

St Michael's Church of England Primary School

Community Cohesion Policy

1. Introduction

The ethos and curriculum of St Michael's Church of England Primary School aim to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

At St Michael's we believe that as migration and economic change alter the shape of our increasingly diverse local communities, it is more important than ever that our school plays a full part in promoting community cohesion. We work hard to secure a thriving, cohesive community, while recognising the vital part it has to play in building a cohesive society for the future.

At St Michael's, 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 challenging they may seem.

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.

3. Community from St Michael's perspective

For St Michael's, the term 'community' has a number of dimensions including:

- the school community – the pupils it serves, their families and the school's staff and governors;
- the community of Steventon within which the school is located
- the school within the community of The Vale of the White Horse and Oxfordshire and the people who live or work in there;
- the community of Great Britain - all schools are by definition part of this community;
- the global community – formed by EU and international links.

4. Our aims and objectives

- Our Community Cohesion Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- We will involve stakeholders in action planning for effective community cohesion.
- The Governing Body will take positive steps to promote good community relations.
- We will work towards challenging any forms of prejudice towards groups and individuals.
- Teaching staff will be trained in promoting community cohesion through a diverse curriculum.
- We will assess the impact of our community cohesion programme to determine adverse or differential impact on groups or individuals.

5. How do we contribute towards community cohesion?

At St Michael's, we consider ourselves responsible, alongside parents/ carers, for equipping our pupils to live and thrive alongside people from many different backgrounds. The school's contribution to community cohesion can be grouped under the three following headings:

- **Teaching, learning and curriculum** – 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.
- **Equity and excellence** – 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.
- **Engagement and ethos** – 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.

6. Teaching, learning and curriculum

- It is our aim to ensure the quality of teaching and curriculum provision that supports 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 will be integrated across the curriculum.

7. St Michael's C of E Primary School will 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 PSHCE classes for pupils to discuss issues of identity and diversity and what it means 'to live together in the UK'.
- A programme of curriculum based activities whereby pupils' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through visits and meetings with members of different communities.
- 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.

8. Equity and excellence

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

9. Engagement and ethos

School to school:

- We shall seek to broaden the ways that we work in partnership with other schools, both locally and further afield. The means of developing the relationship may be through exchange visits, mailing or the internet.
- Sharing facilities also provides a means for pupils to interact, as do opportunities for meaningful intercultural activities such as sport and art.

School to parents and the community:

Good partnership activities with the local and wider community include:

- Working together with community representatives, for example through bringing community representatives into school to work with the pupils, and inviting village groups to our performances and events.
- 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 curriculum evenings, parent and child courses and family liaison work.
- Provision of extended services, in particular, bringing parents together from different backgrounds through parenting and family support, as well as community use of facilities for activities that take place out of school.

10. Monitoring, reviewing, assessing impact

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by staff and governors to ensure that it is effective in securing positive relations between different groups and shared communities, and that it does not disadvantage any particular sections of the community.

Date: February 2015