to learners taking part in SMSC development activities that need to be addressed?*
- *How will learners know they are learning and achieving?*
- *How will SMSC achievement be recognised?*

Staffing

Staff training and support is crucial for the SMSC development of learners. All staff will already have some of the skills and experience needed to support the SMSC development of a learner. But it is useful to start by identifying individuals' understanding of SMSC development and then build on this by focusing on developing specific new areas of knowledge and skills.

When identifying staff development needs it is important to consider senior and middle managers as well as those working directly with learners. They need to understand the different types of activities, programmes and services for SMSC development and how each staff member can contribute to the SMSC development of learners. They also must be made aware of the policy formation and organisational context for SMSC development and the people and resources allocated to the activity. The aim of staff development is to motivate staff and enable them to work effectively and confidently.

Staff training for SMSC development can involve a combination of training sessions and development processes, depending on the time available and the expertise and preferences of staff. Short, focused training sessions can help to raise awareness or develop a specific skill. However, longer-term developmental processes, that support individuals as they gain knowledge, skills and confidence, may also be needed. Importantly, staff should be involved in planning their own programme of training and development for SMSC development, based on their identified needs. The following practices

have worked particularly well for staff training for SMSC development:

- team-based development where more experienced staff are asked to coach or mentor staff who are new to this area of learning
- active learning through encouraging staff to contribute ideas, do something practical and get involved in activities related to SMSC development
- modelling approaches which focus on identifying individual staff members' interests (for example, communication skills, strategies for handling controversial issues, understanding different religions and beliefs) and enabling them to gain the knowledge and skills they need to work with learners
- informal staff development using existing meetings to supplement formal training sessions
- building on enthusiasm from staff already involved in SMSC development and learners.

Organisational prompts:

- *How is SMSC development organised and staffed?*
- *Is there co-ordination of provision with a named member of staff, such as the ECM co-ordinator, citizenship co-ordinator, or college chaplain taking a lead on this work?*
- *What skills and expertise do staff have that can contribute to SMSC development?*
- *How is staff SMSC expertise going to be developed and supported?*
- *How is time and space for SMSC development allocated?*
- *What learning is there from other organisations involved in providing SMSC development?*

Monitoring and evaluation

There is likely to be ongoing monitoring of SMSC delivery as part of a learning and skills providers' management systems. To ensure a more robust method of evaluating and ensuring progress, the Common Inspection Framework (CIF) can form the basis of monitoring and evaluation. The CIF has two references to the SMSC development of learners (there are many other questions that touch on all four thematic areas). However, social development (as perhaps the most measurable or tangible of the four themes) dominates the framework and handbook.

The main references in the CIF to SMSC development are as follows (see Annex 2 for a complete summary of how the CIF relates to SMSC development):

- (A1b) Learners develop personal and social skills, including, as appropriate, spiritual, moral and cultural aspects
- (A2) How well do learners improve their economic and social wellbeing through learning and development?
- (A4) Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and wellbeing?
- (A5) How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?
- (B2) How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?
- (B4) How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them attain their learning goals?
- (C4) How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?

Organisational prompts:

- *How will SMSC development provision be monitored?*
- *How will SMSC development provision be evaluated?*
- *How will the CIF be used for monitoring and evaluating progress and impact?*
- *How will learners be involved in monitoring and evaluation?*

Wider community involvement

How an organisation engages with the wider community is crucial in any SMSC development activity. Openness to participation, new ideas and opportunities to contribute to local community cohesion through links with the wider community are all important. This aspect of SMSC development is relevant for learner development and wider good corporate governance of a learning and skills provider.

Organisational prompts:

- *Who else can be involved in SMSC development from the wider community?*
- *What links can be built with external contributors and organisations to support SMSC development?*
- *How are the SMSC development programme and achievements being communicated?*
- *How is the organisation contributing to community cohesion?*

Benchmarks for organisational performance

In addition to using the above planning areas to identify, assess and develop SMSC provision, it is important to ensure a balanced approach between the four strands. Accordingly, providers should benchmark themselves against each of the four strands (see Annex 3 for a full breakdown of benchmarking areas). For instance, institutions that are encouraging learners' spiritual development are likely to be giving learners the opportunity to explore values and beliefs, including religious and non-religious beliefs, and the way in which they affect peoples' lives. Similarly, providers that are encouraging learners' moral development are likely to be providing a clear institutional ethos and mission statement as a basis for behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the organisation. In terms of encouraging learner social development organisations are likely to be identifying key values and principles on which institutional and community life are based. And providers that are encouraging learners' cultural development are likely to be providing opportunities for learners to explore their own cultural assumptions and values.

“How an organisation engages with the wider community is crucial in any SMSC development activity”

4. Approaches to delivery and case studies

Six case studies are presented in this section. They draw on the work of learning and skills providers and focus on the experience and practice of developing and delivering SMSC provision.

As far as possible the case studies have been structured under a number of general headings (organisation, staffing, SMSC activities, recognising achievement, learners, and future developments).

A key theme running through all the case studies (presented alphabetically) is how SMSC development activity can be practically integrated as a significant part of the learner experience while retaining its distinctive aspects.

Fareport Training Organisation Ltd

Organisation

Fareport Training Organisation Limited is a work-based training provider operating throughout Hampshire and the surrounding area, with four training centres in and around Fareham and Gosport. Their professional focus is on health and social care; children's care learning and development; customer services, business and administration; retail; hairdressing; and ICT.

Over the last eight years a wide ranging programme of learner-led support on SMSC issues has been developed and delivered. As a work-based learning provider there is recognition of the importance and relevance of SMSC issues (focused through the citizenship agenda) for vocational training. Moreover, learners attend Fareport because they have not succeeded in other mainstream provision and some form of

interactive social and learner support is seen as crucial. In addition, given the focus of Fareport delivery is through the e2e funding scheme, having a taught lesson and interaction is seen as especially useful.

Staffing

All staff are trained and undergoing continuous professional development through the accredited level 4 qualification on citizenship with Warwick University (funded by the LSIS Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme – PCSP). The link with the LSIS PCSP has supported staff and learners and produced a range of versatile and useful training materials. Fareport also works with other training providers to share resources, such as attracting external speakers, and promoting exchanges between learners. A range of media including iPlayers, interactive sessions, role play, lectures and visits are used to deliver the citizenship agenda.

The work has been supported through the LSIS PCSP, and as a pilot site for citizenship, Fareport has extended its work on the citizenship agenda. Funds have also been provided for ad hoc visits, such as to discuss the Holocaust at the Imperial War Museum in London.

SMSC development activity

Initially one day (now half) was allocated to cover citizenship issues for learners. Topics are explored and researched to ensure the personal and wider considerations are covered as well as local, national and international dimensions. When possible (learner confidence allowing) learners are encouraged and trained to deliver sessions which in some cases have led to an interest in teaching

as a career. A balance is maintained and subjects that are relevant in the locality are often considered – for instance, the opening of an immigration centre and the implications for people in another country were discussed. Staff are involved in the selection of topics and delivery methods to ensure a balance in the SMSC development programme.

The focus of the work is through the citizenship agenda and there is recognition that it is hard to separate the four SMSC strands. Over a 12-month period staff ensure all four strands are covered. Some activities, such as national and remembrance days, provide opportunities to structure and organise SMSC topics (they also make it easier to invite speakers).

Recognising achievement

A number of methods are used for monitoring and evaluation. An end-of-session evaluation is undertaken and every six weeks learners complete an evaluation for the previous six weeks to identify new issues and topics. The registration and attendance of citizenship lessons is also monitored. Finally, the overall impact of citizenship on the qualifications is assessed.

Learners

Learners contribute to the programme through both the evaluation and monitoring and the development of SMSC development activities. The learner voice is imperative to ensure the topics are learner and community focused.

