John Clifford Community Cohesion Policy

Date of review	Spring 2009	Spring 2013	Autumn 2017
Signed	Pam Holland	Johnny Bishop	

Document History

Policy created: 2008

Date of review: Autumn 2021

Community Cohesion: what does it mean for John Clifford School?

Can schools realistically play a part in creating cohesion in their community?

From September 2007, all schools had a new duty to promote 'community cohesion'. Most schools are already carrying out the role of being a key player in every local community. This role is now being highlighted further by Ofsted, who will be looking at community cohesion in every school in inspections from September 2008.

We need to review our approach to developing a cohesive learning environment and ensuring that it is reflected appropriately in the school SEF and SIP.

All schools serve varying communities and are responsible for educating children who will live and work in a country which is becoming more diverse in terms of culture, faith, ethnicity and social backgrounds.

Through our ethos and curriculum, we can promote a common sense of identity and support diversity, showing pupils that different communities can work together to develop a coherent and successful society.

What is community cohesion?

A commonly agreed understanding is that everyone in an area is working towards an equitable society, in which there is a common vision, a sense of belonging and all people have similar life chances. All schools have a key role to play in ensuring every pupil achieves as well they can.

Community cohesion aims to build 'a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.'

The 'community' has varying dimensions for schools. These include the individual school community and the community within which the school is located, as well as the UK and global communities. In addition, we are a member of the Chilwell Family of Schools

Community cohesion is where:

- there is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision of a local area
- there is a strong sense of an individual's rights and responsibilities when living in a particular place – 'everyone knows what is expected of them and what they can expect in turn'
- those from different backgrounds have similar life chances and access to services
- there is an understanding that local organisations and institutions will act fairly between different interests
- there is a strong recognition of the contribution of those who have lived in an area for a long time and also those who are newly arrived, with a specific focus on what they have in common rather than differences
- there are strong and positive relationships between people from differing backgrounds in the schools, the workplace and other institutions within a local area.

The role of schools here is crucial in creating opportunities for pupils to achieve their academic potential and by developing thinking and tolerant adults.

What do we need to consider in promoting community cohesion?

The duty to promote community cohesion is explicitly placed on the Governing Body of a school. This is part of the developing leadership and management role within the Ofsted inspection regime. The revised inspection framework, starting in September, is likely to increase the emphasis of the role of the local school in supporting community cohesion. Things to think about:

- Make sure governors are fully aware of the responsibility of the Governing Body to develop community cohesion.
- Make sure that the SEF and SIP indicates positive community activities and evaluates successful school initiatives in this area.
- Ensure that pupils, parents and staff are aware of their responsibilities, as well as their rights, in this area.
- Look at a variety of ways, through the curriculum, to deepen the understanding of pupils about the wider world.
- Offer school support and facilities to appropriate outside groups to develop community cohesion, but this should 'support' and not replace, the key focus of the school in improving teaching and learning.
- Remember that we are only one part of a local community and that its impact maybe limited – many other agencies have responsibilities in this area.
- This may seem 'another' area of responsibility for the school/head, but this responsibility must be kept in perspective and a work-life balance maintained.

Our contribution to community cohesion can be considered in three main areas:
Teaching and learning
An effective school will have high standards of teaching and a curriculum provision that supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values that emphasise the understanding of the diversity of cultures, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds.

Examples: Curriculum that includes children's questions and choices, enrichment,

Equity and excellence
A focus on securing high standards of attainment for all pupils, regardless of ethnic or socio- economic background will support true equality of opportunity and achievement.

An effective approach to dealing with incidents of prejudice, bullying and cultural misunderstandings is crucial. It is important that schools are welcoming to parents from every social and economic group with fair admission arrangements that promote diversity and social equity. Monitoring of the achievement of pupils from varying groups is important in making sure that these policies are effective.

Examples: Induction, transition, welcome, groupings, support, playground provision, behaviour and anti-bullying

Engagement and ethos
The development of partnership arrangements to share good practice and offer pupils the opportunity to meet and learn from pupils from different backgrounds. Links built into existing schemes of work, with pupils working together on joint projects.

Examples: John Clifford Promises, bee tokens, community conversation, local partnerships