

Community Cohesion Policy

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10.03.21	0.1	Scheduled Review	Update name & logo. J Bowman	SCC
30.03.21	0.2	Internal Lead Scheduled Review	Reviewed by SLT. Minor changes to language and practice.	
29.04.21	0.3	Board Lead Scheduled Review	No changes. P Lovern	
14.05.21	1.0	Board Scheduled Review	Ratified	

Community Cohesion Policy

Ambitions

Community cohesion should not be seen as a fixed goal, but as a set of processes in which our pupils and others in the community are engaged. We are very aware that as faith and rural schools with relatively homogeneous populations we are faced with particular challenges in supporting young people to acquire the lived experiences of diversity. We are therefore ambitious that our curriculum genuinely engages with both the challenges of working in a mono-cultural environment and the possibilities that education offers in developing the capacity to think beyond the local.

Our learning environment is not simply shaped by physical buildings and resources but by our actions and purposes. These influence pupils and adults attitudes and feelings. We are ambitious that our Trust community conveys values, beliefs and purposes that extend beyond the school gate and local community

We accept the framework of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to inform our community cohesion, plan and policy. Our Trust ethos embraces the Every Child Matters philosophy.

We are ambitious to share our distinctively Christian ethos within our Church schools in an inclusive and embracing way.

School Context

The schools within the Trust serve similar but different communities. The Trust has enabled the pupils to develop a sense of others and an appreciation of both similarities and differences between the school communities. This has helped to develop a meaningful sense of outward lookingness for pupils, their families and their local communities.

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The curriculum for all maintained schools should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. Education Act 2002, Section 78

Schools have a duty to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups. Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

Educating our pupils to live and contribute to a country which is diverse in cultures, religions, beliefs, ethnicities and social backgrounds is the fundamental role that the Trust has in promoting community cohesion.

By community cohesion, we mean working towards a society in which:

- the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued
- similar life opportunities are available to all
- strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.

Aims:

- To ensure our pupils have a sense of belonging in a community where everyone is working towards the same values and principles in which diversity is celebrated.
- To provide a range of opportunities through which all members build positive relationships and extend these to the wider local, national and global community.
- To promote a climate where all members of the community are valued and respected, and show tolerance and understanding of each other.
- To eliminate all forms of discrimination, on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, religion and belief.
- To ensure pupils are provided with the opportunity to experience, understand, celebrate and value diversity to prepare all pupils for a future world and adult life in a multi-racial, interdependent world.

We strive to build community cohesion by promoting equality of opportunity and inclusion for different groups of pupils within our school, whilst promoting shared values and encouraging pupils to engage actively with each other to understand what they all hold in common.

What contribution does the Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust make towards community cohesion?

1) Teaching, learning and curriculum:

We have high expectations of all our pupils and strive for excellence in teaching and learning. Our curriculum provision supports high standards of attainment, promotes shared values and builds pupils' understanding of the diversity that surrounds them, encouraging them to recognise similarities and appreciate different cultures, religions or beliefs, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds.

- Our Religious Education (RE) curriculum contains a significant multi-faith dimension, as evidenced through our curriculum plans.
- We have close links with local churches, as evidenced through information on our websites.
- Our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum and the SEAL programme help pupils to recognise their feelings, develop self-esteem, value differences and to challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping.
- Our commitment to Philosophy for Children as a teaching and learning approach emphasises respect and dialogue.
- We ensure that the school's resources (including reading materials, ICT programmes, library books and displays) are appropriate and promote diversity.
- We have a programme of curriculum based activities which develop pupils' understanding of community and diversity through trips, fieldwork, visits, for example to places of worship, and meetings with members of different communities.
- We engage with events organised by outside agencies to promote cultural understanding.
- We have a clear induction policy and guidelines to welcome and support pupils and their families who are new to the school.
- Worship/Assemblies promote diversity through the celebration of festivals and events from different religions. We also try to involve members of the local and wider community where possible.

2) Equity and excellence:

We aim to ensure equal opportunities for everyone to succeed at the highest level possible, striving to remove barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities, and working to eliminate variations in outcomes for different groups.