Future developments

Working with the local community and stakeholders is essential and a number of projects have been run. For example, a 'Little Jems' young parenting programme has been delivered to aid learners' ability to be young parents (due to the high teenage pregnancy rate in Gosport). Local issues are seen as priorities and ensuring the learner voice is heard in developing and designing provision is crucial. In addition, work has been undertaken with the local authority on intergenerational activities: a gardening project provides an opportunity for dialogue; and a 'me, you and us' project has been delivered promoting a skills swap (surfing the net and guidance on cooking on a budget). More recently a 'make, do and mend' project has allowed older people to show Fareport learners how to mend and reuse their clothing (an important issue in the credit crunch). One of the major outcomes from this work on citizenship has been the growing interest among learners in developing community awareness.

Hartlepool College of Further Education

Organisation

Hartlepool College of Further Education is a medium sized general further education college in the north east of England. Provision in the college is mainly vocational. Many learners have lower than average entry qualifications, and are representative of Hartlepool where the numbers of school leavers achieving 5A*-C grades is below the national average. The college has a strong reputation for its apprenticeship and work-based learning programmes and has a large Train to Gain programme. Around one third of students

are in work-based learning programmes and 425 students study for higher level qualifications. The college has been recognised for its outstanding work with partners. Great emphasis is placed on enabling each individual to achieve and make progress. Hartlepool College of Further Education is a partner of the University of Teesside.

Staffing

The college experienced few difficulties in implementing their SMSC initiative because it was fully supported by senior management. A team of staff and learners across the organisation was created to take the SMSC initiative (Respect) forward, and sufficient time was allocated.

SMSC development activity

Respect has a defined set of values, identified after consultation with staff and students. It is promoted as a partnership between learners, the college and the wider community and has the following values:

- responsibility and accountability
- equality
- social responsibility
- pro-activity
- education
- caring for others and the community
- transparency and tolerance.

These values have enabled the college to contextualise all activities which can be considered to fall under the umbrella of SMSC development. Respect is promoted to learners as a means of defining the type of learner environment they can expect, free from discrimination.

Activities that fall under the umbrella of Respect include:

- a taught tutorial programme for all full-time learners covering themes of citizenship, health promotion, safety, cultural awareness and equality and diversity (one hour per week);
- weekly displays in the main foyer and Learner Resource Centre to promote local, national and international faith and cultural events
- Respect messages are promoted through notice-boards and the college Blackboard VLE (each corridor has messages, such as 'Don't DIS my ability', 'Who minds your language?' and 'Keep College Healthy', displayed outside classroom doors).

In addition, a programme of cross-college events, open to all learners, is published annually. These events promote the college as one community and include awareness-raising and fund-raising. The events draw on contributions from other partners, such as the Safer Hartlepool Partnership, local health care trust, the borough council, voluntary organisations and the Trades Union Council. All of these organisations are represented at the Freshers' Fair in September which is the first point at which learners are introduced to the many organisations that support work in college. Some 35 partner organisations – from sports promotion to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender awareness – have contributed to Respect. Respect also supports consultation forums for disability and faith, and a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender group. The groups are open to students and staff and have a healthy membership. The consultation forums meet on a monthly basis and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender

group meets weekly. An annual Voice of the Learner event is promoted to 100 learners. They are given the opportunity to question the principal about the college on behalf of all learners. Feedback is reported through tutorials, the Blackboard virtual learning environment (VLE) and a poster campaign. The consultation forums are tasked with developing events that raise awareness and make a space for the college to meet as a single community in an act of joint participation.

Faith based services to commemorate Remembrance Day, Christmas and Workers' Memorial Day have run for the last two years. Learners are joined by partner organisations at these events. Veterans of the Royal British Legion, children from the local primary schools and Hartlepool Trades Union Council are valued partners, essential to the running of these events. The college student association officers are also student ambassadors and take part by showing hospitality and promoting young people in a positive light in their local communities.

Charity giving is actively promoted and usually involves a challenge, such as a fancy dress competition, quiz, fun run or something more demanding like the coast-to-coast cycle ride. A charity football match against the local neighbourhood police and fire services and a football competition for primary schools have been supported with a small amount of funding from the Home Office's Youth Engagement Fund. These events are organised by the students and supported by key members of staff.

The college hairdressing students have recently taken part in a citizenship project in partnership with Leicester College, to promote inter-cultural understanding and foster a relationship between students in different parts of the country.

Recognising achievement

Respect is an on-going programme that is evaluated and revised on an annual basis. Learners were interviewed by Ofsted Inspectors and the following conclusions drawn:

'Learners' views are used well to improve the college.'

'Learners like the trips, guest speakers and fund-raising events, which broaden their understanding of life and work.'

'The college makes an outstanding contribution to partnerships in the community and is seen as flexible and highly responsive by its partners'.

'Tutorials and the Respect initiative provide good opportunities for personal development'

'Learners acquire knowledge to make informed choices about their own health, wellbeing and safe working'

Learners

The overwhelming lesson for all involved is that young people do care about society and their place in it. They only need the means to be able to make a positive contribution. When asked, they will become involved and enjoy taking on responsibility.

Hull College

Organisation

Hull College is one of the largest general further education colleges in the country. It operates from four locations in the city centre: Queen's Gardens campus; Park Street Centre which houses the school of art and design; Cannon Street Centre which houses the school of motor vehicle, fabrication and welding; and the learning zone, situated in the Kingston Communications Stadium, run in partnership with Hull City Council and which offers sports programmes. It also has a campus in Goole, 30 miles from Hull. Community education courses are offered in more than 30 venues in Hull and the East Riding. It was awarded an Association of Colleges (AoC) Beacon Award for lifelong learning in 2005, was highly commended for its equality and diversity work in 2006 and won a National Training Award in 2006. Hull was ranked ninth most deprived of 354 local authorities in England in the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Staffing

A senior manager is responsible for leading on SMSC development (the executive director of strategic policy and organisational development and a member of the college's strategic leadership team). The management responsibility for strands of this work is then devolved to a number of roles in the organisation including the learner support services manager, the equality and diversity officer, the tutorial cross-college co-ordinator and the directors of learner experience and organisational development and 14-19 provision. Co-ordination of activities is managed by these members of staff, either

working independently or together when organising a cross-college themed event.

Each manager or leader makes recommendations via a college committee or working group which are then put to senior management for approval. Successes on SMSC activity are reported to the academic board and highlights of this work are included in staff newsletters, the internal portal and wider college publications, such as the prospectus and summer recruitment campaigns. Targets are communicated through key performance indicators (KPIs) for each strategy, and included within the Equality Impact Assessment Impact measures and the Single Equality Scheme.

The management team co-ordinate financial and resource planning in February and take into account changes due in the next academic year, such as government priorities and strategies, and local or internal drivers.

The college has a team of quality improvement and student support managers who work within each of the different curriculum areas to help monitor and support quality assurance and improvement within their area. This is achieved by working with tutors to support and develop their individual tutorial and personal mentoring role, along with vocational and group tutorial delivery.

Delivery and support staff are encouraged to participate in events and activities and learners have the opportunity to access more informal staff development sessions during these weeks – for example in relation to hate crime, transgender awareness, visual impairment and

deaf awareness. Formal staff development days are scheduled on the college calendar, and where specific staff support and development is identified the college seeks to work pro-actively with the teams to provide either support as required – for example, the charity MIND have been involved in delivering mental health awareness training.

SMSC development activity

The vision for SMSC development is grounded in the college's mission statement and core values covering:

- excellence
- respect
- integrity
- celebration for all.

These values are embedded throughout working practice and are outlined in a range of policies and action plans including the Corporate Social Responsibility and Equality and Diversity strategies. The Matrix Report in 2009 stated 'Equality and diversity promotion shines through the life of the college and is apparent in all aspects of delivery'.

