

Batley Girls' High School - Visual Arts College

Policy Document

Community Cohesion

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Introduction

Respect is at the heart of all we do at BGHS and is central to our ethos and Mission Statement.

The curriculum of our school promotes British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths, beliefs, ethnic origins and gender identities. We are committed to developing the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical wellbeing of our students by preparing them to be fully rounded and successful members of society.

Our school is a thriving, cohesive community characterised by ethnic, cultural, faith and linguistic diversity. We believe we have a responsibility to ensure that our students learn about and show respect for an even wider cultural and community heritage, locally, nationally and globally.

Through our ethos of Respect, our school promotes a common sense of identity, supports diversity, and shows our students 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 reflect upon, and appropriately respond to, the recent DFE guidance with respect to **PREVENT** and work in partnership with the local authority and the Police to ensure that our young women are appropriately informed and protected.

BGHS definition of 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.

For our school, the term 'community' has a number of dimensions including:

- the school community – the students 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.

Promoting community cohesion

We aim to provide opportunities for students to work with and share experiences with people from different contexts:

- Partnership schools (shared experiences with young people from different socio-economic, and /or cultural backgrounds)
- Local people of different generations (primary schools, OWLs)
- Bringing together the school to celebrate annually the shared values of peace and mutual respect from our faith and non faith based communities

Teaching, learning and curriculum

We are committed to providing:

- lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help students to value differences and to challenge prejudice and stereotyping
- a programme of curriculum based activities whereby students' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through visits and meetings with members of different communities
- support for students for whom English is an additional language to enable them to achieve at the highest possible level in English
- an effective voice and involvement of students 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 promoting an understanding that 'multiple identities' are very much a part of modern Britain

Examples from our school include:

- Our school has a varied and relevant curriculum that develops students' understanding of community and diversity, enriched through educational visits, meetings, and/or workshop style experiences exploring a variety of cultures
- We have a well resourced Religious Education syllabus based around the local RE Agreed Syllabus and the needs of our students which develops knowledge, attitude and skills in many of the areas at the heart of effective community cohesion
- Lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help students to value differences and challenge prejudice and stereotyping

Equity and Excellence

Our school has a commitment to securing high standards of attainment for all students from all ethnic backgrounds and of different socio-economic statuses, ensuring that students 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.

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

Our school admissions criteria emphasises the importance of admission arrangements that promote community cohesion and social equity.

Examples from our school include:

- A focus on securing high standards of attainment for all students from all ethnic backgrounds and of different socio-economic status. Systems for monitoring and tracking student progress in place and used to inform timely intervention/support.
- A commitment to 'closing the performance gap' between different cohorts of students
- A personalised approach to teaching and learning which addresses all individual and special educational needs
- Robust equal opportunities and race equality policies
- Programmes of work for new arrivals e.g. our new arrivals procedures
- Effective approaches to deal with incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment - school procedures, involvement of community police where appropriate, reporting and referral to governors
- Admission arrangements that promote community cohesion and social equity
- Monitoring our school behaviour policies so that no groups suffer prejudice

Engagement and Ethos

Working in partnership: the school will seek to broaden the ways that we engage with other schools. In addition to maintaining and developing new links with local schools, we will continue to work in partnership with students from schools across the world. A range of ways will be used to provide real and virtual interactions with students in other settings, from Web-conferencing to exchanges, visits and shared field trips.

Sharing facilities also provides a means for students to interact, as do opportunities for meaningful intercultural activities such as sport, art and drama. Good partnership activities with the local and wider community include:

- Adult learners acting as community representatives.
- Maintaining strong multi-agency links via our on-site Student Wellbeing Centre with other agencies such as the youth support service, the police and social care and health professionals.

- Engagement with parents through Parents' Forum, coffee mornings, curriculum evenings, parent and child courses and family liaison work.
- Provision of extended services, and in particular bringing parents together from different backgrounds through parenting and family support and community use of facilities for activities that take place out of school hours.

Examples from our school include:

The school community

- A school ethos ART – Achievement, Respect and Transformation is well established with clear aims, objectives and rules that underpin everyday practice
- Partnership arrangements are in place to share good practice and offer students the opportunities to meet and learn from other students from different backgrounds. e.g. in Enrichment, senior students work with primary classes, Health & Social Care students work with local senior citizens.
- Students show respect for local, national and global fellow citizens through a wide range of charitable fundraising events.
- School council takes into account student views e.g. monitor racism, bullying and playground behaviour
- There is regular participation in Citizenship initiatives and awards both in school and promoted by the local authority

The area in which the school is located

- We have strong links with our local Police Community Liaison Officer.
- We work with community representatives, for example bringing community representatives into school to work with students i.e. local imams and priests speaking at our East meets West event.
- We have developed strong links and multi-agency working practice between the school and other local agencies.
- We engage with parents through Parents' Forum, refreshments after celebration events, curriculum evenings, parenting courses and family learning events
- We provide extended services and community use of facilities for activities that take place in and out of school hours eg including sports, adult and family learning, information and communications technology, after-school care, holiday schools etc.

The UK community

- Curriculum is in place for children to take into account how different communities may live e.g. rural, suburban, urban through visits to other areas and other schools.
- Students are given experiences through cultural visits, experiences and residential events, providing a safe environment in which people of differing backgrounds and communities can learn together.
- We ensure that students are aware of national and local events that affect

people's lives.

The global community

- Links are established locally and internationally eg: Indiability.
- Each year, the students research a range of charities then nominate and vote for a Local, National and International charity that they will support through fundraising. This links directly to Respect tokens, which are awarded to individuals for acts of good citizenship shown towards members of their school community.
- Humanities and PSHE lessons inform students of life experiences and expectations across the world, as well as responding to current affairs and events and giving students a chance to discuss and explore issues in a secure and informed environment.

The Role of Governors

Our Governing Body is legally responsible for ensuring the promotion of social cohesion and the Co-Heads are responsible for ensuring that the duties are fulfilled within school.

On a regular basis our governors will 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 students and parents together.
- How representative our Governing Body is of the local community and students' 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.