



Community Cohesion Policy

Maximum Effort for Maximum Achievement

1. Introduction

The curriculum of our school should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural and social development of our pupils and prepare our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. We already consider this part of our role, and already work in ways which promote community cohesion. As migration and economic change alter the shape of our increasingly diverse local communities, it is more important than ever that all schools play a full part in promoting community cohesion. Our school should be a thriving, cohesive community, but it also has a vital part to play in building a more cohesive society.

Every school - whatever its intake and wherever it is located - is responsible for educating children and young people who will live and work in a country which is diverse in terms of culture, faith, ethnicity and social background. The staff and pupil populations of some schools reflect this diversity, allowing pupils to mix with those from different backgrounds. Our school currently makes links with other schools and organisations in order to give our pupils the opportunity to mix with and learn with, from and about those from different backgrounds. For example we have a strong, established link with Ciamanda School in Kenya. We wish to show that through their ethos and curriculum schools can promote a common sense of identity and support diversity, showing pupils how different communities can be united by common experiences and values. We believe that it is the duty of all schools to address issues of 'how we live together' and 'dealing with difference' however controversial and difficult they might sometimes seem.

2. What is community cohesion?

By community cohesion, we mean working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.

2a. Community from a school's perspective

For schools, the term 'community' has a number of dimensions including:

the school community – the pupils it serves, their families and the school's staff; the community within which the school is located – the school in its geographical community and the people who live or work in that area; the community of Britain - all schools are by definition part of this community; The global community – formed by international links. In addition, schools themselves create communities – for example, the networks formed by schools of the same or different faiths, sports partnerships, cluster groups etc.

3. What can we do to promote community cohesion?

3.1 How does our school contribute towards community cohesion?

All schools, whatever the mix of pupils they serve, are responsible for equipping those pupils to live and thrive alongside people from many different backgrounds. Our school has a pupil population which is less diverse or predominantly of one faith, socioeconomic or ethnic group and therefore more will need to be done to provide opportunities for interaction between pupils from different backgrounds. Just as each school is different, our school's contribution to community cohesion will be different.

We need to consider how different aspects of our work already support integration and community harmony and to take stock of what has worked well so far. We also need to

consider where there may be scope to improve their existing work through a more explicit focus on the impact of their activities on community cohesion.

Broadly, our schools' contribution to community cohesion can be grouped under the three following headings:

- *Teaching, learning and curriculum* – to teach pupils to understand others, to promote common values and to value diversity, to promote awareness of human rights and of the responsibility to uphold and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.
- *Equity and excellence* – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest level possible, removing barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities and eliminating variations in outcomes for different groups.
- *Engagement and ethos* – to provide a means for children, young people and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations, including links with different schools and communities locally, across the country and internationally.

3.2 What do we need to consider in promoting community cohesion?

We need to consider what activities already take place within the school and what might be arranged in cooperation with other schools.

Teaching, learning and curriculum

An effective school will have a high standard of teaching and curriculum provision that supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values and builds pupils' understanding of the diversity that surrounds them, recognising similarities and appreciating different cultures, faiths, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds. Opportunities for discussing issues of identity and diversity will be integrated across the curriculum.

We need to ensure:

- Lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to value differences and to challenge prejudice and stereotyping – for example, opportunities in PSHE lessons for pupils to discuss issues of identity and diversity and what it means 'to live together in the UK' and speakers talking to our school about different faiths and cultures, including different socio-economic groups.
- A programme of curriculum based activities whereby pupils' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through visits and meetings with members of different communities.
- Support for pupils for who English is an additional language (EAL) to enable them to achieve at the highest possible level in English.
- An effective voice and involvement of pupils in the governance and organisation of the school in a way that teaches them to participate in and make a difference in school, in their local community and beyond. We have a very active School Council which makes decisions, such as which charities to support and meets with visitors such as local councillors to influence policy on matters such as road safety in our local area.

Equity and excellence

We should continue to focus on securing high standards of attainment for all pupils from all ethnic backgrounds and of different socio-economic statuses, ensuring that pupils are treated with respect and supported to achieve their full potential. The school tracking systems will enable us to evaluate progress of different groups and to tackle underperformance by any particular group. We need to continue to deal effectively with any incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment. Monitoring of whether pupils from particular groups are more likely to be excluded or disciplined than others should be accompanied by appropriate behaviour and discipline policies in place to deal with this.

Engagement and ethos

- School to school: We seek to broaden the ways that we work in partnership with other schools, either locally or further afield. The means of developing the relationship may be through exchange visits or more likely through the internet. Sharing facilities also provides a means for pupils to interact, as do opportunities for meaningful intercultural activities such as sport and drama.
- School to parents and the community: Good partnership activities with the local and wider community include working together with community representatives, such as local councillors, to work with the pupils, ensuring that the pupil voice is heard and able to effect change.
- Maintaining strong links and multi-agency working between the school and other local agencies, such as the police, road safety unit and social care and health professionals.
- Engagement with parents through curriculum evenings, parent and child courses and family liaison work.
- Provision of extended services, and in particular bringing parents together from different backgrounds through parenting and family support and community use of facilities for activities such as our school fete and Christmas bazaar.

4. Monitoring and Review

Policy Date: Autumn 2019

Review Date: Autumn 2022