



MARSH SCHOOL COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY

**Fulfilling
Uplifting
Nurturing**

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1. Introduction

Under the Education and Inspection Act 2006 schools have a duty to promote community cohesion. This document constitutes the Governing Body Policy for Community Cohesion. It should be read in conjunction with the following policies:- Assessment, Reporting and Recording, Equal Opportunities for Pupils, Educational Inclusion, Racial Equality and the Equality and Diversity Scheme.

Community cohesion is about a common vision, valued and celebrated diversity, equal life chances for all and strong relations between different communities.

It is about having a sense of a shared future with an emphasis on mutual respect, civility, rights and responsibilities and a visible social justice.

2 Background

Marsh is a growing school that serves a diverse community that has many challenges. It is in an area of deprivation within High Wycombe, very close to more affluent areas. The percentage of people from the two top socio-economic groups is low. There are different cultural groups living together, often in estates that need refurbishment where there are social problems such as drugs, alcohol related crime and other forms of anti-social behaviour. Family difficulties are quite prevalent and the area does not have a good reputation. The main cultural groups are white working class British, Pakistani and Afro-Caribbean. There have been concerns in the recent past about fundamental islamists and the terrorist link that causes anxiety.

The school takes its role in promoting community cohesion very seriously as it knows that a child will not be able to learn effectively unless it is treated as whole child with all the influences that affect them are being dealt with sensitively but proactively. The school reflects the diversity of the local area and prides itself on providing an oasis of calm and tranquillity for all children and is a welcoming place for all.

3 Aims and Objectives

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that Marsh School plays a vital part in promoting community cohesion. As a school we recognise, celebrate and value diversity and promote acceptance and respect of different backgrounds, lifestyles and identities. The school is responsible for educating pupils and preparing them for living and working in a multi cultural society which is diverse in its cultures, religious beliefs, ethnicities and social backgrounds. We aim to support our pupils to become responsible citizens who will make a positive contribution to society while respecting the differences of others and equal opportunities for all.

4 How do we contribute to Community Cohesion?

Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

Through planned learning experiences we help children to learn to understand others, to value diversity and promote shared values. We also promote awareness of human rights and develop the skills of participation.

Equality and Excellence

We aim to ensure equal opportunities for all so children can achieve their potential so they can succeed at the highest level. Through careful planning and analysis of data we work to remove barriers to access and participation in learning and other activities. We work to eliminate variations in achievement for different groups. Tracking pupil progress enables us to identify underperformance and tackle it.

Engagement and Extended Services

We provide means for children and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds so building positive relationships. This refers to links with other schools and groups within our community; the development of provision of extended services; and 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.

5. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of every member of the staff and the Governing Body to ensure that community cohesion is actively promoted and that they provide positive role models for the pupils. Pupils will also be expected to take responsibility for their own attitudes and behaviour. This will be endorsed through the PSHE curriculum particularly by the full implementation of SEAL.

Governors' Responsibilities

- To promote community cohesion as part of its leadership and management role
- To follow up any complaints with the headteacher.
- To assist the Head Teacher in drawing up and reviewing of the Policy and action plans for Community Cohesion
- To assist in the monitoring process of the policy and action plan

Headteachers Responsibilities

- To ensure that all staff are made aware of their responsibilities under the Community Cohesion Policy.
- To ensure that the policy is implemented in all activities within the school, whether such activities involve pupils directly or not.
- To work with the Governing Body to monitor the implementation of the policy and action plan for community cohesion.
- To investigate any complaints in relation to the policy and to take appropriate action.

6. Implementation

The concept of community cohesion links to many aspects of everyday life at our school. The school works positively towards the inclusion of all pupils and the ethos of the school is one of a caring, nurturing and encouraging environment.

Community cohesion is implemented in many ways:-

In school through

- Planned every day work that the children experience that promotes community cohesion.
- On site SENCO and Inclusion Manager
- A range of high quality interventions carried out to close the achievement gap
- Quick access to Speech and Language and other agencies with a special focus upon ensuring that children from families with limited English or poor literacy or family difficulties are not disadvantaged in the process of securing extra support.
- Elected School Council and the views of children actively being sought
- Healthy Schools – focus weeks, walk to school, active mark
- School clubs at low cost so children can access activities that may otherwise be out of reach and an extra hour of very cheap child care is available
- Toddler group aiming at reaching isolated groups e.g. Asian mothers with a Pakistani heritage
- Special events e.g. fun afternoon and school picnic where all the community can gather
- Home visits for all new entrants in the Nursery
- Parents are the First Teachers worker working within the school
- Children encouraged to pray in assembly in a way that is comfortable for them
- Careful purchase of new resources to reflect the school population

With Parents and Carers through

- Staff who can speak community languages across the school so parents and carers can access information or seek advice
- Open door policy
- Welcome signs in community languages
- Advice for parents of all cultures e.g. Asian ladies domestic violence help line
- Parents and Carers helping in school developing skills that they will be able to use in future employment e.g. parents running toddler group
- Providing placements for parents who are on courses
- Developing PTA where all families help to raise money for the school but also with an aim of bringing different groups together
- Coffee and Cake Sales
- Quiz nights and other PTA activities
- Parent Teacher conferences with language support where ever possible
- Open mornings for parents when they can see the school in operation
- Parent Governors from a widening section of the community
- Weekly Newsletters
- School shows and concerts

Marsh Infant and Nursery School

With other schools through

- High quality transition work with the local junior school that most children go on to.
- Membership of Rye Liaison Liaison Group
- Sports events with other schools in the local area
- Offer of work experience for pupils from local secondary schools
- Support of teaching students from Brunel, Reading and Oxford Brookes Universities

With the local community through

- Strong links with local nursery schools and pre-schools
- Strong links with Beech view Junior School e.g. Y6 helping at Sports Day and hearing readers. Y2 using ICT suite at the school once each half term
- Visiting theatre groups, sports groups, emergency services
- Being part of different network groups e.g. Network Learning Community and Motivated Schools group
- Educational visits to Cotswold Wildlife Park, London, Kew Gardens, Beconscott, Odds Farm
- Being a polling station
- Helpers from the local area for clubs e.g. knitting club has two older members of the community helping
- Letting out the school to community groups for meetings
- Working with the local builders on the new housing project

Further afield through

- Supports for a number of local, national and international charities particularly buying school dinners for African children
- By having links with schools from other locations e.g. London (developing)

7. Administration

The Curriculum committee of the Governing Body is responsible for reviewing and monitoring the implementation of the policy.

The Chairman of Governors will sign acceptance of the Policy on behalf of the Governing Body.

The Community Cohesion Policy will be reviewed every 3 years.