Core areas for delivery of SMSC development activities include:

Enrichment (Club 14-16 and Club 16-18)

Clubs 14-16 and 16-18, alongside the Students' Union, provide access to information and advice related to sexual health matters and have created effective partnerships with local agencies including the NHS. The group of colleges now have a full STI test-and-treat sexual health clinic on two sites for a specified time each week, which

has made sexual health advice and guidance more readily available. The student clubs provide access to other activities designed to support and develop learner wellbeing. The clubs are actively involved in different cross-college weeks and organise a range of activities and events. Enrichment activities include the annual carol service and events during themed weeks. Weekly activities include football and gym and trips include a range of activities from a safari park to museums, theme parks and beach activity trips. All these activities are aimed at addressing social barriers and developing social and team skills among a diverse group of learners. There is a substantial budget allocated through Learner Support Services to provide enrichment activities.

Enrichment teams actively encourage and support charity fund-raising which supplements money raised through citizenship projects. A large number of local, national and international charities are supported by the college, contributing to both the SMSC agenda and the Every Child Matters (ECM) theme 'making a positive contribution'. The enrichment teams are also responsible for facilitating a programme of activities identified through student class talks and questionnaires linked to the themes of ECM.

Multi-faith chaplaincy

In 2007, the college introduced a multi-faith chaplaincy service to provide moral and spiritual support for the whole college community. The chaplain was provided by North Humberside Industrial Mission and is in college one day a week. Other volunteer religious leaders are also involved with the chaplaincy. Some of the areas of work covered by the chaplaincy include:

- delivering tutorials (on religion and war and African culture)
- organising the celebration of religious festivals
- providing pastoral support
- establishing links with local faith and black and minority ethnic communities (enabling a photography project)
- providing resources and workshops for celebration weeks
- creating multi-faith resources (including web based information, notice board displays and tutorials)
- representing on Hull and East Riding Interfaith and other bodies
- serving on policy and other committees
- keeping up to date on issues of religion and faith.

There is also significant multi-faith work, religious education and spiritual development going on within the curriculum and tutorial system.

Tutorial programme

Within the tutorial programme, learners are encouraged to take part in a citizenship project and explore issues that they feel strongly about, or that affect them or their friends and family. The college sets themes to help focus learner attention and allows learners freedom to choose their subject matter and method of presenting.

Themes considered include equality and diversity, sustainability and enterprise, and community action and social enterprise. Past projects include planning, creating and running a 'Re-cycled' fashion show in aid of the Special Care Baby Unit, by Childhood Studies learners; producing Braille Sudoku and other puzzles by construction learners; fundraising for Christmas gifts for the local

children's ward; and producing videos to raise awareness of homophobia and global warming. Celebration of these projects is undertaken during the Equality, Diversity and Citizenship Celebration week in the third term. During this week staff, learners and the public are invited to a wide range of events and activities, demonstrations and exhibitions of learner work. Some of these are of a controversial or sensitive nature. Examples from previous weeks include religion and war, transgender (myths and realities), hate crime, and citizenship and human rights.

Students' Union

The Students' Union organises activities targeting higher education learners and learners over the age of 18. These trips have included sightseeing and cultural visits for international students.

Pastoral care

The college supports an internal counselling service for students and staff. Learner mentors are a valuable resource that have shared responsibility for pastoral support of the students and are pro-active in identifying barriers and issues. They operate a support and sign-posting service working closely with Connexions and social services to co-ordinate support mechanisms, such as homelessness facing learners.

Use of IT

Extensive use of Moodle (the virtual learning environment) helps to deliver and support the SMSC agenda in the college.

It is taken up by tutors and learning advisors to support classroom-based work (vocational or tutorial sessions). Within Moodle there are sections specifically for equality and diversity with tutorial resources identified. This service is also used to provide learners with access to a wider range of materials supporting SMSC development. These include access to course materials, videoed student enrichment activities (such as Question Time during Democracy week), and student presentations. Learner created materials can also be uploaded and used to encourage, celebrate and support the work.

Recognising achievement

Informal feedback from staff and learners is used to help identify new development opportunities. These may then be developed internally, or purchased externally, depending on the requirements. The college utilises feedback mechanisms which include student perception of college (SPOC), parent perception of college (PPOC), the National Student Survey and learner voice, to inform development and to benchmark progress against similar organisations. Feedback from recent inspections and quality assurance processes has been positive, and is used to help monitor and evaluate provision.

Learners

Young people influence the development of activities via a number of advisory groups such as the Student Union, Clubs 14-16 and 16-18, the learner voice, higher education learner group and the Student Forum for Disability. Suggestions and feedback are gathered at the time of the event and following activities. This information is then used to further develop the range of activities,

and will be essential for Equality Impact Assessments which are currently under development. The overall aim of the SMSC development programme is to embed it fully within college systems. By analysing SPOC results and feedback through the learner voice, learner views are monitored.

Future development

Future work will be targeted at issues of monitoring, evaluation and impact of provision especially in relation to Equality and Diversity Impact Measures and Equality Impact Assessments.

Leicester College

Organisation

Leicester College is a major provider of education to young people, adults and employers in Leicestershire. It offers a selection of courses and qualifications in hundreds of subjects from entry to university level with an emphasis on vocational learning as well as academic achievements. The college is a regular award winner – they recently were awarded the LSIS Leading the Learner Voice award for community and social cohesion. It has also received the Charter Mark, the government's national quality standard for customer excellence.

For many learners involved in post-16 education there remain few opportunities to meet with and experience the culture or way of life of another learner from a different faith, ethnic or socio-economic background. Exchanges between different career or vocational groups are also rare among learning and skills providers because of the day-to-day pressures of delivering training.

Staffing

The Swapping Cultures project was jointly co-ordinated and supported by lead staff members from the Hair and Beauty departments of Leicester and Hartlepool Colleges and a faith and enrichment co-ordinator. No physical or monetary resources were allocated to the project from Leicester College, although funds were allocated to pay for refreshments when Hartlepool College learners visited Leicester.

Leicester College does not have a formal staff development programme for the delivery of SMSC activities, and staff experience comes from other personal and professional development activities.

For teaching staff the focus is on how citizenship is supported and delivered in different organisations and understanding the benefits of the provision for the development, progression and achievement of the learners. In particular, for Leicester College teaching staff, the visit provided an opportunity to showcase and present teaching styles, programmes and resources to achieve the learning objectives for learners. In fact, at Leicester College the designated curriculum area was supported with enrichment activities and tutorials for the learners to raise their awareness and importance of equality, diversity, culture, values and beliefs in modern day society.

For the inclusion co-ordinator and enrichment co-ordinator of Leicester College, the major outcome was learning about how citizenship and enrichment activities are delivered in Hartlepool College.

SMSC development activity

Through the Swapping Cultures project, (supported by the LSIS PCSP) Leicester (lead college) and Hartlepool Colleges developed a programme on how learners and staff could learn from each other, especially if they had little exposure to the background of their counterparts. The project broadly aimed to provide learners with a chance to exchange educational environments, and to encourage opportunities through experiential learning and personal interaction to break down barriers of mistrust which may exist if people from different backgrounds do not interact. Ten Leicester College learners on the Level 2 Hair and Beauty programme (from diverse ethnic and faith backgrounds) visited Hartlepool College and participated in tutorial sessions and salon-based learning activities as well as cultural awareness tutorials. This activity was reciprocated with fifteen students and two members of staff from Hartlepool College completing a practical day at Leicester College.

The project was structured as follows:

- ten learners from diverse backgrounds on the Level 2 Hair and Beauty programme were nominated to take part in the project
- Leicester College hosted a visit of the Hartlepool College learners and staff in December 2009
- visitors (staff and learners) were given an opportunity to buddy up and take part in tutorial sessions and salon-based learning activities with Leicester College peers
- a tutorial was held with whole level 2 group on diversity and cultural awareness and introducing the project and activity day; it also explored the current set of diverse personal

values, skills and abilities the individual holds and how the environment, education and personal perceptions affect individuals' understanding of culture

- an assessment tool - What do we know about other people and does it matter? - was used to test Leicester College learners' knowledge of Hartlepool and the attitudinal survey devised by Hartlepool College was completed by the group
- 15 learners and two members of staff from Hartlepool College completed a practical day at Leicester College in December 2009
- review meetings to discuss follow-up work and tutorial support for Leicester College were organised.

