

Community Cohesion Policy

St Mary's Church of England School
Kirkby Lonsdale, Cumbria



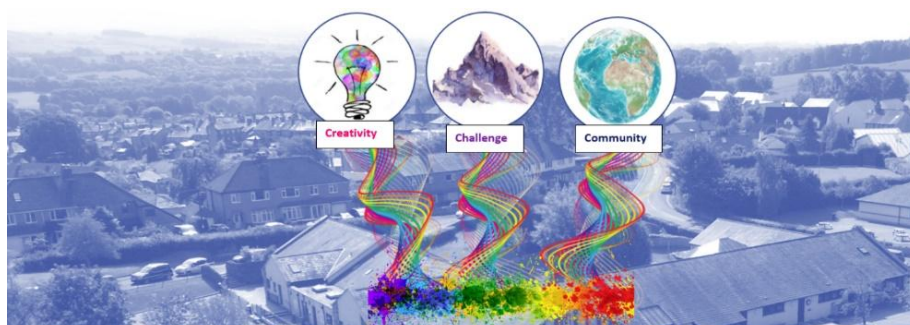
ST. MARY'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL, KIRKBY LONSDALE

COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY

Approved by Governing Board: September 2026

Our School Vision

At St Mary's CE Primary School, our aims and Christian values enshrine community cohesion at the heart of everything we do. In doing so, we are ensuring our children flourish as active members of the community. We work in partnership with our community and other organisations to ensure we do all we can to promote and establish strong, respectful relationships that enhance the outcomes for children and their families.



1. INTRODUCTION & STATEMENT OF INTENT

The curriculum of our school aims to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, emotional, and physical development of our pupils and of society, and to prepare our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life. It puts community at the heart of our curriculum.

As the curriculum and society become increasingly diverse, it is more important than ever that all schools play a full part in promoting community cohesion. Our school has a thriving, cohesive community, but it also has a vital part to play in building a more cohesive society.

Our school maintains active links with other schools and organisations in order to give our pupils the opportunity to mix with and learn with, from, and about those from different backgrounds. Through our ethos and curriculum, we promote a common sense of identity and support diversity, showing pupils how different communities can be united by common experiences and values.

We believe that it is the duty of all schools to address issues of 'how we live together' and 'dealing with difference'—however controversial and difficult they might sometimes seem.

2. STATUTORY LEGISLATION & GUIDANCE

This policy reflects our statutory duties under UK education law and associated national guidance, including:

- **Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 21):** The statutory duty of maintained school governing bodies to promote community cohesion.
- **Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):** Eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations across all protected characteristics.
- **DfE Statutory Guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' :** Ensuring a welcoming, inclusive school environment that addresses barriers to attendance and supports all cohorts sensitively.
- **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty):** Safeguarding pupils from radicalisation and promoting fundamental British Values.
- **Ofsted Education Inspection Framework:** Evaluating pupils' personal development, cultural capital, and understanding of living in modern multi-cultural Britain.

3. 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;
- 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.

4. COMMUNITY FROM A SCHOOL'S PERSPECTIVE

The term 'community' has a number of dimensions including:

- **The school community:** The pupils it serves, their families, and the school's staff;
- **The Rainbow parish community:** Our local church and parish network;
- **The local geographical community:** The school within Kirkby Lonsdale and Westmorland and Furness, including the people who live or work in the area;

- **The UK community:** All schools are by definition part of this wider national community;
- **The global community:** Formed through international links, global education, and eco-awareness.

5. HOW OUR SCHOOL CONTRIBUTES TOWARDS COMMUNITY COHESION

A central aspect of our work in developing community cohesion is to consider how different aspects of our work already support integration and community harmony, and to take stock of what has worked well. We also consider where there may be scope to improve our existing work through a more explicit focus on the impact of activities on community cohesion.

Our contribution to community cohesion is grouped under three key headings:

A. Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

To teach pupils to understand others, promote common values, value diversity, promote awareness of human rights and the responsibility to uphold and defend them, and develop skills of participation and responsible action.

At St Mary's, we constantly strive to maintain a high standard of teaching and curriculum provision that supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values, and builds pupils' understanding of diversity, recognizing similarities and appreciating different cultures, faiths, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds. Opportunities for discussing issues of identity and diversity are integrated across the curriculum.

We work to ensure that:

- Lessons across the curriculum promote common values and help pupils to value differences and to challenge prejudice and stereotyping—for example, through structured opportunities to discuss issues of identity and what it means 'to live together in modern Britain'. Eg Picture News and other News Events
- There is a coherent programme of curriculum-based activities whereby pupils' understanding of community and diversity is deepened.
- There is dedicated support for pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) to enable them to achieve at the highest possible level.
- There is an effective voice and involvement of pupils (e.g., School Council, Young Leaders) in the governance and organisation of the school, teaching them to participate in and make a difference in school, in their local community, and beyond.

B. Equity and Excellence

To ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest level possible, removing barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities, and eliminating variations in outcomes for different groups.

- We continually focus on developing strategies that support us in securing high standards of attainment and progress for all pupils from all ethnic backgrounds and socio-economic statuses, ensuring that pupils are treated with respect and supported to achieve their full potential.
- Our robust tracking systems enable us to evaluate the progress of different groups (including SEND, Pupil Premium, EAL, and Young Carers) and to tackle underperformance by any particular group.
- In line with DfE attendance guidance, we proactively identify barriers to attendance, providing supportive, early intervention so that every child feels safe, included, and able to attend regularly.

- We rigorously monitor any incidents of prejudice, discrimination, bullying, and harassment, acting decisively within agreed policies to ensure that such incidents are not tolerated and that all children and members of our community feel emotionally and physically safe.

C. Engagement and Ethos

To provide a means for children, young people, and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations, including links with different schools and communities locally, across the country, and internationally.

School to School Partnerships:

- We continually seek to broaden the ways that we work in partnership with other schools locally and further afield (e.g., partner primary schools in contrasting urban settings as a means of developing relationships that promote community cohesion.
- Sharing time together provides a means for pupils to interact through meaningful intercultural activities, including sport, music, expressive arts, and collaborative projects.

School, Home and Community Engagement:

- Maintaining strong multi-agency working between the school and local services, including Westmorland and Furness Council, health professionals, police, and early help support;
- Active engagement with parents and carers through family support, volunteers, digital communication systems, and face-to-face community events;
- Provision of extended services and community links to respond to and meet the needs of our local Kirkby Lonsdale community.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Governing Board and Headteacher regularly monitor the effectiveness of this policy through curriculum reviews, pupil voice surveys, attendance data analysis, and logging of equality-related incidents.

Approved by Headteacher & Governing Board

Headteacher Signature:  _____

Date: September 2026