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**BOWER GROVE SCHOOL**  
**COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY**

**1. Introduction**

The curriculum of our school promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils and aims to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. As a Co-operative Trust School we uphold the co-operative values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity and foster the ethical values of openness, honesty, social responsibility and caring for others

Our 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, language and ethnicity. We consider this part of our role and work in ways which promote community cohesion. As migration and economic change alters the shape of our increasingly diverse local communities, it is important that our school plays a full part in promoting community cohesion. Our school community plays an importance in building a more inclusive society for the future.

We ensure that our pupils learn about our broad cultural heritage, especially in the wider community of Kent, the UK and the global community.

Through our ethos and curriculum our school promotes a common sense of identity and supports diversity, showing our pupils how different communities can be united by common experiences and values.

We address issues of ‘how we live together’ and ‘dealing with difference’ however controversial and difficult they might sometimes seem. We work in partnership with the local community, the local authority, the police and other agencies to ensure that our pupils are appropriately informed and kept safe. All staff are aware of the Prevent Strategy.

**2. 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 the wider community. Our school promotes fundamental British values of rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect for individual faith and belief.

**Community from our school’s perspective**

For our school, the term ‘community’ has a number of dimensions including:

- The school community – the pupils it serves, and their roles within the school, their families, the school’s staff and the networks formed by schools in development groups.
- The community within which the school is located – the school in its geographical community and the people who live or work in that area.
- The community of Britain – all schools are by definition part of this community.
- The global community – formed by international links.

### **3. What we consider in promoting community cohesion**

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

#### **Teaching, learning and curriculum**

We aim to provide:

- Lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to value differences and to challenge prejudice and stereotyping – for example, opportunities in PSHE classes for pupils to discuss issues of identity and diversity.
- A programme of curriculum based activities whereby pupils' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through visits and activities with members of different communities.
- Support for pupils whom have additional educational needs e.g. SEMH, learning, physical or behaviour difficulties or English as an additional language (EAL) to enable them to achieve at the highest level possible.
- 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.
- Opportunities for discussing issues of identity and diversity across the curriculum.
- Promotion of fundamental British values across the wider curriculum.

#### **Examples from our school include:**

- A varied and relevant curriculum that develops pupils' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through fieldwork visits and activities with members of different communities e.g. children visit a range of places of worship and experience workshops from a variety of cultures.
- A broad opportunity to attend residential throughout School from Year 6-11.
- A well resourced Religious Education syllabus based on the local RE Agreed Syllabus which develops knowledge, attitude and skills in many of the areas at the heart of effective community cohesion.
- Lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to value differences and challenge prejudice and stereotyping e.g. PSHE and Citizenship curriculum.
- Relevant support for pupils with AEN by strong differentiation practices.
- An active school council promotes the widest possible pupil voice.
- Theme of the fortnight focuses on different social topics in form time and across school.

#### **Equity and Excellence**

Our school has a commitment to 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.

Our school monitors incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment. The monitoring of whether pupils from particular groups are more likely to be vulnerable to exclusion or under-performance than others is tracked by appropriate behaviour and discipline policies that identify any concerning features. Admission arrangements promote community cohesion and social equity.

#### **Examples from our school include:**

- A focus on securing high standards of attainment for all pupils from all ethnic backgrounds and of different socio-economic status e.g. tracking and closing the gap between groups e.g. intervention strategies put in place to raise standards of reading.
- Developing the personalised progress of work.

- The development of gifted and talented children within the school as well as having effective procedures to support children with special educational needs.
- Equal opportunities and race equality policies are in place.
- Developing programmes of work for new arrivals e.g. our new arrivals procedures.
- Effective approaches in place to deal with incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment e.g. monitoring reports to governors termly; clear school procedures that are regularly revisited and communicated to staff, pupils and parents.
- Weekly monitoring of our school behaviour data by the senior leadership team ensures that no groups will suffer prejudice without it being identified and addressed. Inappropriate behaviour, exclusions, racist, bullying and drug related incidents are rare and any incidents are reported to governors through our termly behaviour monitoring.