- The Trust has developed a Disability Equality Scheme and Access Plan that is regularly reviewed.
- The Trust uses tracking information to monitor the achievement and progress of gender and inclusion groups and tackle underperformance.
- The Trust regularly reviews existing Trust policies and publications to ensure that all documentation is inclusive.
- We ensure that all members of staff understand and follow Trust guidelines on reporting any incidents relating to discriminatory behaviour.
- We monitor incidents of racism and bullying; these are reported to the Directors/Governors.
- We monitor and review the Trust's Behaviour Policy and Attendance Policy, and the Sanctions and Rewards systems to ensure the inclusion of all pupils.
- We monitor pupil feedback through regular discussions and surveys.
- Our admission arrangements are in line with the School Admissions Code, which emphasises the importance of admission arrangements that promote community cohesion and social equity.

3) Engagement and extended services:

The Trust seeks to provide opportunities for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations. We have built links with different schools and communities and provide opportunities for pupils, families and the wider community to take part in activities which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups.

a) School to school:

- The Trust is a member of a cluster of schools, which enables staff to meet and work collaboratively with colleagues in other schools to share good practice and develop new ways of working to improve outcomes for pupils.
- The Trust is part of a Sports Partnership, which gives our pupils regular opportunities to meet and learn from other young people from different backgrounds, by taking part in sports festivals and tournaments with other schools in the partnership.
- The Trust takes part in meaningful cultural activities that enable our pupils to perform to a wider audience and also enjoy the performances of other schools.

b) Trust to parents and the community:

- We strive to build a strong supportive partnership with parents through our parents' evenings, parents' workshops, and encouraging ongoing dialogue through an open door policy.
- We have active Parent Teacher Associations which organise various community events including Open Gardens and Summer Fun Day
- We ensure that the pupil voice is heard and able to effect change by involving pupils in decision making and the running of schools. We have active school councils, and Year 6 children take on responsibilities around their school. Children organise and promote charitable events.
- We maintain strong links with local agencies such as social care, health professionals, the police and fire service.
- We have links with initial teacher education providers such as KNPS, NFTS and the University of Wolverhampton for whom we provide placements for a range of students.
- We offer work experience placements for a number of local High schools.

c) Trust to local authority:

Local authorities and other voluntary and community organisations have an important role in supporting schools to discharge the duty to promote community cohesion.

- We seek to work in partnership with Staffordshire Local Authority for practical support and assistance to promote community cohesion for example, through the identification of relevant local contacts and facilitating links with other schools and organisations.

Conclusion :

For schools such as those within The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust, where the pupil population is less diverse and predominantly of one religious background, we recognise that more will need to be done to provide opportunities for interaction between children and young people from different backgrounds. We therefore plan more opportunities through the curriculum that help children to find out about the customs and traditions of different cultural backgrounds. These are embedded rather than tokenistic.

We are keen to

- Introduce more artefacts through displays around our schools and use a wider range of music in assemblies.
- Ensure that our schools hold a wealth of multi-cultural books.

- Plan for more opportunities to celebrate both similarities and differences in cultures – invite more visitors to the school from different clubs, groups and organisations.
- Use ICT to expand on pupils’ limited experiences of multi-cultural Britain – use websites and webcams to communicate with other schools.

Monitoring, measuring impact and evaluation:

The impact of the Trust’s contribution to community cohesion will be monitored through the annual questionnaires to parents and pupils and reported to Directors/Governors. Increased awareness of other cultures and communities will be visible through lesson observations and discussions with the children. The parents will increase their understanding awareness through Worship, assemblies and meetings with community leaders.

Teaching, learning	Equality and Excellence	Engagement & Ethos
Local Links		
Continue to work within school net-works to build greater interaction and diversity into the daily lives of the school and wider community, (including the church).	Continue to use tracking data to ensure that we meet the needs of and promote the achievement of pupils from all backgrounds.	Further consultation with pupils, parents, families & the wider community about the services they provide to ensure we meet the needs of all groups.
Plan additional opportunities through the curriculum that help children to find out about the customs and traditions of different cultural backgrounds	Increase the opportunities for Directors/Governors to liaise directly with the school council	Build on the existing support that the school offers to parents by facilitating additional feedback
National Links		
Develop links with an urban school		
Use ICT links to expand on pupils’ limited experiences of multi-cultural Britain		
Introduce additional artefacts through displays in school to promote and celebrate diverse cultures.		Plan to involve parents in the aims of the cultural visits.
International Links		
Continue written links with primary school in France. Continue to develop video and internet links with the school		Aim to involve parents in celebrations around school linking through celebration and assemblies.

Work alongside our local farm to promote the awareness of global as well as local issues.		Aim to involve parents with global awareness issues.
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