Recognising achievement

For Leicester College one of the most significant outcomes was exposure of learners to their peer groups in another part of the country. During an initial tutorial, questions like 'Do they speak English?' and 'Will they need a passport to come to Leicester?' were asked. The discussion also explored the perceptions that the learners had, such as trying to understand their peers have never had opportunities to work with, for instance, African-Caribbean and Asian hair types or even experience of meeting people from different faiths and backgrounds. This discussion exposed the limited experience and knowledge some young people have of the country in which they may have been born and live in. Part of the programme allowed learners to work with different ethnic hair, products and equipment. For the Hartlepool learners in particular this was a new learning experience and they were able to articulate the benefits of the opportunity to their peers who supported them in the learning experience.

Learners

No formal process has been devised by Leicester College for evaluating the impact of the work but attitudinal surveys, developed by Hartlepool College, have been employed. This system is being developed into a more formal approach to capture the learner experience.

For the visit learners were not involved in planning or design. But the faith and enrichment co-ordinator helped design a cultural awareness programme and met with the Hair and Beauty learners during a tutorial to explore culture and tradition. Through this approach learners have been able to inform the programme and explore their expectations and what they will learn and gain from the session. The aim of this session is to widen and develop learner awareness of traditions and culture.

Despite difficulties in getting feedback from learners and capturing the experience, the programme increased the exposure of learners to the environment around them. It allowed a group of learners to interact with members of their peer groups from different backgrounds, cultures and traditions. This helped learners understand the context and reason for community cohesion and developing respect and understanding between different groups of people.

Future developments

Links are being established with partner colleges to allow learners to communicate with each other and create an understanding of the backgrounds, motivations and aspirations of their counterparts in other geographical areas. Leicester College will host a visit from its partners to allow the young

people to experience a multi-cultural and diverse learning environment.

The wider SMSC and citizenship agendas have been linked through this project. It also created the opportunity to build on existing activities – for instance, faith awareness, equality and diversity awareness, bullying, drug and alcohol misuse, moral and ethical issues.

The college has used this opportunity to contribute to the development of their tutorial and enrichment improvement project, and to examine how to include current citizenship and SMSC development agendas.

North Warwickshire & Hinckley College

Organisation

North Warwickshire & Hinckley College is a large further education college recognised for its outstanding work with individuals, communities and employers. The college provides vocational and academic provision in all sector subject areas. The most significant learner numbers are on courses in health, public services, care, preparation for life and work, motor vehicle and engineering, hairdressing and beauty therapy and business administration. During 2008-09, the college enrolled 22,000 learners. This year the college has 2,500 16-18-year-olds enrolled on full time courses. Learners from black and minority ethnic groups provide 12.2 per cent of enrolments.

The college's mission is to 'release potential and transform lives'. It works within the spirit of the following values:

- continue to strive for excellence
- constantly improve the learner experience, which is at the heart of everything we do
- carry on valuing each member of the college community and treating them with dignity and respect
- continue to remove barriers to success wherever possible
- keep caring for our environment ethically and efficiently
- carry on trusting and supporting each other
- continue to encourage co-operation with others in the development of provision.

As the college principal notes: "The embedding of opportunities to develop our students' confidence in and understanding about social, moral, spiritual and cultural issues is fundamental to the achievement of our college mission and to the development of behaviours which support our college values. These opportunities are at the heart of providing an outstanding learning experience in which students are prepared to become good citizens and active participants in the economic life of the nation."

Staffing

There are different features of SMSC support in the college but it is largely focused through the chaplaincy and student life areas. There are three members of chaplaincy staff (chaplain, assistant chaplain and chaplaincy assistant) supported by student volunteers. The work of the team of student volunteers is logged by V (the national young volunteers service) and earns a nationally recognised certificate. Staff and volunteers meet to discuss the programme and suggest additions. Volunteers often find they are drawn to tasks that

build on their vocational learning; for example, catering students running refreshments or floristry students involving others in craft activities. These learners find that they rise to the challenge of real responsibility and they see how much their work impacts on the life of the college.

The Student Life Team consists of qualified youth workers and counsellors as well as a nationally trained member of staff to run the non-smoking activity to issue NHS prescriptions for all products. Sexual health work is delivered by staff trained to level 3 and under a Warwickshire pregnancy testing protocol. Research with black and minority ethnic learners has highlighted the need for sessions to be delivered by black and minority ethnic staff members.

SMSC development activity

The overall aim of SMSC activity is that every full-time learner should be affected by the programme and, if desired, allowed to explore SMSC issues more deeply. In the autumn term 2009 there were 15 groups taking part in SMSC tutorials.

A Chaplaincy Festival Programme covering tutorials, events, competitions, appetisers and displays is the focus for SMSC development activity. The programme was introduced to provide a focus to the different work of the chaplaincy. It covered 11 religions in 2008-09, responding to learner requests and now includes paganism and Rastafarianism.

Tutorials

The programme is tailored to deliver tutorials in curriculum areas when the subject matter

matches vocational interests. – for instance floristry students created huts for the Jewish festival of Sukkot, travel and tourism students learned the stories and customs of Chinese new year; in fact, the most effective tutorials are when SMSC issues have obvious relevance to a vocational area. For example, floristry students have been motivated by developing window displays created around different religious festivals.

Whether it is business students thinking about the different cultural values around the world or catering students discussing ethical sourcing of produce, these tutorials help equip learners to live and work. Tutors have said of the tutorials 'a brilliant mix between theory and practical'.

Student life enrichment programme

Outside of timetabled hours learners can drop into the student centre, either just to relax or to join a youth work session. There is an extensive range of sessions designed to appeal to learners' personal lives and interests and several deal with SMSC issues, such as rights and responsibilities, positive alternatives to paid work, working in the community, investigating personal lifestyle, morals and values, politics, drugs, smoking and its consequences, emotional health, listening skills and relationships. With these activities there are many opportunities for learners to explore SMSC issues and controversial topics, even if their accredited course has limited connections to the subject.

Recognising achievement

Learners are given college certificates for all enrichment activities and work is being

undertaken towards developing a nationally recognised qualification for some areas, such as alcohol. Learners are also increasingly being nominated for awards for their work – for instance, some have reached the finals of Pride of Coventry and Warwickshire Community Award.

Learners

Learners respond at many different levels - from announcing 'I love college' when receiving a free gift for epiphany, to exploring important lessons on life when celebrating Hindu festivals. All the activities are relatively informal and no two sessions are ever the same. Almost every topic includes some element of controversy and staff provide a learner environment to explore and question the elements of a topic. Different voices and views are captured continuously. Typical comments made by learners include the following: 'I've gained understanding about subjects I thought I knew', 'I felt comfortable expressing my own views and hearing different views', 'I loved the activities about paganism', 'the lessons can't get better', 'I have learned that if you don't agree with someone it doesn't mean they are wrong', 'I enjoyed the whole thing', and 'the Student Centre has made a difference to my learning'.

Enrichment is an agenda item during student forum meetings that provide feedback on SMSC activity. Learners also give feedback at principal's question time, which is part of a Student Parliament in the college.

Future developments

A partnership with a community agency and grant making trust is being developed to enable the college to employ another member of staff to

oversee and extend the chaplaincy tutorial programme. The aim will be to collate and create tutorial plans for web publication so that they can be used by other chaplaincies or people doing similar work in other colleges.

The student life enrichment programme is being developed to be a progression into the new Foundation Learning offer since September 2009.

Salford City College

Organisation

Salford City College was established as a general further education college in January 2009 following the merger of Salford College of Further Education, Eccles Sixth Form College and Pendleton Sixth Form College. It has four main centres: Pendleton, Eccles, Worsley and the city campus, each with their own centre principal and two smaller sites at De La Salle and Winton. It is now the second largest college in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area. In 2008-09, the new college enrolled 5,680 learners aged 16 to 18 and 5,540 adult learners across all 15 sector subject areas.

The college's mission is 'to inspire people to create opportunities and enrich lives through learning'. The college has Beacon status and is a partner with others in two Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) in construction and media studies.

