

Policy on Community Cohesion

(1) Definition and Context

At Barham Primary School we are working to establish a society in which there is a **common vision** and **sense of belonging** by all communities; where the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; where similar **life opportunities** are available to all; and in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace and in the wider community.

The term 'community' has a number of dimensions.

- The first key group is the school community, which includes the pupils it serves, their parents, carers and families, the school's staff and governing body, and users of the school's facilities and services.
- The second group is the community within which the school is located, its geographical setting and the people who live or work in the area. This applies not just to the immediate neighbourhood but also to the local authority area within which a school is located.
- There is then the United Kingdom community of which we are a part.
- The school operates with the global community – formed by European Union and international links.
- Finally, the school creates communities – for example, the networks formed by this school working in collaboration with others.

(2) What is the school's role?

This school's responsibilities for community cohesion are grouped under the three following headings.

(a) Teaching, learning and curriculum

We encourage our pupils to learn to understand others, to value diversity whilst also promoting shared values, to promote awareness of human rights and to apply and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.

(b) Equity and excellence

We promote equality of opportunity for all to succeed at the highest level possible, striving to remove barriers to access and participation in learning. We aim and work to eliminate variations in outcomes for different groups.

(c) Engagement and extended services

We provide reasonable means for our pupils, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations: including links with different schools and communities and the provision of extended service with opportunities for pupils, families and the wider community to take part in activities and receive services which build positive

interaction and achievement for all groups.

(3) Assessing impact

Having a policy is the first step towards promoting community cohesion. Implementing it is the second. Most important of all is securing impact. We will know we have been successful if the following comes to fruition.

The school will assess impact by judging how well it

- promotes amity and accord among the pupils, parents and wider community it serves, challenging divisions and breaking them down;
- serves the wider community and helps to bring different pupils and parents together;
- engages with all sections of the parent body and promotes ways of bringing them together and included into special consultation meetings;
- secures full representation of the disparate groups on the governing body and School Council;
- creates an ethos of inclusion, in which divisions and intolerance of others are unacceptable;
- promotes understanding and dialogue between different groups, especially those that are disadvantaged or marginalised, by bringing in, or reaching out, to community and faith leaders;
- considers the local social problems which impact adversely upon the school and seeks action by partners – for example through positive role models, programmes geared to working with new migrants, and tackling racism and stereotypes; and
- exploits fully what the local authority has to offer to promote community cohesion.