

## 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 –
  - Promote the well-being of students at the school
  - 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.

We also take into account within this policy the Children Act 2004 and the Equality Act 2010 which replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The curriculum of our school promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our students and of society and prepares our students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

We consider this part of our role, and work in ways which promote community cohesion. The community is becoming increasingly diverse and it is vital that the school plays a full part in promoting community cohesion.

Whilst our school is characterised by ethnic, cultural, faith and linguistic diversity: currently 16% of students are from ethnic minorities, 16% LAC and 3% EAL. We still have a responsibility to ensure that our children learn about an even wider cultural and community heritage, especially the wider community of the UK but also the global community.

We wish to show through our ethos and curriculum that 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 reflect upon and appropriately respond to the recent DCSF guidance 'learning together to be safe; and work in partnership with the local authority and the Police to ensure that our pupils are appropriately informed and protected.'

St Nicholas School believes:

- ✓ All learners are of equal value
- ✓ Diversity should be recognised and respected
- ✓ In fostering positive attitudes and relationships within a shared sense of belonging
- ✓ In equal opportunities in staff recruitment, retention and development
- ✓ In reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist by consulting widely

- ✓ That we should contribute to society locally and nationally by fostering greater social cohesion and participation in pupils life.

## **2. WHAT IS COMMUNITY COHESION?**

By community cohesion, we, St Nicholas School, 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.

Community from our school's perspective:-

For St Nicholas School, the term 'community' has a number of dimensions including;

- The school community – the pupils it serves, their families and the school staff;
- The community in which the school is located;
- The community of UK – all schools are by definition part of this community;
- The global community – formed by EU and international links;
- The network of links we have with a variety of schools and colleges in the area.

## **3. WHAT DO WE NEED TO CONSIDER IN PROMOTING COMMUNITY COHESION?**

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

Teaching, learning and curriculum:-

### **WE PROVIDE**

- Lessons across the curriculum that promote common values, help pupils to value differences and to challenge prejudice and stereotyping; that is, St Nicholas gives opportunities in citizenship classes for pupils to discuss issues of identity and diversity and what it means to 'live together in the UK'.
- Opportunities for pupils to visit and meet with members of different communities to enhance their understanding of diversity;
- Support for pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), and where applicable in the context of St Nicholas School, to enable them to achieve the highest possible level in English;
- A forum for students to voice their opinions and contribute to the Governance and organisation of the school, their local community and beyond
- School Council
- Opportunities for discussing issues of identity and diversity across the curriculum.
- LAC support
- Traveller support
- Ethnic minority support
- Mentor role
- Person centred planning support role
- Advice and guidance from UNICEF

### **EXAMPLES FROM ST NICHOLAS SCHOOL INCLUDE**

- The curriculum is varied and helps develop the pupils' understanding of community and diversity with trips to the local community, shopping, visits to the European market, attendance at the local church services for Easter, Christmas and Harvest, as well as receiving visitors to the school from other cultures which give the children opportunities to join in workshops to experience, for example, dance, drama, music and explore food and leisure.

- We follow a well planned Religious Education syllabus which develops knowledge, attitudes and skills in many areas of the heart of effective community cohesion.
- Through the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum and Personal, Social and Emotional Development curriculum in Early Years, pupils learn about common values and help pupils to value differences and challenge prejudice.
- Support for pupils with English as additional Language by ensuring resources are appropriate and aid understanding e.g. symbols being translated into their home language, resources for enabling stories to be translated.
- The school is working with UNICEF to increase its commitment in developing a global perspective in rights-respecting schools, promoting the idea of taking action with and building cohesion. A global citizen in a rights-respecting school is someone who knows their rights, believes everybody has rights and is committed to working towards a world where everyone can access their rights.
- As of March 2016 the School have been accepted as a Rights Respecting School and awarded the Record of Commitment.
- As a school committed the principles of the UNCRC (UN Convention of the Rights of the Child), this policy highlights Article 15 (All children have the right of freedom of association with individual people and groups).

### **EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE**

Our school has a commitment to securing high standards of attainment for all pupils from all ethnic backgrounds and 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.

Our school will monitor 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.

Pupils must have a Statement of Education Need to gain a place at St Nicholas School, and

Examples from St Nicholas School include, ensuring:-

- Maintaining achievement for all pupils from ethnic backgrounds and of different socio-economic status e.g. tracking progress for traveller pupils and ensuring their cultural heritage is valued
- Equal opportunities and race equality policies are in place
- Effective approaches are in place to deal with incident of prejudice, bullying and harassment e.g. monitoring our incident reports, giving feedback to the Governors and following clear school procedures
- That inappropriate behaviour, exclusions, racist, bullying and drug related incidents are monitored termly and reported to the Governors.

### **ENGAGEMENT AND ETHOS**

We ensure that we have successful partnerships with other schools. Sharing of facilities enables pupils to interact, as do opportunities for meaningful intercultural activities such as sport and drama.

St Nicholas School has developed good partnerships for example:

- Satellite classes established at Canterbury Academy, the Spires Academy and Community College Whitstable;
- Links with Brogdale farm for work experience and life skills;
- Inclusion at St Stephen's Infant School, Wickhambreaux School, Herne Bay High School and the North School;
- Strong links and multi-agency working between the school and other local agencies, such as health

professionals, specialist teaching service and connexions.

