



Community Cohesion Policy

Reviewed: Autumn 2025

Next Review date: Autumn 2027

This Policy aims to demonstrate how we at White Ash School will meet our duty to promote community cohesion. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21 (5) to the Education Act 2002 introducing a duty to the governing bodies of schools to promote community cohesion. This came into force in September 2007. The Policy also builds on the duty set out in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, which supports equality for all pupils and positive race relations. More recently the Equality Act 2010 has brought together all the current discrimination laws into one policy.

Definition

The DCSF definition is:

“... 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”.

Lancashire County Council defines community cohesion as:

“... people working together and respecting the differences in our society”.

This policy aims to show how White Ash School will meet our duty to promote community cohesion and builds on our Equality and Diversity Policies. The school’s contribution has three strands including:

- Teaching and Curriculum
- Equity and excellence
- Engagement with the community and extended services

School Context

White Ash is a community special school for pupils with Generic Learning Difficulties from age 2 to 11 years of age. The school is located in Oswaldtwistle. The majority of the pupils come from the Hyndburn area, with others from with Burnley, Clitheroe/ Ribble Valley, Blackburn and Darwen, Bacup and Rossendale and travel via Local Authority Transport. The school population represents a diverse range of



backgrounds including a high proportion of pupils who qualify for Free School Meals and Pupil Premium. This indicates that social deprivation is an important factor with regard to our pupils. There are 2 Looked After Children currently on roll. We also have a large population of pupils from an ethnic minority background where English is an Additional Language. The school has bi-lingual teaching assistants for all pupils who require it in order for them to have equality of opportunity to access the curriculum and to assist with home/school liaison and communication/ translation at educational review meetings and medical appointments in school.

The majority of our pupils have communication difficulties and so the main challenge facing the school with respect to community cohesion is to ensure that pupils develop a sense of identity, positive attitudes and the communication skills they need to participate within local communities to which they belong – this includes the school, their family, the local community and cultural and religious groups.

School Aims

Together, anything is possible...

In order to achieve this our school aims to:-

Work Hard

We have high expectations and challenge each pupil to work hard and fulfil their full and unique potential.

Help each other

We aim to provide pupils with a supportive, nurturing, safe, secure and stimulating environment in which their social, emotional, intellectual and health needs are met.

Inspire

We will guide and inspire our pupils to achieve all they can ensuring that they are best prepared for life beyond our school doors.

Try our best

We value each individual pupil and actively promote their efforts to achieve their next steps.

Everyone included

We aim to strengthen the spiritual, moral and cultural development of our pupils and encourage them to be positive members of the school and wider community. We will ensure that all pupils, staff, parents/ carers, governors and all that are involved with the school feel valued and that we remain an 'amazing and fantastic place to come to'.

Achieve

We celebrate every achievement, big or small, enabling all our pupils to shine and succeed.



Share

We encourage all our pupils to be warm and sharing young people, who will build meaningful relationships built on mutual respect.

Have Fun!

We plan lessons which are engaging and creative, appealing to all pupils in order to promote curiosity. School will be an enjoyable experience embedding long lasting memories to treasure.

Intent

- Our Community Cohesion Policy builds upon our School Ethos, aims and core value.
- We recognise our duty to promote equality of opportunity and inclusion.
- We encourage our pupils to actively engage with others to understand what they all hold in common, strengthen and celebrate the diversity of cultures and backgrounds within the whole School community.

We aim to achieve this by:

- treating all those within the whole School community as individuals with their own particular abilities, background, and experiences.
- creating a School Ethos, which promotes community cohesion, race equality, develops understanding and challenges stereotypes, misconceptions, and prejudices.
- encouraging everyone within the School community to gain a positive self-image and high self-esteem
- promoting mutual self-respect, valuing each other's similarities and differences and facing equality issues openly.
- supporting the development of the skills, knowledge, understanding and motivation pupils need to become active citizens who recognise the rights and responsibilities of everyone.
- providing opportunities for positive interaction and the building of relationships with people from a range of different backgrounds both in our local community and the wider society.
- ensuring pupils receive a broad and balanced education which allows them to reach their full potential.

Governors will ensure that:

- that the School complies with its duty to promote Community Cohesion;
- all our current policies are assessed for their impact in relation to community cohesion;
- one member of the Governing Body (**Amanda Orr**) has the responsibility for monitoring the policy and acting as the designated Governor for Community Cohesion.



