Woodlands Primary School

Community Cohesion Policy

Written by	Mark Burns
Ratified by Governors	Summer 2019
Date for Review	Summer 2022
Signed – Chair of Governors	
Signed – Headteacher	

This policy has been impact assessed by Mark Burns in order to ensure that it does not have an adverse effect on race, gender or disability equality

Woodlands Primary School Community Cohesion Policy

Context

1. Section 21(4) of the Education Act 2002 (as inserted by section 38 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) states that:

   'The governing body of a maintained school shall, in discharging their functions relating to the conduct of the school —
   (a) promote the well-being of pupils at the school, and
   (b) in the case of a school in England, promote community cohesion.'

2. This duty came into effect on 1 September 2007. From 1 September 2008, HMCI has a duty under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 (as inserted by section 154 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) to report on the contribution made by schools to community cohesion.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has published *Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion* to support schools in implementing the duty – see DCSF website.

1. Introduction

The curriculum of our school should promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities, challenges and experiences of later life.

We already consider this as part of our role and work in many ways which promote community cohesion. As social and economic changes alter the shape of our local communities, it is more important than ever that our school plays a full part in promoting community cohesion and diversity. 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, language and ethnicity.

Whilst our school is characterised by ethnic, cultural, faith and linguistic diversity, we still have a responsibility to ensure that our children learn about our wider cultural and community heritage, including within Kent, the United Kingdom and globally.

We wish to show that through our ethos and curriculum, our school can promote a common sense of identity and support diversity, showing our pupils how different communities can be united by common experiences and values.

We believe that it is the duty of our school to address issues of 'how we live together' and 'dealing with difference', however controversial and difficult they might sometimes seem. We also need to work in partnership with the local community, the local authority and the Police to ensure that our pupils are appropriately informed and kept safe.

2. What is community cohesion?

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

Community from our school's perspective

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

- The school community – the pupils it serves, and their roles within the school, 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 in the UK are by definition part of this community;
- The global community – formed through international links.

In addition, schools themselves create communities – for example, the networks formed by schools in collaborative groups.

3. What do we need to consider in promoting community cohesion?

We need to consider what activities already take place within our school and what might be arranged in cooperation with other schools,our partnerships and links in the wider community.

Teaching, learning and our curriculum

We need to ensure that we provide:

- Lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to value differences and to challenge prejudice and stereotyping – for example, opportunities 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 their full potential..
- 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.
- Opportunities for discussing issues of identity and diversity across the curriculum.
- An international dimension to our curriculum planning and delivery.

Examples from our school include:

- Our school has a varied and relevant curriculum that develops pupils' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through fieldwork, visits and meetings with members of

different communities e.g. all children go on school visits each year as part of the curriculum to visit a range of places of worship and/or experience workshops from a variety of cultures.
- We have a well-resourced Religious Education syllabus based on the local RE Agreed Syllabus which develops knowledge, attitude and skills in many of the areas at the heart of effective community cohesion.
- Lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to appreciate differences and challenge prejudice and stereotyping e.g. the PSHCE curriculum.

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Equality and Excellence

Our school has a commitment to 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 identifiable group.

Our school will monitor incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment. Monitoring of behaviour and exclusions includes tracking data for vulnerable groups.

Our school admissions criteria emphasises the importance of admission arrangements that promote community cohesion and social equality.

Examples from our school include:

- A focus on securing high standards of attainment for all pupils from all ethnic backgrounds and of different socio-economic statuses.
- Supporting children with special educational needs through effective procedures and interventions. Equal opportunities and race equality policies are in place.
- Developing programmes of work for new arrivals.
- Effective approaches in place to deal with incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment.
- Monitoring our school behaviour policies so that no groups suffer prejudice. Ensuring that inappropriate behaviour, exclusions, racist, bullying, drug related incidents and other stereotyping is monitored termly and reported to governors.

Engagement and Ethos

We shall seek to broaden the ways that we work in partnership with other schools. We shall look either locally or further afield and the means of developing relationships 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. Good partnership activities with the local and wider community might include:

- Working together with community representatives, for example through mentoring schemes or bringing community representatives into school to work with the pupils, ensuring that the pupil voice is heard and able to affect change.
- Maintaining strong links and multi-agency working between the school and other local agencies, such as the youth support service, the Police and social care and health professionals.

- Engagement with parents through coffee mornings, curriculum evenings, parent and child courses and family liaison work.
- Provision of extended services - in particular bringing parents together from different backgrounds through parenting and family support and community use of facilities for activities that take place out of school hours, including adult and family learning, ICT and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) classes.

Examples from our school include:

The school community

- A school ethos established with clear aims, objectives and rules that underpin everyday practice.
- Partnership arrangements in place to share good practice and offer pupils opportunities to meet and learn from other pupils from different backgrounds.
- A school council to take into account pupil views e.g. monitoring racism, bullying and playground behaviour.
- Regular participation in Citizenship initiatives.
- We draw upon a number of local cultural organisations to provide speakers for assemblies or as a stimulus to learning in the classroom.

The area in which the school is located

- Shared use of local facilities to provide a means for pupils to interact.
- We have strong links with our local Police Community Support Officer.
- Working with community representatives, for example bringing community representatives into school to work with pupils i.e. local imams and priests visiting classes, discussing the different ways people worship.
- Strong links and multi-agency working practice developed between the school and other local agencies.
- Engagement with parents through coffee mornings, refreshments after special assemblies, curriculum evenings, parent and child courses.
- Provision of extended services and community use of facilities for activities that take place in and out of school hours.
- Information and communications technology and English classes for speakers of other languages e.g. school breakfast club, after-school clubs, after-school and holiday care etc.

The UK community

- A curriculum is in place for children to take into account how different communities may live e.g. rural, suburban, urban, through visits to other areas and other schools.
- Giving children experiences through trips and residential visits of differing areas and communities.
- Ensuring that children are aware of national and local events that affect people's lives.
- Learning about how different communities celebrate different festivals within Britain.

The global community

- Links established locally and also internationally.
- Children raise funds to support charities in other parts of the world.

- Geography curriculum informs children of worldwide ways of living.
- Charity events set up to support children around the world - children learn why they are raising funds e.g. Children in Need, Red Nose Day.

The Role of Governors

Our Governing Body is legally responsible for ensuring the promotion of social cohesion and the Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the duties are fulfilled within school.

On a regular basis our governors will consider:

- The school's impact on the community i.e. is the school exacerbating divisions or challenging them and breaking them down?
- How our school uses its own data around bullying and racist incidents to inform provision and school development.
- Whether we serve the wider community and help bring pupils and parents together.
- How representative our governing body is of the local community and pupils' backgrounds.
- What our school can do to create an ethos of inclusion in which divisions and intolerance of others is unacceptable.
- How our school actively promotes understanding and dialogue between different groups - do we work in partnership with community and faith leaders?
- Any social problems which might impact adversely upon the school and how we have sought to engage key partners.
- Whether we have accessed support and good practice from within the local authority to promote social cohesion and what additional support is available.

Monitoring Community Cohesion at Woodlands Primary School

The school staff and governors will regularly review activity under the key headings above to ensure that this is further developed and refined.

Prevent Duty

Woodlands complies with the requirements of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act to have due regard for the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism and will act in accordance with its Prevent duty.