

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

11 NOVEMBER, 2004

Ahmed Arif Emag team, Education Walsall.

Cal- Aaj is an Education forum composed of members from Walsall's leading Muslim community organisations [Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Gujarati]. The forum's purpose is to enable collaborative work between the Muslim communities and schools. Cal-AAj offers consultation to school on areas that will support the raising of attainment and achievement of Muslim pupils.

We are keen to establish a working relationship with ACRE as two of our key objectives are to:

- Enable schools to appreciate the value of mosques as places of learning and encourage mosques and schools to work in partnership for a continuing school day.
- Ensure that schools value and address the social, cultural, linguistic, ethnic and Islamic needs of pupils.

Ahmed will make a brief presentation to SACRE on the work the Cal-AAj forum. One outcome of this agenda item will to determine the working relationship that we can establish between SACRE and Cal -Aaj

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Cal AAJ Forum

The Consultative Forum was set up in order to address the educational needs of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Gujarati heritage pupils. It has long been recognised that both schools and communities have wanted to work collaboratively to address the issues of underachievement of these communities. The Consultative forum has four principles:

- Celebrate all the ways in which pupils achieve
- Address the issues of educational underachievement
- Raise attainment by redressing the causes of underachievement
- Engage with community cohesion issues

Whilst there have been local partnerships between schools and individuals within the community, the consultative forum seeks to build and develop these so that a coherent and unified approach is taken. The Forum will, therefore, enable a strategic and operational partnership to operate between the community, parents, schools and Education Walsall.

What the Education Walsall Community Forum hopes to achieve is a balance between the needs of the community and the needs of the school.

Capacity and Coordination

- To employ the potential of the community
- The professionals
- The wealth of knowledge, associations and networks of representatives to wider levers of change
- Physical resources
- Fulfilling the educational remit of community groups.

Issues into Targets

Meeting the language, cultural , personal, religious needs of the pupils and their parents

- Ensuring the schools value the culture and language of the pupils and the school is free of any forms of discrimination e.g Islamophobia.
- School and community liaison with clear lines of communication established for each school to provide support and advice to head teachers.
- Educators create packages of work for the curriculum that support the idea of a positive role models from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.
- The role of governors and their duties and responsibilities

Parental Support

- Pupils and parents need to have their experiences of home life valued and understood.
- Parents need to have support for their roles and responsibilities.
- Relationships and liaison with Mosque and the continuing learning day
- Improving parental involvement in the child's learning:
- Improved attendance at parents evening.
- Improving punctuality and attendance
- Programmes that support pupils who go for extended leave to Pakistan and Bangladesh. Provide reintegration support to parents.
- Workshop for mothers and Educational surgeries.

Cal – Aaj Forum

Our Successes 03-04 : What's been achieved

The partnership has been in operation since September 2003 and the following has been achieved:

The Consultative Forum, has successfully completed one year of a consultation exercise in which the following have been achieved:

- A comprehensive action plan which sets out the areas of need that pupils have and the ways in which schools and the community can work collaboratively to support each other to address those needs.
- Training and guidance to the members of the Forum from Education Walsall personnel to have a fuller understanding of the operation of schools.
- Developing mechanisms for collaboration between members of the Forum and Head teachers. All Heads are now aware of the programme and keen to join.

Other Successes:

Community Cohesion – partnering a school to the community.
Revision Workshops within community settings

The Cal-Aaj Forum is embarking on an exciting partnership over the coming years. During the year 2004-5 the Forum needs to work with schools and head teachers, the blueprint for this partnership has been laid and participation from all members of the community is invited.

DRAFT Cul – Aaj Education Consultative Forum Time Line . 04 -05

Areas of development	When by	Success criteria
To complete consultation within Cul – Aaj! Forum Please invite Ahmed to your next meeting or use Ahmed to set up your subcommittee.	Oct – November	A policy statement to schools explaining the roles organisations can play and the services they can provide to schools – and the cost of this . See template to fill in.
Launch of Forum within community	January 2005	All community organisations hold a launch to inform parents and community of their role and the services schools can provide
Carry out consultation with Heads	November – December	Terms of reference and action plan agreed.
Launch with schools	January 2005	Schools share their plans for raising attainment
Create plans to engage parents in learning e.g Croft to deal with extended school leave; attendance,		Each community organisation has plans to host one parents evening attended by Head teacher
Setting up a network meeting time.	December -	3 meetings per year
Development programme : Interfaith Agreed syllabus; Director Learning, Behaviour and exclusion services, Director of	Ongoing through out year	Developing other routes through which raising attainment can be achieved and the responsibility shared

Learning		
Role of the mosques in the continuing school day	December meeting with chairs of all mosque committee	Mosques and schools have a clear and supportive understanding of each others role and provide complementary support.
Widening the scope of the Cal-AAj ! forum Youth forum, womens forum, agency and business forum	December	The Forum is able to broaden the its strategy for raising the attainment of pupils.