### **Engagement and Ethos**

We seek to broaden the ways that we work in partnership with other schools to provide opportunities for meaningful intercultural activities such as sport and music. 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 pupil voice is heard and able to effect change.
- Maintaining strong links and multi-agency working between the school and other local agencies including the police and social care and health professionals.
- Engagement with parents through coffee mornings, Parent Support Group, curriculum evenings and multi-agency meetings.
- Provision of extended services, and in particular bringing parents together from different backgrounds through parenting and community use of facilities that take place out of school hours.
- Provision of venues for community activities including Rochester Pipe Band, sports clubs and a parent support group.

### ***The school community***

- A school ethos established with clear aims, objectives and rules that underpin everyday practice e.g. no bullying, teasing or racist comments.
- Partnership arrangements in place to share good practice and offer pupils opportunities to meet and learn from other pupils from different backgrounds e.g. PE, Citizenship and PSHE.
- Invites speakers to talk about living in different communities and using their skills to promote learning.
- School council to take into account pupil views e.g. monitor racism, bullying and playground behaviour.
- Regular participation in Citizenship initiatives.
- We draw upon a number of cultural organisations to provide speakers or activities for assemblies or as stimulus to learning in the classroom, especially during our focus days.

### ***The area in which the school is located***

- Shared use of local facilities to provide a means for pupils to interact e.g. Youth Club and Sports clubs.
- We have links with our local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO).
- Working with community representatives, for example bringing community representatives into school to work with pupils.
- Strong links and multi-agency working practice developed between the school and other local agencies.
- Engagement with parents through, support groups, special assemblies, curriculum evenings.
- Links with our local church and Rev. Lavender.
- Provision of extended services and community use of facilities for activities that take place in and out of school hours and during school holidays.

### ***The UK community***

- Curriculum in place for children to take into account how different communities may live.
- Giving children experiences through visits and residential of differing areas and communities.
- 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-Fitr, Diwali, Chinese New Year, Christmas, Harvest, Passover, Baisakhi.

### ***The global community***

- Links established locally and also international links via the internet.
- Children raise funds to support local, national and international charities.
- Global Learning curriculum informs children of world wide ways of living.
- Charity events set up to support children around the world. Children learn why they are raising funds e.g. Children in Need, Comic Relief and worldwide disaster funds.

### **The Role of Governors**

Our Governing Body is responsible for ensuring the promotion of social cohesions and the Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the duties are fulfilled within the school.

On a regular basis our governors will consider:

- The school's impact on the community i.e. is the school exacerbating divisions or challenging them and breaking them down?
- The analysis of data around bullying and racist incidents to inform provision and school development.
- Whether we serve the wider community and help bring pupils and parents together.
- How representative our governing body is of the local community and pupils' backgrounds.
- What our school can do to create an ethos of inclusion in which divisions and intolerance of others is unacceptable.
- How our school actively promotes understanding and dialogue between different groups, do we work in partnership with community and faith leaders?
- Any social problems which might impact adversely upon the school and how we have sought to engage key partners.
- Whether we have accessed support and good practice from within the local authority to promote social cohesion and what additional support is available.

### **Monitoring Community Cohesion at Bower Grove School**

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

Links with other school policies e.g.

- Equalities Policy
- PSHE & Religious Education
- Anti-Bullying

Our network of partners in this area of school life includes:

School Doctor	The Police through the PCSO
Local Councillors / Mayor / MP	Representatives of local Churches
Parent Support Group	Rochester Pipe Band
Volunteers	Canterbury Christ Church University
CXK Advisors	College and work experience partners
ASD Satellite host school (West Borough Primary)	LA specialist schools
Maidstone Football Club	Local Scouts groups
Badminton Club	Headstart (Mental Health Charities Project)
KSENT (Kent Special Educational Needs Trust)	