GRITTLETON
HOUSE SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1951

COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY

Legal Status:
- This policy was informed by the duty for schools to promote community cohesion under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Applies to:
- Whole School including EYFS

Related documents:
- Admissions Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Continuing Professional Development Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

Availability

This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: via the School website, and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

Monitoring and Review:
- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headmaster.
- The Proprietor (who is also the Principal) undertakes an annual review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed: Date: February 2016

Mr NJ Dawes   Mr J Shipp
Headmaster   Proprietor

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Community Cohesion Policy

Aims
The aim is to provide a framework within which all children are enabled to develop the highest possible level of achievement, fulfilling their academic, moral, social, physical and spiritual potential. The curriculum of our school should prepare our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

As migration and economic change alter the shape of our increasingly diverse local communities, it is more important than ever that all schools play a full part in promoting community cohesion. 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, ethnicity and social backgrounds. We wish to show that through their ethos and curriculum schools can promote a common sense of identity and support diversity, showing pupils how different communities can be united by common experiences and values.

We believe that it is the duty of all schools to address issues of 'how we live together' and 'dealing with difference' however controversial and difficult they might sometimes seem.

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.

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, the school's staff and the parishes within which it lies.
- 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 EU and international links.

In addition, schools themselves create communities – for example, the networks formed by schools of the same or different faiths.

What can we do to promote community cohesion and how does our school contribute towards community cohesion?
All schools, whatever the mix of pupils they serve, are responsible for equipping those pupils to live and thrive alongside people from many different backgrounds. However schools that are driven by divisions are less likely to perform well.

For some schools with diverse pupil populations, existing activities and work aimed at supporting pupils from different ethnic or socioeconomic backgrounds to learn with, from and about each other, will already be contributing towards community cohesion.

For other schools where the pupil population is less diverse or predominantly of one faith, socioeconomic or ethnic group more will need to be done to provide opportunities for interaction between pupils from different backgrounds.

Just as each school is different, our school's contribution to community cohesion will be different and will need to develop by reflecting the location of the school – for instance whether it serves a rural or urban area and the level of ethnic, faith and socio-economic diversity in that area.

In the light of the current duty we need to consider how different aspects of our work already support integration and community harmony; to take stock of what has worked well so far. We also need to consider where there may be scope to improve their existing work through a more explicit focus on the impact of their activities on community cohesion.

Broadly, schools' contribution to community cohesion can be grouped under the three following headings:
- **Teaching, learning and curriculum** – to teach pupils to understand others, to promote common values and to value diversity, 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 eliminating variations in outcomes for different groups.
- **Engagement and ethos** – to provide a 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.

What do we need to consider in promoting community cohesion?
We need to consider what activities already take place within the school and what might be arranged in cooperation with other schools.

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. Opportunities for discussing issues of identity and diversity will be integrated across the curriculum.

We need to ensure the provision of:
- 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
We continue to focus on enabling our children, irrespective of their ethnic background or the different socio-economic status, to be treated with respect and supported in achieving their full potential.

The school tracking system enables us to evaluate progress of different groups and to tackle underperformance by any particular group.

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We would monitor incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment and whether children from particular groups are more likely to be excluded or disciplined than others. This is accompanied by appropriate behaviour and discipline policies in place to deal with this.

Engagement and ethos
School to school: We 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 the relationship 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.

School to parents and the community: 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 effect 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, and in particular bringing parents together from different backgrounds through community use of facilities for activities that take place out of school hours, including adult and family learning and ICT.

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