Community Cohesion Policy

Summer 2016

Approved by: Steering Committee

Date: 18th April 2016

Next Review Date: Summer 2019

Waterthorpe NI School
Community Cohesion Promotion Policy

There is a duty for schools to promote community cohesion under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

1. Introduction

The curriculum of our school promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils and helps to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

We consider this part of our role, and work in ways which promote community cohesion. Our aim is for Waterthorpe NI school to be a thriving, cohesive community, with a vital part to play in building a more cohesive society.

Every school 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. The staff and pupil populations of some schools reflect this diversity, allowing pupils to mix with those from different backgrounds.

Our school does not reflect this diversity and we are working in different ways, including the establishment of links with other schools and organisations, in order to give pupils the opportunity to mix with and learn with, from and about those from different backgrounds.

We wish to show that through our ethos and curriculum we 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 our duty to address issues of 'how we live together' and 'dealing with difference' however controversial and difficult they might sometimes seem.

Training on the PREVENT strategy and CHANNEL duty Guidance (Protecting vulnerable young people from being drawn into terrorism) is in place in school to support the government's aim of identifying any radicalisation at an early stage.

2. 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 our school, the term 'community' has a number of dimensions including:

- the school community – the pupils it serves, their families and the school's staff;

- the <u>community within which the school is located</u> – the school in its geographical community and the people who live or work in that area;
- the <u>community of Britain</u> - all schools are by definition part of this community;
- The <u>global community</u> – formed by EU and international links.

In addition, we are able to create communities – for example, the networks formed with the other users within the Emmanuel Complex or by schools within our Family of Schools or within the locality group of schools.

3. What can we do to promote community cohesion?

3.1 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.

The work aimed at supporting pupils and families from different ethnic or socioeconomic backgrounds, to learn about each other, contributes towards community cohesion.

Community cohesion at our school will need to develop by reflecting:

- the nature of the school's population
- the location of the school
- the needs within our community

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

Broadly, schools' contribution to community cohesion can be grouped under the three following headings:

- <u>Teaching, learning and curriculum</u> – 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.
- <u>Equity and excellence</u> – 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.
- <u>Engagement and ethos</u> – 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.

3.2 What do we consider in promoting community cohesion?

We consider what activities already take place within the school and what might be arranged in co-operation with other schools.

In addition, we consider our duty to promote well-being as some of the work and activities that support community cohesion can also contribute towards pupils' outcomes of 'making a positive contribution' , 'enjoying and achieving' and 'achieving economic well-being'.

Teaching, learning and curriculum

At Waterthorpe we aim to have a high standard of teaching and curriculum provision that supports equally 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 are integrated across the curriculum and part of our PHSE/RE sessions.

We aim to deliver:

- Lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to value differences and to challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- A programme of curriculum based activities whereby pupils' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through visits and meetings with members of different communities.
- A rich and broad learning environment
- Opportunities for children to empathise with different issues in the local and global community through 'charity days' and PSHE focus weeks
- 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. Our School Council is a key factor in meeting this aim

Equity and excellence

We 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 tracking systems enable us to evaluate progress of different groups and to tackle underperformance by any particular group.

We carefully monitor incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment. Monitoring of whether pupils from particular groups are more likely to be excluded or disciplined. These are accompanied by appropriate behaviour and discipline policies to deal with this.

Engagement and ethos

School to school: We seek to broaden the ways that we work in partnership with other schools.
Sharing facilities and joining in with Family of Schools activities 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 police and social care and health professionals
- Engagement with parents through meetings, curriculum evenings, workshops and family liaison work
- On-going development of our Travel plan
- Provision of a range of extended services and family/adult learning
- Promoting the use of community volunteers in school
- ECO school development
- SEAL and family SEAL work

Strengths of our school's current practice of community cohesion:

- Our School's commitment to the Sustainable School's strategy
- Green Flag ECO School (Waterthorpe Nursery Infant School)
- Forest School developed and led by the school working with local community through a constituted group
- Travel plan in place and stars awarded for on-going good practice
- Broad range of extended services and excellent links with other agencies
- Annual involvement in 'Build-it Challenge', CABE Green Day and Fair Trade fortnight
- Identified school for links and sponsorship with local shopping centre
- Established volunteer schemes for parents and local community members
- Established training for local community members in a range of adult and family learning areas e.g. weekly adult computer course
- Annual involvement in charity days alternating between local and global community issues

Websites of interest

The Specialist Schools network, led by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, with advice and information available at:
www.schoolsnetwork.org.uk

Information on extended schools partnerships and networks at:
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/ete/extendedschools
www.teachernet.gov.uk/extendedschools

Equality Impact Assessment Template

Name of policy or project being assessed?	Date
Community Cohesion	2/2/16

Priority Level	
High	**x**
Medium	
Low	

Lead Officer: Helen Stokes
Members of the assessment team: Helen Stokes & Suzanne Marriott
Others involved in the assessment (peer review/external challenge): Co-ordinator's Committee members

What are the aims of the policy or project?
Supporting pupils and families from different ethnic or socioeconomic backgrounds to learn with, from and about each other, contributes towards community cohesion.
Who is the intended customer/service user of this project or policy?   **Children & families & local communities**
What are the desired outcomes from this project or policy?
We equip pupils to live and thrive alongside people from many different backgrounds and to contribute to their community.
List any other key policies, procedures, projects or strategies that this policy/project has implications on: **Equal Opportunities (EO)**

What are the racial, disability and gender equality implications of the policy or project?	
Does the policy or project have any significant positive impact for: ▪ **Different racial groups** ▪ **Disabled persons** ▪ **Men and women** ▪ **Boys and girls**	**The policy focus is for children to have an understanding, empathy and tolerance of all people, to learn that we are all different and can all contribute to our communities**
Does the policy or project have any significant adverse impact for: ▪ **Different racial groups** ▪ **Disabled persons** ▪ **Men and women** ▪ **Boys and girls**	**NO**
Do you have any evidence?	
Is there any way that you could reduce or eliminate the adverse impact or increase positive impact?	**N/A**

Action to take		
If you have indicated there is a negative impact, can it be justified? N/A	**YES**	**NO**
If you have indicated there is a negative impact and it cannot be justified, is it discrimination? N/A	**YES**	**NO**
If you have answered YES, please list all the changes that you have made to eliminate this discrimination:		
Please state how will you monitor the policy or project?: Policy review (by staff/governors by dates on policy)		

Signed (Person completing the form):	Date: 2/2/16