Staffing

At Salford City College, SMSC provision is delivered by the chaplaincy team (funded by the college). The team comprises a chaplaincy co-

ordinator (Christian, 2.5 days per week), a tutor chaplain (Muslim, 2.5 days per week) four assistant chaplains (each half a day per week), and faith community volunteers. The assistant chaplains have been recruited from the local Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and Buddhist communities. There is a dedicated chaplaincy budget to assist with SMSC development.

The co-ordinator has overall responsibility for SMSC development and arranges the deployment of assistant chaplains and volunteers for pastoral support and specific projects such as 'Guns, Gangs and Knives', teenage pregnancy and fair-trade. The tutor chaplain has responsibility for the development of SMSC within the curriculum and manages the contribution of the assistant chaplains to teaching programmes.

The chaplaincy works closely with assistant principals for learner services on each of the sites to develop a strategy. The chaplaincy managers and the assistant principals all report to the director of quality and learner services.

SMSC development activity

The SMSC education programme covers a number of aspects including:

- open events associated with initiatives such as One World Week; Healthy College Week; Teenage Pregnancy Support; Gun and Knife Crime
- faith celebrations such as Eid and Passover
- Multi-Faith Question Time for AS level students
- faith awareness sessions for individual tutor groups as part of the college induction programme
- faith and belief awareness sessions designed for specific vocational and academic courses

including childcare from a faith perspective and public service students wishing to join the police force

- health and social care sessions addressing patient care from a faith perspective
- an introduction to Buddhism for Performing Arts students
- gender issues in Islam for Sociology students
- Judaism and Islam awareness sessions for History students studying the Middle East since 1918.

Recognising achievement

After each session or event, tutors and students complete feedback forms to assist future curriculum development. Each week the assistant chaplains submit an impact log to the tutor chaplain outlining their activities for the week and feedback from learners and staff.

Learners

There are different aspects of the learner experience. For example, after a session on Buddhism for Performing Arts, a tutor commented: "It went really, really well and got my students talking about things – even afterwards in the canteen! It also helped the students to realise where a lot of the relaxation and breathing techniques used for acting have been taken from. I think it definitely helped expand their minds, and they would be interested in following this session up with one on Christianity. My second year tutor group heard about it and want it booking for them! You are all in popular demand!" After a faith awareness session for Public Services students, the learners made various comments including: 'we learnt about different cultures', 'we learnt Jewish people eat Kosher', 'the big fat

statue is not the Buddha', 'I learnt more about my own religion', 'Sikhs carry five Ks', 'it was fun and exciting.' and 'it showed us diversity'.

Future developments

The tutor chaplain is researching further opportunities to encourage the inclusion of SMSC development and delivery into teaching and learning alongside Every Child Matters (ECM) and equality and diversity issues. Plans are being developed to extend faith and belief awareness sessions to learners on catering, hair and beauty, business, travel and tourism, and construction courses. An overseas project which would involve learners undertaking fundraising activities to finance an overseas trip to support an educational project is also being considered.

“It went really, really well and got my students talking about things”

5. Key lessons

As noted from the outset this guidance is suggestive in approach – it highlights the context, resources and examples of good practice in the area of SMSC development and delivery.

Above all, it highlights the relevance of SMSC development for the learning and skills sector, and provides support on how to plan, deliver and assess appropriate SMSC development.

The guidance is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive and recognises that individual learning and skills providers will engage with and develop this agenda according to their particular circumstances. Nevertheless, from the case studies outlined in Section 4 SMSC development activities are more effective when:

- the SMSC provision is recognised as a practical expression of institutional or organisational vision, values and purposes
- the SMSC provision receives strong and explicit leadership, co-ordination and support from senior leaders and management within the organisation
- there is strong commitment to the learner voice and encouragement for learners to influence the shape and delivery of activities and discuss controversial subjects, such as through tutorials and enrichment sessions
- cultural, religion and belief literacy is acknowledged as necessary for a harmonious society whatever the ethnic or religious diversity of an institution's immediate locality
- the SMSC provision is embedded into mainstream curriculum and tutorial programmes
- the SMSC development is linked with other significant national initiatives, such as Every Child Matters; Guns, Gangs and Knives; and Teenage Pregnancy
- there is strong commitment to including SMSC development topics within continuous professional development programmes, and all staff are encouraged to contribute to the agenda
- the SMSC development activities involve local communities and stakeholders, and learners are taken into the community and networks developed with local experts on SMSC issues
- learners from different regions of the country engage in joint learning activities
- the full range of available learning technologies and media is used to enhance the learning experience
- targets for delivering SMSC provision are agreed and monitored through Equality Impact Assessments and Single Equality Schemes.

“SMSC development is linked with other significant national initiatives”

Annex 1: References and resources

The following resources list is divided according to the four themes (spiritual, moral, social and cultural). Resources with a wider range can be found under the general section. Web addresses have been provided where they exist.

Key websites and further support

- **LSIS** (Learning and Skills Improvement Service), includes the National Healthy FE website. www.lsis.org.uk
- **Excellence Gateway**. The Excellence Gateway offers an unrivalled breadth of resources, support and advice, and opportunities to participate and share good practice. www.excellencegateway.org.uk
- **Safe Colleges**. This site contains information and guidance, plus useful links to further material about: Dialogue; Policies and Procedures; Preventing Violent Extremism; and Guns, Gangs and Knives. www.safecolleges.org.uk
- **The National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in FE (fbfe)**. Information and up-to-date-news about fbfe, publications, projects, etc. www.fbfe.org.uk
- Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme. A guide to the resources and support available from the Post-16 Citizenship support programme (PCSP). www.post16citizenship.org
- **Ofsted**. Key documents for learning and skills sector SMSC development include: **Common Inspection Framework** (2009) and **Common Inspection Framework** (Handbook, 2009) for the learning and skills sector.

Learning together: How education providers promote social responsibility and community cohesion (2010). Survey results of how aware local authorities and education providers were of what makes for good citizenship education and formation amongst learners.

Citizenship established? (2010). This report, based mainly on schools but with relevance to post-compulsory education, shows steady progress in citizenship education since 2002. www.ofsted.gov.uk

Promoting and evaluating pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, (Ofsted, 2004), www.ofsted.gov.uk

General resources

- **Supporting learners to succeed (SLTS): Guidance for pastoral provision – key messages**, (LSIS, Teaching and Learning Programme, 2009). Sets out the key points involved with whole organisation pastoral care, including definitions and check-lists. <http://teachingandlearning.qia.org.uk/tlp/psp/resource/index.php>
- **Good Practice Guidance for a Healthier College**, (NAMMS: National Association for Managers of Student Services in Colleges, 2009). Commissioned by the Dept. of Health and feeds into Healthy FE initiative. Composed of 15 in-depth case studies covering every aspect of health and wellbeing. <http://www.goodpracticeforahealthiercollege.co.uk>

- **Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Mental Health Strategy: The Way Forward. Implementing the Vision of Learning and Work**, (LSC, 2009). Outlines good practice for the sector around inclusion and support of learners with mental health issues; includes case studies. www.lsc.gov.uk/publications
- **Guidance on Equality and Employment in FE Colleges: Religion and Belief (AoC 2008)**. This offers more than a guide round the legislation. It suggests positive provision to meet diverse needs as well as legal obligations. www.aoc.co.uk/en/publications
- **Equality and Diversity in Self-Assessment: Guidance for Colleges and Providers**, (LSC, 2009). Offers advice and sign-posting on all aspects of equality and diversity. www.lsc.gov.uk/publications
- **Visible and Valued: The leadership of sexual orientation equality in the FE system**, (LSIS, 2006). The leadership of sexual orientation equality in the FE system (DVD and training programme) research revealed widespread discrimination and harassment of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the learning and skills system. Using documentary testimony and dramatised video sequences, Visible and valued provides activities and exercises that deepen awareness of and help to develop strategies for, sexual orientation equality within the sector. www.excellencegateway.org.uk/239353

