

Bleakhouse Primary School **Community Cohesion Policy**

There is a duty for schools to promote community cohesion under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Introduction

The curriculum of our school

- *promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and,*
- *prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.*

2014 Primary National Curriculum in England (DFE, 2013)

We recognise that all within the school community have a vital part to play in building a more cohesive society whilst recognising that our school is a thriving, cohesive community which supports the fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The school prayer also includes the Olympic and Paralympic values of friendship, respect, excellence, determination, courage, equality and inspiration. These are the values that underpin the work of the school.

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 backgrounds. The staff and pupil populations of some schools reflect this diversity, allowing pupils to mix with those from different backgrounds.

Our school increasingly does and we build upon our links with other organisations in order to give our pupils the opportunity to mix with and learn from and about those from different backgrounds. By working together schools can promote a common sense of identity and support diversity, showing pupils how different communities can be united by common experiences and values.

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.

For schools it can be summarised under three headings:

- Teaching, learning and curriculum – to teach pupils to understand others, to promote common values and to value diversity whilst also promoting shared values, 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 working to eliminate variations in outcomes for different groups.
- Engagement and ethos – to provide reasonable 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.

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 or clusters of schools.

How our school promotes community cohesion

Our approach includes a range of activities and these include:

- Working with places of worship;
- Charity days/events;
- Visitors from various agencies and community groups to work with children
- Encouraging Pupil Voice through the School Council and the Learning League;
- Promoting engagement with parents through Parents' Evenings, curriculum and SAT meetings, community events, website etc.;
- Strong links are fostered and encouraged, enabling multi-agency working between the school and other local agencies such as the community police, social care, health professionals, Local Authority and WBA Foundation;
- Providing signposting to and promoting extended services;
- LA admission arrangement promote community cohesion and social equality.

With other schools these include:

- Musical events;
- Sporting Events;
- Collaborative working as part of networks and cluster projects and share good practice and offer pupils to meet and learn from other young people from different backgrounds and with other local schools as the opportunity arises;
- Working with local secondary schools on different curriculum areas.

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.

We need to ensure:

- Opportunities for discussing issues of identity and diversity will be integrated across the curriculum.
- Lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to value differences and to challenge prejudice and stereotyping – for example, opportunities in citizenship classes for pupils to discuss issues of identity and diversity and what it means ‘to live together in the UK’.
- 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 whom 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.

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.

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy
- Single Equality Policy
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
- Curriculum Policy

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