The Headteacher will ensure that:

- this policy is readily available and governors, staff, pupils and their parents/carers have access to the policy and are updated on any changes;
- all staff understand their responsibilities and receive appropriate support and training where necessary.

All staff will ensure that:

- They understand their responsibilities;
- They have read and follow the correct procedures and policies
- they promote equality of opportunity and positive attitudes to diversity in accordance with this policy and other relevant policies.
- Pupils will be encouraged to recognise and respect the rights and responsibilities of the School and wider community
- Parents/Carers will be asked to support the School in the aims of this policy and positively encourage their children to respect the diversity in our community.

Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

- All subject areas will be reviewed regularly to ensure the curriculum promotes awareness of diversity, shared values, exploration of identity and human rights where appropriate.
- Subject Leaders will monitor resources and the curriculum in their subject area to ensure they meet the aims of this policy.
- Teaching methods will, where appropriate, encourage discussion, questioning and reflection e.g. Circle Time and collaborative learning etc. and this will be monitored through planning documentation and observations. We have bilingual assistants to assist pupils from ethnic minorities throughout their learning.
- The Senior Leadership Team will monitor teaching and learning.
- The School will fulfil its commitment to community cohesion by creating a learning environment where all pupils can contribute fully and feel valued.
- The school will provide opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and express views through 'class areas of responsibility', membership of the school council, attendance at review meetings where appropriate.
- Staff will receive relevant training and support to ensure they feel confident in promoting discussions around sensitive issues including the Prevent agenda.
- Teachers will promote community cohesion in assemblies, achievement assemblies, special events such as European Awareness, Multi-cultural faith days, equality awareness days and National Days of celebration such as St George's Day, World Book Day, Rainbow Day, Olympics, and charitable events including Comic Relief, Breast Cancer Awareness and Children in Need.

Equality and Excellence Data will be rigorously analysed, in line with our Single Equalities Policy, to eliminate any gaps in attainment and appropriate intervention strategies will be utilised.

We will work collaboratively with our pupils to address barriers to achievement.



Engagement and Extended Services

- We will continue to develop links with other schools (primary, secondary and special) which are curriculum/pastoral based and which encourage communication on a range of topics.
- We will work collaboratively to establish stronger links with our local community.
- We will continue to maintain our links with other special schools within the Lancashire and GLD networks.
- We will continue to work in partnership with Lancashire Breaktimes to provide Holiday schemes for our pupils and SEND children within the local community.
- We will strengthen our links with local mainstream primary schools through the Oswaldtwistle and Church Cluster, utilising our specialist teachers to provide guidance, support, and training in ASD, Challenging Behaviour, Sensory Learning, Communication through PECS, Makaton and Assessment/ pupil tracking.
- We continue to promote school as active members of the local community through our engagement with visits to a local care home, regular attendance at a local schools and playgroups and support of local services such as the library and shops/ cafes.
- We will facilitate smooth transition by effective communication e.g. signpost networks/groups in the community
- School will provide opportunities for children to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relationships through access to role models including bi-lingual assistants, visiting faith speakers, visits to mosques, temples and through participation in special events and multi-cultural celebrations, eg Eid parties.
- We will continue to offer holiday clubs, lunchtime clubs and weekly After School Club where children access a variety of activities to meet the needs of all our pupils. This includes cycling on specialist adapted bikes/ trikes, parachute games, sensory sessions in the interactive sensory room.
- To have accessible **Thrive time** clubs for all pupils regardless of gender and sexual orientation.
- We will strengthen pupil voice within school by consulting and engaging with pupils, encouraging them to contribute to school improvement e.g. through Pupil Parliament meetings, pupil questionnaires etc with suggestions for new or improved facilities within school and opportunities out of school.
- We will continue to work closely with parents and regularly consult them on the services we provide. This includes our **Helping Hands** Parent Group which provides parents with the opportunities to meet and share experiences, offer advice and support. We also provide information and training sessions using our specialist staff



within school and community specialists such as Occupational Therapists, Oral Hygienist, Nutritionists, Contingence Advisor, Social Services Direct Payments representatives and providers of local short break provision.

- We will maintain our strong links with our school Governors, particularly for the Community, and send regular school newsletters to inform them and invite them to participate in school life. Some Governors volunteer on a regular basis to support pupils in a range of activities within school and on educational and residential visits.

The Governing Body actively encourages the community use of the school buildings and facilities to enhance the life of the school by developing contacts with other organisations in the local community.

Monitoring the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body will monitor the policy and evaluate its impact on our School and its community.