- **Whole People Matter**: The importance of continuing the spiritual, ethical, social and cultural development of each learner: A way of approaching citizenship: A paper to promote discussion and reflection, (The Methodist Church, 2003). Seeks to ask what value the concept of 'holistic education' has in further education. www.fbfe.org.uk
- **Promoting the Work of FE Colleges: Economic and social well-being: enriching lives, demonstrating value**, (LSIS, 2009). A document responding to the push from government that further education institutions should promote the wellbeing of people who live or work in the locality of their institution. www.lsis.org.uk

Spiritual development

- **All Faiths and None** – AFAN (2009). Comprehensive learning and skills sector resource bank of information on six main faiths and humanism, including visuals, video-clips, teaching materials, plus support to colleges and continuing professional development (CPD) programmes. www.afan.uk.net
- **Faith Communities Toolkit:** for leaders and managers in the learning and skills sector, (CEL, 2005). Provides thorough information for colleges around engaging with faith communities and gives basic information on the major faith traditions in the UK. Helpful glossary and web-links. www.lsis.org.uk
- **Faith in the Community:** Leadership Challenges in the Learning and Skills Sector, (CEL Research Report, 2007). A document which examines the relationship between Muslim communities and colleges. Includes suggestions for deeper engagement with Muslim concerns around post-16 education. www.lsis.org.uk
- **College/Faith Community Partnerships and Student Retention,** (LSC/NEAFE, 2003). Based on research in four colleges, identifies ways in which multi-faith chaplaincy and mentoring improves college visibility and student retention among minority communities. www.cofe.anglican.org/info/education/hefe/fe/communityfaith
- **Making space for faith:** values, beliefs and faiths in the learning and skills sector: A report on the national enquiry into opportunities for spiritual and moral development in further education, (NEAFE/FIFEF, 2005). The report offers statistical evidence that issues of values, beliefs and faiths are important to learners and staff alike in the learning and skills sector. www.fbfe.org.uk
- **Faiths and Further Education:** A Handbook. Towards a Whole-College Approach to Chaplaincy for a Pluralist Society, (NEAFE/LSC, 2005). Comprehensively establishes the case for inclusive chaplaincy provision including information on different models of chaplaincy plus sample job descriptions and management agreement form. www.fbfe.org.uk
- **Multi-faith Chaplaincy:** A Guide for Colleges on Developing Multi-Faith Student Support, (LSC/fbfe, 2007). A companion to the 2005 handbook with further information on chaplaincy and community cohesion. Contains helpful chaplaincy benchmarks. www.fbfe.org.uk
- **Welcome to Chaplaincy:** A Training Programme for Multi-Faith Chaplaincy in the Further Education Sector, (LSC/fbfe, 2009). A nine-module self or small group study programme, includes topics such as pastoral care, youth spirituality and setting up multi-faith provision. www.fbfe.org
- **Churches' National Adviser in Further Education** (john.breadon@c-of-e.co.uk) produces FIFE – (Faith in FE) a monthly e-bulletin to support colleges with values, beliefs and faith issues and chaplaincies. Also runs regular national training events.
- **The Journal of Chaplaincy in Further Education.** Published by fbfe and founded in 2005, has a range of useful articles including: Inspecting for SMSC Development – Peter Green

HMI (Vol 2.2, 2006). Article on how inspectors look for evidence of good provision in each category of SMSC in FE colleges, with some advice on good practice.

Spiritual Development for Materialists –

Andrew Copson BHA (Vol 2.2 Autumn 2006). Humanist perspective on spiritual development, belief and non-belief, moral values etc for young people in the learning and skills sector. Full Circle – Ann Limb and Lynne Sedgemore (Vol 4.2) A short history of the development of values and beliefs in the learning and skills sector, seen through the eyes of NEAFE and fbfe

All Faiths and None: Passing Fashion or Tectonic Shift – Alan Murray (Vol. 1.2, 2010). Development of the Learning and Skills Council-funded AFAN programme, providing materials for colleges since 2007.

Values, Beliefs and Faiths in FE – Archbishop Rowan Williams (1), Sheik Abdul Mahiel (2) (Vol 3.1, 2007). Articles from a Christian and Muslim perspective taken from a conference on SMSC, and Values, Beliefs and Faiths in FE at Lambeth Palace.

Spirituality in Further Education: A Literature Review – (Parts 1 + 2 Vols 3.1 and 3.2, 2007). Two articles reviewing the history of SMSC in the learning and skills sector since the 1970s.

Taking Young People Seriously – Alan Murray; Spiritual and Moral Development in Post-16 Learning and Skills – Ann Limb (Vol 1.2, 2005). Two introductory articles on applying the SMSC development requirement to the learning and skills sector.

Moral development

- **Green Colleges**, (AoC, 2007). Outlines the role colleges can play in moving towards a more sustainable society. Contains good signposting material. www.aoc.co.uk/en/publications
- **Happy planet**: sustainable development and citizenship (QIA, 2007) www.post16citizenship.org. This pack has been produced to support the integration of citizenship into post-16 education and training and contains activities for use with learners in the whole range of post-16 settings.
- **More than profit**: work, social enterprise and citizenship (QIA, 2007) www.post16citizenship.org. The pack has been produced by the post-16 citizenship support programme to help the integration of citizenship education into post-16 vocational and work related learning programmes.

Social development

- **The Role of Further Education Providers in Promoting Community Cohesion**, Fostering Shared Values and Promoting Violent Extremism: Consultation Document, (DIUS/ AoC, 2008). Establishes government priorities around community cohesion in colleges and suggests good practice around student mixing and inter-faith and belief dialogue. www.dius.gov.uk/further_education/guidance_and_good_practice/preventing_violent_extremism
- **Learning Together to be Safe**: A toolkit to help colleges contribute to the prevention of violent extremism, (July 2009). The toolkit aims to raise awareness in colleges of the threat from extremist groups and provide advice for

taking action against extremism. www.dius.gov.uk/further_education/guidance_and_good_practice/preventing_violent_extremism

- **Promoting and evaluating young people's social and emotional wellbeing in secondary education**: NICE public health guidance 20 (NICE, 2009). Focuses on six key recommendations including better institutional pastoral care. www.nice.org.uk/PH20
- **Active citizenship**: learning resources for topical issues (QIA, 2007) www.post16citizenship.org. This collection of resources contains information and activities for young people learning about ten topical and often controversial issues. The aim of each resource is to introduce the key facts and arguments surrounding a citizenship topic and to provide introductory learning activities.
- **Agree to disagree**: Citizenship and controversial issues (LSIS, 2009) www.post16citizenship.org. The activities in this pack can be used with either staff, within a training and development session, or learners, as part of their citizenship programme. They aim to introduce participants to the meaning of 'controversy'; to provide techniques for dealing with controversy; and to build the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to use these techniques effectively.
- **Choosing an angle**: Citizenship through video production (LSDA, 2006) www.post16citizenship.org. This pack is intended to be a practical and accessible guide to citizenship teaching and learning through video production.
- **Citizenship and 14-19 developments**: Quick Guides - 1) Overview of 14-19 Developments

(LSIS, 2009) www.post16citizenship.org. This revised Quick Guide, the first of a series of 13 highlighting 14-19 opportunities for citizenship, offers an overview of 14-19 developments of particular relevance to citizenship including Every Child Matters and the Common Inspection Framework, community cohesion, personalisation and learner voice, the GCSE and GCE qualifications in Citizenship Studies, the Diploma, Foundation, Higher and Extended Projects and Skills. This resource is available in electronic format only

- **Citizenship Uncovered**: a young person's guide to post-16 citizenship (LSDA, 2006) www.post16citizenship.org. This DVD has been produced with an advisory group of young people who have themselves taken part in citizenship programmes. They have made the DVD to explain post-16 citizenship education to other young people.
- **For the sake of argument**: discussion and debating skills in citizenship (LSIS, 2009) www.post16citizenship.org. This is a practical introduction to discussion and debating skills development within a citizenship context. Learners are helped to express their opinions in a clear and logical way, to think critically and develop reasoned arguments about citizenship issues.
- **Foundations of citizenship**: Activities for learners at entry level (LSIS, 2009) www.post16citizenship.org. This pack contains activities to build the foundations for citizenship learning with learners at the consolidation and application stages of entry level 1 (which includes the former pre-entry level) and at entry levels 2 and 3. They can also be adapted to be

used more widely with learners and also in staff training and development.

