



Doc. Ref: **BerkeleyPrimary-7-002**
Page No.: **1 of 7**
Doc. Date: **AutumnTerm 2021**

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Community Cohesion

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1. Rationale

Berkeley Primary School believes that:

- The curriculum should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. *Education Act 2002, Section 78*
- Schools have a duty to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups. *Race Relations Amendment Act 2000*
- Educating our pupils to live and contribute to a country which is diverse in cultures, religions, beliefs, ethnicities and social backgrounds is the fundamental role that the school has in promoting 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
- the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued
- similar life opportunities are available to all
- strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.

Aims:

- To ensure our pupils to have a sense of belonging in a community where everyone is working towards the same values and principles in which diversity is celebrated.
- To provide a range of opportunities through which all members build positive relationships and extend these to the wider local, national and global community.
- To promote a climate where all members of the community are valued and respected, and show tolerance and understanding of each other.
- To eliminate all forms of discrimination, on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, religion and belief.
- To ensure pupils are provided with the opportunity to experience, understand, celebrate and value diversity to prepare all pupils for a future world and adult life in a multi-racial, interdependent world.

School Context:

Berkeley Primary School is a one form entry school serving a rural area including the town of Berkeley and out lying villages and hamlets.



The area does not reflect the multi-cultural nature of many urban areas in the UK. However there are a very small number with English as a second language on entry to our school.

We strive to build community cohesion by promoting equality of opportunity and inclusion for different groups of pupils within our school, whilst promoting shared values and encouraging pupils to engage actively with each other to understand what they all hold in common.

The Role of Schools in promoting Community Cohesion:

What contribution does Berkeley Primary School make towards community cohesion?

Teaching, learning and curriculum:

We have high expectations of all our pupils and strive for excellence in teaching and learning. Our curriculum provision supports high standards of attainment, promotes shared values and builds pupils' understanding of the diversity that surrounds them, encouraging them to recognise similarities and appreciate different cultures, religions or beliefs, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds.

- Our Religious Education (RE) curriculum contains a multi-faith dimension in line with the Gloucestershire RE Syllabus.
 - We have close links with our local churches and the various Christian groups and their ministers help to support and nurture the Christian faith of our school community.
 - Our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum and the SEAL programme help pupils to recognise their feelings, develop self-esteem, value differences and to challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping.
 - We ensure that the school's resources (including reading materials, ICT programmes, library books and displays) are appropriate and promote diversity.
 - We have a programme of curriculum based activities which develop pupils' understanding of community and diversity through trips, fieldwork, visits, for example to places of worship, and meetings with members of different communities.
 - Our MFL and Global curriculum supports understanding of a different culture and international links.
 - We engage with events organised by the LA to promote cultural understanding.
 - We have a clear induction policy and guidelines to welcome and support pupils and their families who are new to the school.
 - Assemblies promote diversity through the celebration of festivals and events from different religions. We also try to involve members of the local and wider community where possible.
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Equity and excellence:

We aim to ensure equal opportunities for everyone 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.

The school has developed a Disability Equality Scheme and Access Plan which will be regularly reviewed.

- The school uses Insights electronic tracker to monitor the achievement and progress of gender and inclusion groups and tackle underperformance.
- The school regularly reviews existing school policies and publications to ensure that all documentation is inclusive.
- We ensure that all members of staff understand and follow school guidelines on reporting any incidents relating to discriminatory behaviour.
- We monitor incidents of racism and bullying; these are reported to the LA and governors.
- We monitor and review the school's Behaviour Policy and Attendance policy, and the Sanctions and Rewards systems to ensure the inclusion of all pupils.
- We monitor pupil feedback through regular discussions, surveys and School Council.
- Our admission arrangements are in line with the School Admissions Code, which emphasises the importance of admission arrangements that promote community cohesion and social equity.

Engagement and extended services:

The school seeks to provide opportunities for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations. We have built links with different schools and communities and provide extended services with opportunities for pupils, families and the wider community to take part in activities and receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups.