- Engagement with parents through parents evenings, Annual Reviews, Family Support worker, home visits, parent workshops and PTFA.

#### **THE ST NICHOLAS SCHOOL COMMUNITY CONSISTS OF:**

##### **THE LEARNING COMMUNITY**

- Creative Partnerships Change School Programme
- Celebrations and events e.g. Harvest Festival, Christmas, Easter and Summer Celebration of Achievement
- Cultural week in the summer term
- Extended services including Breakfast club, some Saturday Clubs, After-school club, sports club, residential experiences and lunchtime clubs. (see Appendix A)

##### **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

- PFTA
- MSU parent group
- MSU professionals group
- Home school support – signposting services and support and workshops
- Behaviour clinic
- Sex and relationships (NHS/school)
- Art workshops (parent and child)
- Parents evening
- Bespoke training packages
- Access to resources
- Referrals to other services

#### **THE ST NICHOLAS LOCAL COMMUNITY CONSISTS OF:**

##### **COMMUNITY USE**

- Extended school lettings – use of meeting rooms, hydrotherapy pool and sport's hall
- In-reach Opportunities
- Specialist Teaching Service base
- Specialist training and support services

##### **LOCAL COMMUNITY**

- Canterbury College – joint management and planning group, computer games project with media department and work experience opportunities
- St Mary Bredin Church – Harvest, Easter and Christmas services
- Canterbury Christ Church University – animation project and Masters In Enabling delivery
- Kent University – drama student projects and Tizard Centre Link
- Specialist status partners including Wincheap Primary School, Pilgrims Way primary school, Kingsmead Primary School, St Anselms Secondary School and the Abbey Secondary School
- Outreach/inreach projects with over 30 pre-schools, primary and secondary schools
- LCPs
- LSC local planning group
- PSC consortium for MOVE, SCIPr and INSET

#### **THE ST NICHOLAS UK COMMUNITY CONSISTS OF:**

- MOVE charity
- School links with other special schools

- The curriculum reflects how different communities may live e.g. rural, suburban and visits to other areas and schools
- Learning about how different communities celebrate different festivals e.g. Ramadan, Diwali and the Chinese New Year
- Residential trips

#### **THE ST NICHOLAS GLOBAL COMMUNITY CONSISTS OF:**

- Eco-school
- Charity links e.g. Uganda
- School links and work with schools in Malawi, France and India
- Children in Need, Red Nose Day and Action Aid
- Olympics project and visit
- The Geography curriculum teaches pupils about the lives of world wide ways of living.
- Fair Trade School Status work.
- Multi-cultural week
- Flat Nicholas global travels – whole school project
- Rights Respecting Schools Award with UNICEF

#### **THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS**

Our Governing Body is legally responsible for ensuring the promotion of social cohesions and the Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring that the duties are fulfilled within the school. They are responsible for ensuring that the school complies with relevant legislation and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented. A member of the Governing Body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

#### **ON A REGULAR BASIS OUR GOVERNORS WILL CONSIDER:**

- How the school uses data around bullying and racist incidents to inform provision and school development
- How we attempt to bring parents and pupils together
- How the Governors represent the local community and diversity of pupil backgrounds
- What our school can do to create an ethos of inclusion in which division and intolerance of others is unacceptable.
- How the school promotes understanding and dialogue between different groups and how we work in partnership with community and faith leaders.
- Whether the school has accessed support and good practice from within the local authority to promote social cohesion and what additional support is available.

#### **MONITORING SOCIAL COHESION AT ST NICHOLAS SCHOOL**

The Head Teacher is responsible for implementing the policy, for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities, are given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

The school will collect both quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy and make adjustments as appropriate.

All stakeholders are invited to the Equality and Diversity meetings where issues are raised and addressed throughout the year.

The school staff and Governors will regularly review activity under the key headings above to ensure that this further developed and refined. Evidence of social cohesion activity will be kept on file.

#### **OUR NETWORK OF PARTNERS ARE: -**

- Vicar of local church – St Mary Bredin
- Music for Change/WEDG
- Fair Trade Status
- Local Authority
- Our Network of local schools
- MCAS
- Canterbury College
- Canterbury Academy
- Spires Academy
- Herne Bay High School
- Community College Whitstable
- UNICEF
- Linking schools in London, France, India and Africa

#### **EQUALITY, SAFEGUARDING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT**

St Nicholas School, in all policies and procedures, will promote equality of opportunity for students and staff from all social, cultural and economic backgrounds and ensure freedom from discrimination on the basis of membership of any group including gender, sexual orientation, family circumstances, ethnic or national origin, disability (physical or mental), religious or political beliefs.

St Nicholas School aims to:

- Provide equal opportunity for all
- Foster good relations, and create effective partnership with all sections of the community
- Only take actions which does not discriminate unlawfully in service delivery, commissioning and employment
- Provide an environment free from fear and discrimination, where diversity, respect and dignity are valued.

All aspects of Safeguarding will be embedded into the life of the School and be adhered to and be the responsibility of all staff.

#### **LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES:**

Equality Policy  
Race Relations  
Religious Education  
Collective Worship  
PSHE  
Anti-bullying  
Single Equality Scheme  
Safeguarding  
Behaviour Policy  
All curriculum policies  
Equality Action Plans

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REVIEWED SEPTEMBER  
2018