- **Getting started with post-16 citizenship** (Revised edition, LSIS, 2009) www.post16citizenship.org. This publication aims to support the introduction of citizenship teaching and learning in the post-16 education and training sector. It is now updated to include guidance and case studies specific to post-16 education and training settings including colleges, school sixth forms, work-based learning, youth and community groups and offender learning.
- **Getting the show on the road**: skills for planning and running citizenship events (QIA, 2006) www.post16citizenship.org. An active introduction for staff and learners to the skills needed to run a successful citizenship event. Activities focus on how the citizenship context impacts on the use of these skills and ways to help young people identify, develop, practice and apply the skills they need to be effective contributors to citizenship events, and to reflect on what they learn in the process.
- **Joining the game**: Themes for post-16 citizenship (LSIS, 2009) www.post16citizenship.org. This pack looks at the social and political debates surrounding the Olympic and Paralympics Games that raise important citizenship issues which are likely to be of interest to young people, such as how can political differences between competitor countries interfere with the games, and how can ordinary people have a say in preparation for the games and the events surrounding them.

- **Listening to learners?** Citizenship and learner voice (LSIS, 2009) www.post16citizenship.org. This pack can be used with staff engaged in training and development to help enrich learner voice through citizenship or with learners who have an interest in supporting and developing learner voice within their organisation.
- **Moving forward together:** citizenship learning for community cohesion (QIA, 2008) www.post16citizenship.org. This pack of materials aims to help you explore community cohesion with your learners in a citizenship context.
- **Post-16 citizenship:** a guide for leaders and coordinators (LSIS, 2009) www.post16citizenship.org. This guide examines the benefits that citizenship can bring and the ways in which leaders and co-ordinators can ensure that these benefits are embedded in the whole ethos of the organisation. The guide also considers how citizenship education can provide a vehicle and context for many current educational initiatives for 14-19 year olds.
- **Reality Check:** Citizenship through simulation (LSDA, 2006) www.post16citizenship.org. This pack is aimed at facilitators wishing to use simulations in a programme of active citizenship, in which learners are encouraged to take some real action in their organisation or community.
- **Straight talking:** citizenship and offender learning (LSIS, 2009) www.post16citizenship.org. This pack provides information, case studies and educational materials for introducing citizenship into programmes designed to better prepare young offenders for life in the community. Citizenship provides opportunities for young offenders to engage in debate about the kind of world that they want to live in and their own responsibilities in making such a world possible.
- **The language of citizenship: activities for ESOL learners** (QIA, 2008) www.post16citizenship.org. This pack of resources focuses on the needs of learners aged 16-19 and contains activities which can be used with learners as part of a citizenship programme or in free-standing ESOL classes.
- **We all came here from somewhere: Diversity, identities and citizenship** (QIA, 2006) www.post16citizenship.org. The activities in this pack are designed to be used with learners as part of a citizenship programme. They provide a range of ways of encouraging debate about the concepts of 'identity', 'cultural identity' and 'national identity'. It also includes two DVDs.
- **Making it click:** an interactive guide to post-16 citizenship (LSDA, 2005) www.post16citizenship.org. This interactive CD-ROM offers a comprehensive guide to post-16 citizenship. It has been developed to support staff interested in offering citizenship in education and training organisations and in community groups.
- **More than volunteering: active citizenship through youth volunteering** (QIA, 2007) www.post16citizenship.org. This booklet illustrates how citizenship knowledge and skills can be developed through volunteering. Activities such as community involvement, service learning and youth-led projects are valuable for developing active citizenship.

Cultural development

- **Get up stand up:** Citizenship through music (LSDA, 2005) www.post16citizenship.org. This resource pack, a booklet and DVD, aims to introduce citizenship education to post-16 learners through the medium of music, song, poetry or rap.
- **More than words:** Citizenship through art (LSDA, 2005) www.post16citizenship.org. Citizenship through art aims to introduce citizenship education to post-16 learners through the medium of art. It is intended to be a fun and comprehensive guide for those directly involved in citizenship provision voluntary organisations, the youth service, training organisations, schools and colleges.
- **The Real Picture:** Citizenship through photography (LSDA, 2004) www.post16citizenship.org. This pack encourages an active exploration of society, aiming to explore issues, challenge opinion and share conclusions through the medium of photography.

Annex 2: Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework

The following is a commentary, observation and interpretation of SMSC within the common inspection framework.

Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework (September 2009) contains two references to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners, though there are many other questions that touch either directly or indirectly on all of the four thematic areas. However social development – as perhaps the most measurable or tangible of the four themes – is predominant throughout framework and handbook alike.

The first complete reference to SMSC development comes under the general heading of Outcomes for learners: **(A1b) learners develop personal and social skills, including, as appropriate, spiritual, moral and cultural aspects.** Note two things. Firstly, evaluation of the learners' acquisition of personal and social skills are separated from spiritual, moral and cultural ones, and, secondly, that the handbook provides no further guidance on the matter. This is to allow each college or institution space to define for itself to inspectors what SMSC development means for them. This is important: no generic definition of spiritual development, for example, will work for all. Consider what it does mean for you and stick to it to avoid confusion. The definitions provided in chapter 3 should be considered as starting points only.

Still within the broad heading of outcomes for learners, the next three references to SMSC development focus mainly on personal and social issues.

(A2) How well do learners improve their economic and social wellbeing through learning and development? To make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- learners develop relevant knowledge, understanding and skills which contribute to their economic and social wellbeing
- learners increase their employability
- learners understand their rights and responsibilities at work.

The handbook adds the following additional guidance for inspectors who should take into account where relevant learners' development of qualifications, skills and knowledge that will enable them to progress to their chosen career, employment and further education and training and learners' development of additional, relevant employability skills which may include:

- additional qualifications and experiences in the workplace
- literacy and numeracy skills
- broader skills relevant to learner career aims, such as communications, teamwork, leadership, taking responsibilities, problem solving and commitment
- learner development of an understanding of careers and progression opportunities and their ability to benefit from training and development opportunities
- learner development of financial literacy and competencies
- learner understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens and consumers in the community and as learners at the provider and at work.

(A4) Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and wellbeing? To make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- learners have the knowledge and understanding to enable them to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing

The handbook adds the following additional guidance for inspectors who should take into account where relevant:

- use of available learner health and wellbeing data to identify the health needs of all groups, including the most vulnerable
- use of learner views on the range and quality of health-related services provided
- partnership work with external agencies to support delivery and facilitate referral to specialist services
- learner awareness of the consequences of smoking, alcohol abuse and drugs, insufficient physical exercise and an unhealthy diet
- learner participation in activities which tackle key aspects of learners' physical and mental health, wellbeing and emotional development
- learner opportunities to access confidential support
- learner involvement in developing a range of opportunities and activities which are inclusive and have high rates of participation, to increase their levels of physical activity and to improve the uptake of healthy food choices within the provider's setting.

(A5) How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community? To make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- learners are involved in additional community-based development activities and projects
- learners develop skills, knowledge and understanding relevant to community cohesion and sustainable development

The handbook adds the following additional guidance:

- learner understanding of their local and wider community, which may include their workplace, learning community or neighbourhood
- learner participation in events to support the community, such as voluntary work, charity events and fundraising
- learner take-up of opportunities to participate and be involved in developing provider activities and policies for the benefit of themselves and other learners, for example, student union or council, social events and course representatives
- learner understanding of their role in contributing to their communities
- learner understanding of issues relating to sustainable development and how they can contribute to reducing global warming.

