

English Martyrs' Catholic School



Community Cohesion Policy

*English Martyrs', as a community centered in Christ,
strives to develop the talents of each person.
"May they all be one"*

Approved/reviewed by Governors:	
17 th March 2021	
Date of next review	January 2022

Rationale

As a Catholic community we value the dignity and unique value of each human person, uniquely created in the image and likeness of God. We seek to live our lives by Christ's precept: "love your neighbour as yourself" and our Christian obligation to promote the Common Good of society. As a Christian community we recognise the value of distinct gifts and identities. St Paul expresses it thus: "many parts but always the one body". As a Catholic community we recognise our duty to promote the value and dignity of all people, but especially the most needy and vulnerable members of society. As the Second Vatican Council put it:

"The joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears of the people of this age, especially those who are poor, or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts."

As a Catholic community we are committed to the promotion of equality and harmony, justice and peace for all; to being 'a light for the nations' in the context of our church and school as a Eucharistic community united in Jesus' words "May they all be one".

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a definition of Community Cohesion which is consistent with our beliefs and values and the definitions as agreed

by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, and to explain the areas of school life on which this policy will impact.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families' understanding of Community Cohesion is:-

“Working towards a society where 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 where strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.” (A.Johnson, 2 Nov. 2006).

English Martyrs' Catholic School strives to build a tolerant, understanding and fair society, in which all members share a common sense of belonging that overcomes their differences, “May the all be one”.

The school will build Community Cohesion by promoting equality of opportunity and inclusion for different groups of students within a school, and promote shared values and encourage students to engage actively with others to understand what they all hold in common and to understand the views and perspective of those with whom they differ.

Teaching, learning and curriculum

Through the curriculum the school will help young people learn to understand their God given value, and the value of others, to value diversity whilst promoting shared values, to promote awareness of human rights and to apply and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action. These values will be taught directly through Religious Education but reflected in all aspects of the curriculum, actively and passively.

Equity and excellence

The school will ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest level possible, striving to remove barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities and working to eliminate variations in outcomes for different groups.

Engagement and extended services

The school will endeavour to provide reasonable means for students and their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations, including links with different schools and communities; the provision of extended services; and opportunities for students, families and the wider community to take part in activities and receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups.

Promoting Community Cohesion

In promoting Community Cohesion the school will actively seek to have:-

- Opportunities across the curriculum to promote shared values and help students to value differences and to challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping. As well as the opportunities in Religious Education and Citizenship, there are opportunities across the curriculum and Personal, Social and Health Education (PHSE).
- A programme of curriculum based activities whereby students' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through retreats, Performing Arts activities, fieldwork, visits, for example to places of worship, and meetings with members of different communities.
- Support for students for whom English is an additional language (EAL), to remove barriers to effective learning, enabling the students to be integrated and achieve the highest possible level in English.
- Assemblies which involve members of the local and wider community and promote the engagement of students and shared understanding, as well as the school's ethos and values.
- Encouragement for students to value diversity and develop a better understanding of UK society, for example by challenging assumptions and creating an open climate to address sensitive and controversial issues.
- Encourage students to develop links with schools in England and throughout the world.
- The progress of all student groups will be evaluated by analysing assessment results, to keep track of the relative performance of different groups and to tackle underperformance by any particular group or the reintegration of excluded or self-excluded students into school. The school will ensure that active policies are in place to counter prejudice, discrimination, bullying and harassment including monitoring of whether students from particular groups are more likely to be excluded or disciplined, harassed or bullied than others in evaluation of the success of a school promoting equity.

School/parents/parish/community

The school will encourage good partnership activities with parents, parishes and the local and wider community e.g.:

- Working with parishes on provision of activities for the vulnerable;

- Working together with community representatives, for example through mentoring schemes or bringing community representatives into school to work with the students or to support learning by leading assemblies;
- Ensuring that the student voice is heard and able to effect change by involvement of students in the organisation.
- Maintaining strong links and multi-agency working between the school and other local agencies, such as CAMHS, the Youth Support Services, the police, different religious groups and social care and health professionals.
- Developing links with work placed learning providers and other employers.
- Placements for students in voluntary community based activities.
- Engagement with parents through curriculum briefing meetings, consultation meetings, teaching and learning activities, newsletters, and the school website