

## Heaton St. Barnabas' CE (VA) Primary School

# POLICY FOR PROMOTING COMMUNITY COHESION

### National Context

We recognise we have a key part to play in promoting community cohesion through our approach to:

- Teaching and learning
  - Teaching pupils to understand others
  - Promoting discussion and debate about common values and diversity
- Equity and excellence
  - Removing barriers to access and participation
  - Offering equal opportunities to all pupils to succeed at the highest level possible
- Engagement and ethos
  - Providing opportunities for children, young people and their families to interact with others from different backgrounds.

### School Context

The Governing Body is committed to promoting community cohesion and discharges its responsibility as part of its leadership and management role by encouraging all staff to be proactive and by involving pupils in the promotion of community cohesion.

We value 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 work place, in schools and in the wider community.

For us, community has a number of dimensions including:

- the school community – the pupils it serves, their families and the school's staff and governors;
- the community within which the school is located - the school in its geographical community and the people who live and work in that area;
- the network community – school working with other schools and providers in the cluster;
- the community of Britain – all schools are by definition part of this community;
- the global community – formed by EU and International links;

### Procedures

An integral part of our self-evaluation and improvement planning is building on our best practice in promoting community cohesion. We are committed to considering where there may be scope to improve our existing work in three specific areas:

#### 1. Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

- we teach pupils to understand others
- we promote common values and value diversity
- we promote awareness of human rights and of the responsibility to uphold and defend them
- we develop the skills of participation and responsible action

As an effective school we 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.

Integrated across our curriculum are opportunities for discussing issues of identity and diversity.

### *Strategies*

As a tool in building community cohesion, 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 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 educational visits, and 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 school in a way that teachers them to participate in and make a difference in school, their local community and beyond.

## **2. Equity and Excellence**

- we strive to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest level possible
- we seek to remove barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities
- we aim to eliminate variations in outcomes for different groups.

Our focus is 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 reach their full potential.

We evaluate progress in the following ways:

- by analysing assessment results to keep track of the relative performance of the different groups
- by using the outcomes of analysis to tackle underperformance by any particular group

We monitor impact of our strategy in the following ways:

- by monitoring the effectiveness of our approaches in dealing with incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment
- by monitoring whether pupils from particular groups are more likely to be excluded or disciplined than others

We ensure that our admissions policy is fully compliant with the new School Admissions Code and take care not to present ourselves in a way that might deter parents from particular communities.

## **3. Engagement and Ethos**

- we are committed to providing a means for children, young people and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations
- we will link with different schools and communities locally, across the country and internationally

We value partnership arrangements that enable the sharing of good practice and offer pupils the opportunity to meet and learn from other young people from different backgrounds.

Our partnership opportunities include:

- promoting links with different types of school, including where appropriate the shared use of facilities

- promoting EU and international links
- working together with community representatives
- maintaining strong links and multi-agency working between school and other local agencies
- liaison with voluntary community based activities
- engagement with parents through coffee mornings, curriculum evenings, parent and child courses and family liaison work
- provision of extended services, in particular bring 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.

## References

### Policy and Legislation

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, which introduced a duty on the Governing Bodies of maintained schools to promote community cohesion. This duty came into force on 1st September 2007 alongside this, from September 2007 OfSTED have included contributions to promoting community cohesions in their inspections.

Other Legislation relevant to community cohesion includes:

- Equality Act 2006; and
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Human Rights Act (1998)

Alongside the legislative framework there is a range of community cohesion guidance including:

- Community Cohesion Education Standards for Schools, September 2004
- Community Cohesion – an action guide, LGA guidance for local authorities 2004
- Community Cohesion; Seven Steps – A Practitioners Toolkit, Home Office and ODPM March 2005
- Commission in Integration and Cohesion, Interim Statement, February 2007
- Community Conflict; A Resource Pack, Home Office and ODPM sponsored guidance, October 2006
- Building a Picture of Community Cohesion, July 2003
- Strong and Prosperous Communities – the Local Government White Paper, 2006

### Additional References:

The Specialist Schools network, led by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust has advice and information available at:

- <http://www.schoolsnetwork.org.uk>

Information on extended schools partnerships and networks is available at:

- <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/ete/extendedschools>
- <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/extendedschools>