School to school:

- The school is a member of a learning network, which enables staff to meet and work collaboratively with colleagues in other schools to share good practice and develop new ways of working to improve outcomes for pupils.
 - The school is part of a Sports Partnership, which gives our pupils regular opportunities to meet and learn from and with other young people from different backgrounds, by taking part in sports festivals and tournaments with other schools in the partnership.
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- The school takes part in meaningful intercultural activities such as the Young Voices music Festival in Birmingham, which enables our pupils to perform to a wider audience and also enjoy the performances of other schools.
- The school takes up opportunities for our Gifted and Talented pupils to attend enrichment workshops enabling collaboration with other G&T pupils from schools across Dursley and surrounding areas.

School to parents and the community:

- We strive to build a strong supportive partnership with parents through our parents' evenings, parents' workshops, curriculum evenings, termly curriculum information sheets and encouraging ongoing dialogue through reading record books and an open door policy.
- We work with Family Learning to provide a programme of courses tailored to parents' needs to enable them to support their children's learning in literacy, maths and areas such as healthy eating and managing behaviour.
- We have an active Parent Association which organises various community events including the Christmas and Summer Fairs.
- The school has links with community groups and organisations such as Playgroup, Scouts movement, local secondary schools and colleges, enabling them to play a role in the school and encouraging pupils to make a positive contribution in the local area.
- We ensure that the pupil voice is heard and able to effect change by involving pupils in decision making and the running of the school. We have an active school council and Years 5 & 6 and take on responsibilities around the school. Children organise and promote charitable events and conduct assemblies to educate others about e.g. the more serious purpose of charities and the work they do home and abroad.
- We maintain strong links with local agencies such as social care, health professionals, the police and fire service.
- We have links with work placed learning providers such as GlosCat University, local secondary schools to whom we provide placements for a range of students.

School to local authority:

Local authorities and other voluntary and community organisations have an important role in supporting schools to discharge the duty to promote community cohesion.

We seek to work in partnership with Gloucestershire Local Authority for practical support and assistance to promote community cohesion for example, through the identification of relevant local contacts and facilitating links with other schools and organisations.



Extended services:

A key part of the extended schools full core offer is that schools encourage parents to become more involved in the school and in their child's learning, opening up their services and facilities to the wider community. Berkeley Primary School has fulfilled the extended services core offer and seeks to develop its duty to promote community cohesion through:

- Consultation with pupils, parents, families and the wider community about the activities and services they provide to ensure they meet the needs of all groups.
- Working in clusters with other schools to build greater interaction and diversity into the daily lives of the school and wider community.
- Working with local voluntary and community groups to build stronger relationships with the community, increasing the range of activities and services we can offer and gaining expertise in working with different groups who are already established in the area.
- Embedding services and activities into the school improvement plan to ensure we support the achievement of pupils from all different backgrounds.
- Offering support for all parents through providing information, advice and parenting programmes which are designed to meet the needs of different groups.

Conclusion:

For schools such as Berkeley Primary School where the pupil population is less diverse and predominantly of one religious background, we recognise that more will need to be done to provide opportunities for interaction between children and young people from different backgrounds. Our current School Action Plan has identified the following areas for development to further promote community cohesion:

- Plan more opportunities through the curriculum that help children to find out about the customs and traditions of different cultural backgrounds – multi-cultural arts week.
 - Introduce more artefacts through displays around the school and use a wider range of music in assemblies. Develop links with other schools and where possible to seek out a link with an inner city school.
 - Plan for more opportunities to celebrate differences in cultures – invite more visitors to the school.
 - Use ICT to expand on pupils' limited experiences of multi-cultural Britain – use websites and webcams to communicate with other schools.
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Doc. Ref: BerkeleyPrimary-7-002
Page No.: 7 of 7
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Monitoring and Evaluation:

The impact of the school's contribution to community cohesion will be monitored through school improvement updates for governors.