

Evington Valley Primary School
Caring and Learning Together

Community Cohesion Policy 2014 – 2016



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Introduction

The curriculum of our school should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils and prepare our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

We already work in ways which promote community cohesion but as migration and economics change and 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, language and ethnicity.

Evington Valley serves a culturally diverse community. 30% the population are Indian, 15% are Pakistani, 15% are Bangladeshi, 9% are Somali and 6% are African Asian. The remaining population is composed of other black background, other ethnic groups and a small recent influx of white European pupils. When pupils first start school, for the majority (93%), English has not been the predominant language spoken at home and for a few pupils English has not been used at all.

We wish to show that through our ethos and curriculum that 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.

Definition

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 background 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 school and in the wider community.

Community from a school perspective

For schools, the term 'community' has a number of dimensions including:

- School community – the pupils it serves, families and school staff;
- Community within which the school is located – the school in its geographical community and the people who live or work in that area;
- Community of Britain – all schools are by definition part of this community;
- Global community – formed by EU and international links.

Schools themselves also create communities – for example, networks formed by schools in development groups.

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.

In addition, schools will want to consider the duty to promote well-being as the work and activities that support community cohesion also contribute towards the Every Child Matters outcomes of 'making a positive contribution', 'enjoy and achieve' and 'achieving economic well being'

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 will ensure:

- Lessons across the curriculum 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 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 affective 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 and excellence

We should continue to focus 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 achieve their full potential.

The school will monitor incidence of prejudice, bullying and harassment. Monitoring of whether pupils from particular groups are more likely to be excluded or disciplined than others will be accompanied by appropriate behaviour and discipline policies in place to deal with this.

Engagement and ethos

School to school

We shall 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 intercultural activities such as sports.

School to parents and the community

Good partnership activities with the local and wider community 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 pupils' voice is heard and able to affect change.
- Maintaining strong links and multi-agency working between the school and other local agencies, such as the police and social care and health professionals.
- Engagement with parents through placements for adult education, curriculum evenings, and family liaisons work.

How is social cohesion promoted at Evington Valley Primary School to fulfil the above?

Teaching and Learning

- At Evington Valley Primary School teaching and curriculum provision supports good achievement, promotes common values, and builds pupils understanding of the diversity that surrounds them.
- Lessons across the curriculum promote common values and help pupils to value differences and challenge prejudice and stereotyping e.g. PSHE, SEAL, and citizenship curriculum.
- A varied curriculum that develops pupils understanding of community and diversity is enriched through visits and meetings with members of different communities e.g. all children go on school visits each year as part of the curriculum.

Equity and Excellence

- A focus in securing high standards of attainment for all pupils from all ethnic backgrounds and of different socio-economic status.
- Tracking and closing the gap between groups.
- The development of gifted and talented children within the school as well as having effective procedures to support children with special educational needs.
- An equality scheme in place.
- Effective approaches in place to deal with incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment e.g. monitoring reports to governors termly; clear school procedures.
- Admission arrangements that promote community cohesion and social equity for F1; arrangements for F2 onwards are administered by the local authority rather than by the school.

Engagement and Ethos

The school community

- The school ethos established with clear aims, objectives and rules that underpin everyday practice e.g. no bullying, teasing and racist comments.
- Links built into existing schemes and grounded in the curriculum with pupils working together.
- Use of parents to talk about living in different communities and using their skills to promote learning.
- School council to take into account pupils views e.g. monitoring bullying and playground behaviour.

The area in which the school is located

- Shared use of local facilities to provide a means for pupils to interact e.g. swimming pool.
- Working with community representatives, for example bringing community representatives into school to work with pupils including community police, fire rescue service and representatives of different faiths.
- Engagement with parents including: consultation evenings, News letters, special assemblies, curriculum evenings, performances, volunteer placements.
- Provision of extended services and community use of facilities for activities that take place in and out of school hours, including sports clubs.

The UK community

- A curriculum that takes into account how different communities may live e.g. rural, suburban, urban through visits to other areas.
- Ensuring that children are aware of national and local events that affect people's lives.
- Learning about how different communities celebrate different festivals within Britain, e.g., Eid-Al-Addha, Ramadan, Eid-Al-Fittr, Diwali, Christmas, Harvest, Baisakhi.

The global community

- The Geography curriculum informs children of the similarities and differences in the lives of different communities from around the world.
- Establishing links with schools in different environments in Britain and abroad.
- Charity events supporting children around the world; e.g. Red Nose Day.

The Role of Governors

The Governing Body is legally responsible for ensuring promotion of social cohesion; the head teacher is responsible for ensuring the school fulfils these duties.

On a regular basis governors will consider:

The schools impact on the community.

Whether the school can serve a wider community and help bring pupils and parents together.

How representative the governing body is of the local community and pupils backgrounds.

How does the school actively promote understanding and dialogue between different groups.

An action plan to address any issues that have arisen would need to be produced.

Monitoring Social Cohesion at Evington Valley Primary School

The school staff and governors will regularly review this policy under the key headings to ensure that this is further developed and refined.