

Prepared with reference to the DfE publications

- Improving the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils Departmental advice for independent schools, academies and free schools” Nov 13
- Promoting fundamental British Values in schools as part of SMSC Nov 14
- Improving the SMSC values of pupils updates Nov 14

Introduction

The curriculum of our school should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils and of society and prepare our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

We already consider this part of our role, and already work in ways which promote community cohesion. 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. Our school should be a thriving, cohesive community, but it also has a vital part to play in building a more cohesive society.

We are 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.

Whilst our school is characterised by ethnic, cultural, faith and linguistic diversity, we still have a responsibility to ensure that our children learn about an even wider cultural and community heritage, especially the wider community of the UK and the global community

We wish to show that through our ethos and curriculum our school can promote a common sense of identity and support diversity, showing our pupils how different communities can be united by common experiences and values.

We believe that it is the duty of our school to address issues of ‘how we live together’ and ‘dealing with difference’ however controversial and difficult they might sometimes seem. We also need to reflect upon and appropriately respond to, government guidance ‘Learning together to be safe’ and work in partnership with the local authority and the Police to ensure that our pupils are appropriately informed and protected.

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 our perspective

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

- the school community – the pupils it serves, their families and the school’s staff;
- 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 EU and international links.

What do we do in promoting community cohesion

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

The Iona School promotes an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where differing views, faiths, cultures and races are valued and where children are encouraged to engage with the wider community through visits to mosques, synagogues, museums, and local events.

Children should acquire a tolerance and appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures; know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions and share and discuss practices, celebrations and experiences.

In order to foster an understanding of different faiths in our older pupils (classes 4,5, and 6) we invite representatives of different faiths to talk to them.

All students learn another language from the age of 5, and the curriculum covers cultural aspects as well as the study of the language. Staff will encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours such as sharing and respecting other's opinions. Staff are expected to promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example, sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.

Other activities to support our commitment to community cohesion

We are always mindful to teach equality and consider the protected characteristics of the 2010 Equalities act,

The Iona school is fortunate to have Rutland House School for parents renting classrooms from us. This charity specialises in helping children with conditions such as cerebral palsy that cause motor disorders or motor development delay. They also run specialist projects to help children with Down syndrome improve their communication skills.

Due to this, the school children are aware of diversity, they regular see and come into contact with the service users of Rutland House.

We also invite the staff of Rutland House to talk to our children about their work. This gives our children some understanding of the problems of identifying and combatting discrimination (based on protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010)

Our Teaching, learning and curriculum provides;

- lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to value differences and to challenge prejudice and stereotyping – for example, opportunities in citizenship 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.
- opportunities for discussing issues of identity and diversity across the curriculum
- an international dimension to our curriculum planning and delivery

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.

Our school will monitor incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment. Monitoring of whether pupils from particular groups are more likely to be excluded or disciplined than others will be accompanied by the appropriate behaviour and discipline policies that are in place to deal with this.

We also have;

- A focus on securing high standards of attainment for all pupils from all ethnic backgrounds and of different socio-economic status
- 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
- Effective approaches in place to deal with incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment e.g. monitoring reports to trustees and clear school procedures
- Admission arrangements that promote community cohesion and social equity
- Monitoring our school behavior policies and practice so that no groups or individuals suffer prejudice. Ensure that inappropriate behaviour, exclusions, racist, bullying and drug related incidents or other stereotyping is monitored termly and reported to governors'

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 the opportunities to meet and learn from other pupils from different backgrounds.
- Opportunities for parents and other relatives to talk about living in different communities and using their skills to promote learning
- School council to take into account all pupil views.
- We draw upon a number of local cultural organizations to provide speakers for assemblies or as stimulus to learning in the classroom.

The area in which the school is located

- Shared use of local facilities to provide a means for pupils to interact.
- We have strong links with our local Police Community Liaison Officer
- 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
- Provision of extended services and community use of facilities for activities that take place in and out of school hours.

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.
- We prepare our pupils for active Citizenship in the school and community.

The global community

- Links established locally and also International Links through the Steiner schools network
- Children raise funds to help Umanandi.
- curriculum informs children of lives of world wide ways of living
- Charity events set up to support children around the world.

The Role of Trustees

Our Trustees oversee the promotion of social cohesions and the College are responsible for ensuring that the duties are fulfilled within school.

On a regular basis we consider;

- The school's impact on the community i.e. is the school exacerbating divisions or challenging them and breaking them down?
- How our school uses its own 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 we are 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?

Issue date

This policy takes effect from the below date

March 2010

Related Policies

- Equality and diversity policy
- Behaviour policy
- Pupil code of conduct
- SMSC policy

Review date

This policy will be reviewed and revised by the school manager on an annual basis.

Endorsement

Full endorsement to this policy is given by:

Name: Mr Martin Taylor
Position: Iona School Trustee
Signed: 
Date: 06/08/2018

Iona School & Nursery