

# **Policy for**

## **Community Cohesion**

### **Helmingham Community Primary School**

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**Date: January 2011**

**Approved by: .....**

**Date of approval: .....**

***To be reviewed January 2012***

## **Introduction**

The curriculum of our school promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils. It prepares our pupils for the wider opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life for both during and after their education at Helmingham Community Primary School.

We have a duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, and to promote equality of opportunity and good relationships between people of different groups.

We already consider this part of our role, and we at Helmingham Community Primary School work in ways which promote community cohesion. As migration and economic change alter the shape of our local and national communities, it is more important than ever that all schools play a full part in promoting community cohesion. At Helmingham, we aim to continue to be a thriving, cohesive community whilst continuing to impact on a wider scale to build a more cohesive society.

This policy supports the work of, and is supported by, our Equalities Policy.

It is our belief that every school, irrespective of its intake and location, is responsible for educating 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 our ethos, curriculum, actions and relationships, we promote a common sense of identity and support diversity. This is closely linked to our efforts to ensure that 'Every Child Matters'.

In order to prepare our pupils for living in a diverse and cohesive society, we strive to work in partnership to:

- Encourage the development of a secure sense of their own identity, as individuals and within the many communities to which they belong.
- Encourage open and positive attitudes towards diversity and the development of the skills, understanding and confidence to challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping.
- Support the children in becoming active citizens who recognise their rights and responsibilities, enabling them to make informed judgements.
- Ensure equality of opportunity, and remove barriers to access and eliminate discrimination.
- Ensure children receive a broad and balanced education and succeed in reaching their potential.
- Provide opportunities for positive interaction with people from a variety of backgrounds in the local and wider community.

## **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 the School's Perspective**

From the school's perspective, the term 'community' has a number of meanings:

- The school community – the children we serve, their families and the school's staff
- The local community in which the school is located – its geographical community and the people who live/work in that area
- The community of Britain – of which all schools by definition are part of
- The global community – formed by EU and international links

## **How does our School Contribute to Community Cohesion?**

All schools, whatever the mix of children they serve, are responsible for equipping their learners to live alongside people from many different backgrounds.

For some schools where the pupil population is diverse, existing activities and work aimed at supporting pupils from different social, ethnic or economic backgrounds to learn from, will already be contributing towards community cohesion. For our school, where the student population is less diverse (according to our annual school census), we work to provide opportunities for our learners to work with a range of people from different age groups, backgrounds, religious, ethnic and cultural groups.

Our work as a Healthy School, and through our existing partnerships in the local and wider community, supports community cohesion to a great extent, and the promotion of community cohesion permeates through our school.

Helmingham's contribution to community cohesion can be grouped under three headings:

### **Teaching, Learning and Curriculum**

Our teaching and the curriculum provision supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values and helps pupils understand and value the diversity that surrounds them. Lessons across the taught curriculum provide opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding and empathy; helping them to value differences and challenge prejudice and stereotyping. The taught and wider curricula help to promote awareness of the rights of individuals and also to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.

### **Equality and Excellence**

In school, there is a focus on securing high standards of attainment for all pupils, removing barriers to learning and wider activities and eliminating a variance in outcomes for different groups of pupils. Effective procedures exist to deal with prejudice and bullying. Our tracking and monitoring systems enable us to evaluate progress of different groups and to minimise the risk of underachievement by members of any particular group who may be vulnerable.

### **Engagement and Ethos**

We provide different opportunities for young people and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relationships, including links with different schools and communities locally, nationally and on a wider basis where possible. The school works in partnership with a wide range of agencies and organisations to support our learners' education.

Engagement with parents through an open door ethos, parents' evenings, sharing assemblies, half-termly parents' forums and whole school events are a priority for the school. The School Council, Eco Team and Fun at Breaktimes (FAB) involve the children in the decision making and organisation of the school, teach the children the importance of participation and making a difference to the school, local community and beyond.

We have a number of community cohesion activities that take place in our school already:

<b><u>TEACHING, LEARNING &amp; THE CURRICULUM</u></b>	<b><u>EQUALITY &amp; EXCELLENCE</u></b>	<b><u>ENGAGEMENT &amp; ETHOS</u></b>
Sporting festivals	Equalities policy	Collective worship / reflection
Drama and music activities	Development of Travel plan	Community events e.g. Carol Service / Harvest Festival / school productions / open evening / school fete
Visits from life skills educators: school nurse, community support officer	Road safety events e.g. young cyclist training for Year 6 children	Celebration of historical events – Remembrance Day
Work towards Healthy Schools, Eco Schools and Sing-Up.	School council	Involvement in local community art exhibitions
Transition work and link work undertaken with our high school	Eco team	Sports Day / weekly parents' assemblies
Travel Plan involvement	Wide range of extra curricular clubs	Whole school fund raising events
Special curriculum days and weeks e.g RE day, Bird watching day	Cultural events e.g. Christian festivals / Chinese New Year / other elements taught through curriculum and covered in assemblies	Numerous activities within our two high school pyramids and within our WHEB group – including Year 6 residential trip
Policies reflect the cultural, disability and gender diversity within school and community	Data analysis effectively tracking all groups	Level of parental and adult support
Immersion of all the children in MFL (in our case French)	Cross pyramid gifted and talented projects e.g. Wingfiled Barns art group	Parent questionnaires
Links with school in Romania	Links with pre-school	Governor visits
Pupil chosen charity voted for after presentations from year 6 in September (currently RSPB)		

The school strives to enhance the provision already in place to extend further the children's engagement with the school, local and wider communities.

Summary of current practice