The next full reference to SMSC development comes under Quality of provision:

(B2) How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users? To make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- enrichment activities or extended services, including work experience, contribute to learners' enjoyment and achievement, and their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

This emphasis is new and shows a broader focus on enrichment.

The next area of provision which touches on SMSC elements is that of learner support and pastoral care. With every meaningful contact – either between learners or with a member of staff – some aspect of SMSC development can be said to be taking place. This is especially so with more affective and sustained relationships such as with a personal tutor or trusted member of staff, a counsellor or chaplain. Once again, the emphasis here is on forging creative links between different aspects of the college's provision – especially in connection with overlooked areas like spiritual and moral development. It is helpful to record this and make the information and evidence available during inspection.

(B4) How effective is the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them attain learning goals? To make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which:

- learners receive individual care and support to promote their learning and development, and to help them achieve their potential

Amongst the handbook's further guidance is:

- the availability and quality of support for learners on personal issues
- the extent to which individual learners' additional support needs are accurately identified early in the programme and met quickly through the provision of appropriate resources and support throughout a learner's programme
- how well learners are involved in the planning, reviewing and evaluation of provision to meet their support needs
- whether services are sensitive to and promote equality of opportunity and awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity.

Finally, equality and diversity:

(C4) How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?

From September 2009 Ofsted have made equality and diversity a limiting judgement and one of the new equality strands, religion or belief, clearly impacts on the institution's provision for SMSC development.

Annex 3:

Benchmarks for organisational performance around SMSC development provision

Institutions that are encouraging learners' spiritual development are likely to be:

- giving learners the opportunity to explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they affect peoples' lives
- where learners already have religious beliefs, supporting and developing these beliefs in ways which are personal and relevant to them
- encouraging learners to explore and develop what animates themselves and others
- encouraging learners to reflect and learn from reflection
- giving learners the opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions, the way they affect people and how an understanding of them can be helpful
- developing a climate or ethos within which all learners can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected
- accommodating difference and respecting the integrity of individuals
- promoting teaching styles which:
- value learner questions and give them space for their thoughts, ideas and concerns
- enable learners to make connections between aspects of their learning
- encourage learners to relate their learning to a wider frame of reference – for example, asking why? how? and where? as well as what?
- monitoring, in simple, pragmatic ways, the success of what is provided.

Institutions that are encouraging learners' moral development are likely to be:

- providing a clear institution ethos and mission statement as a basis for behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the institution
- promoting measures to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age and other criteria
- giving learners opportunities across the curriculum and elsewhere to explore and develop moral concepts and values
- developing an open and safe learning environment in which learners can express their views and practise moral decision-making
- modelling, through the quality of relationships and interactions, the principles which they wish to promote – for example, fairness, integrity, respect for people, learner welfare, respect for minority interests, resolution of conflict, keeping promises and contracts
- recognising and respecting the codes and morals of the different cultures represented in the institution and wider community
- encouraging learners to take responsibility for their actions; for example, respect for property, care of the environment, and developing codes of behaviour
- reinforcing the institution's values through images, posters, displays, screensavers and exhibitions
- monitoring, in simple, pragmatic ways, the success of what is provided.

Institutions that are encouraging learners' social development are likely to be:

- identifying key values and principles on which institution and community life is based
- fostering a sense of community, with common, inclusive values which ensure that everyone, irrespective of ethnic origin, nationality, gender, ability, sexual orientation and religion can flourish
- encouraging learners to work co-operatively
- encouraging learners to recognise and respect social differences and similarities
- providing positive corporate experiences
- helping learners to challenge, when necessary and in appropriate ways, the values of a group or wider community
- helping learners resolve tensions between their own aspirations and those of the group or wider society
- providing a conceptual and linguistic framework within which to understand and debate social issues
- providing opportunities for engaging in the democratic process and participating in community life
- providing opportunities for learners to exercise leadership and responsibility
- providing positive and effective links with the world of work and the wider community
- monitoring, in simple, pragmatic ways, the success of what is provided.

Institutions that are encouraging learners' cultural development are likely to be:

- providing opportunities for learners to explore their cultural assumptions and values
- presenting authentic accounts of the attitudes, values and traditions of diverse cultures
- addressing discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age and other criteria and promoting racial and other forms of equality
- extending learner knowledge and use of cultural imagery and language
- recognising and nurturing particular gifts and talents
- providing opportunities for learners to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts and other cultural events and encouraging learners to reflect on their significance
- developing partnerships with outside agencies and individuals to extend learner cultural awareness
- reinforcing the institution's cultural values through displays, posters, exhibitions etc
- auditing the quality and nature of opportunities for learners to extend their cultural development across the curriculum and elsewhere
- monitoring, in simple, pragmatic ways, the success of what is provided.

Annex 4: Audit frameworks for organisations

Audit areas

Audit questions

Institutional values and leadership

- How would developing SMSC support for learners enhance our organisation’s mission and values?
- What is our organisation’s vision and purpose for SMSC development?
- How is senior management promoting this vision to the organisation and the wider community?
- Who is responsible for leading SMSC development?
- How does SMSC development link to learner voice strategies and citizenship education?
- Are targets for SMSC education included in the organisational development plan?
- What does our public documentation say about SMSC?
- Who co-ordinates SMSC activities?
- Who is in the SMSC team? (staff, external contributors, others)
- Who is involved in making decisions about SMSC?
- What structure and mechanisms do we have in place to enable staff and young people to take part in decision making?

Resources and management

- What resources are there for SMSC?
- How are resources allocated?
- How are resources identified?
- Are there new resources that would be helpful for SMSC and how are these selected?

Provision and assessment

- What kind of activities do we already do that contribute to SMSC?
- What kind of provision do we want to make in the future for SMSC learning in this organisation and in the wider community?
- Are there timetabled SMSC sessions?
- Does SMSC activity occur currently in any, or all, of the following learning opportunities and activities within the college: qualifications and personal learning programmes, group tutorials, enrichment, volunteering and community programmes, projects and pastoral support?
- What size and scale of programme do we want to develop? How many young people will we work with on SMSC programmes?

- How are SMSC opportunities, objectives and actions in the learning framework being addressed?
- Are there any barriers to young people taking part in SMSC activities that we need to address?
- How will we and young people know they are learning and achieving?
- How will SMSC achievement be recognised?

Staffing

- How is SMSC development organised and staffed? Is there co-ordination of provision with a named member of staff such as the Every Child Matters co-ordinator, citizenship co-ordinator or college chaplain taking a lead in this work?
- What skills and expertise do staff have that can contribute to SMSC?
- How are we going to support and develop our staff’s SMSC expertise?
- How will we ensure that there is time and space for SMSC development?
- What can we learn from other organisations involved in providing SMSC?

Monitoring and evaluation

- How are we going to monitor our SMSC provision?
- How will we evaluate SMSC?
- How will we involve young people in monitoring and evaluation?*

Wider community involvement

- Who else can be involved in SMSC from the wider community?
- What links can we build on with external contributors and organisations to support our programme of SMSC?
- How are we communicating with others about our SMSC programme and achievements?
- How is our organisation contributing to community cohesion?

Glossary

A number of abbreviations are used throughout the guide. The most common are set out below for convenience.

- AoC** Association of Colleges
- CEL** Centre for Excellence in Leadership
- CIC** Commission on Integration and Cohesion
- CRB** Criminal Records Bureau
- DIUS** (former) Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
- ECM** Every Child Matters
- ESF** European Social Fund
- fbfe** The National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education
- FENW** Faith in England's North West
- FIFEF** Faiths in Further Education Forum
- HE** higher education
- LSC** Learning and Skills Council
- LSDA** Learning and Skills Development Agency (now LSN)
- LSF** learning support fund
- LSN** Learning and Skills Network (formerly LSDA)
- NEAFE** National Ecumenical Agency for Further Education (now fbfe)
- NICE** National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
- QCA** Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
- SAR** self-assessment report
- SMSC** spiritual, moral, social and cultural
- RAWM** Regional Action West Midlands
- RDA** regional development agency.