

COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY

Preamble

Section 78 of the 2002 Education Act states that the curriculum for all maintained schools 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.

Under the 2000 Amendment to the Race Relations Amendment Act schools have a duty to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups.

New regulations 2007

All schools will recognise these two important statements which are part of existing law. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002 introducing a duty on the governing bodies of maintained schools to promote community cohesion from September 2007.

By community cohesion, the government means 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.

At Trinity Catholic High School we consider this as a fundamental part of our vision and actively work in ways which promote community cohesion.

Trinity Catholic High School is responsible for educating children and young people who will live and work in a country which is diverse in terms of cultures, religions or beliefs, ethnicities and social backgrounds.

Aims

- **Teaching, learning and curriculum** – helping children and young people to learn to understand others, to value diversity whilst also 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 – for example through the new 'Identity and Diversity: living together in the UK' strand within citizenship education.
- **Equity and excellence** – to 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** – to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from

different backgrounds and build positive relations; including links with different schools and communities and the provision of extended service 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.

Trinity Catholic High School fully embraces the spirit and letter of the Acts which are fully consistent with our School Vision. This, our Community Cohesion Policy, should not be read in isolation but with other school policies in particular:

- The School Vision
- Race Equality Policy
- Students' Entitlement Statement
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Gender Equality Policy
- Disability Policies
- Pay Policy
- Staff Selection and Recruitment Policy
- Gifted and Talented Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Employment Policies
- Looked after child policy
- Exclusion Policy

Responsibilities

The Headmaster is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school vision including this policy and its procedures are followed.
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities.
- Taking appropriate action in instances where this policy and its procedures are not followed.

All staff are responsible for:

- Complying fully with this policy.
- Promoting community cohesion through all working practices.

Commitments

Our commitments include:

- Offering all our students the opportunity to participate in activities which develop a respect for diversity which actively attempts to understand rather than to merely coexist with others;

- Offering all our students equality of opportunities and encouraging them to strive for excellence in order to ensure all young people are able to access appropriate education and welfare support helping them to achieve their full potential;
- Offering all our students the opportunity for participation and engagement which creates a sense of belonging within the local and wider community, with a desire to improve the wellbeing of all and encouraging positive relationships.

Dimensions

Trinity Catholic High School is a cohesive community of faith comprising staff and students from different backgrounds who share a common vision, founded on the teachings of Christ and expressed in the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount. This shared faith, with the knowledge that every person has been uniquely created by God, underpins the vision and ethos of Trinity Catholic High School.

For Trinity Catholic High School the term 'community' has a number of dimensions including:

- The school community – the pupils 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 and 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.

It is the policy of Trinity Catholic High School to operate across all of the above dimensions and that our work in relation to community cohesion be reflected in all aspects of school life including: - the formal academic curriculum arrangements, our policies for inclusion, our work in relation to the spiritual and moral development of students, our employment practise, our work with parents and the local community, our extended schools services and by forging links with other schools locally, regionally and internationally. Our approach reflects the nature of our catholic beliefs, the nature of our school population and the location of the school.

Admissions

Our School's Admission policy is inclusive of all children irrespective of disability, SEN, or cultural background. Our School offers a first priority to children who are in care, and we have developed an excellent reputation for seeking to be inclusive of children with disabilities. This is reflected in our commitment to care plans, protocols of care, and associated staff training, through which we attempt to develop our School's capacity to meet the needs of both current, and future pupils.

Academic Provision

Across all years we operate a mixed ability teaching policy, which engenders an atmosphere of equality and recognises the diversity of talents that children bring to our School. This is supported by our SEN provision, our academic mentoring programmes which monitor the progress of all.

Pupils' progression is further supported by our attendance policies, through which we monitor the attendance patterns of all pupils, but also pay particular attention to the potential needs of vulnerable groups for example, pupils with complex medical conditions or disabilities, and those with special educational needs.

Our curriculum provision also seeks to be inclusive of the wider community, and this is achieved through our work with our family of schools that has developed in conjunction with our Science, and Sports College Status. During the current academic year we have been engaged in strengthening our relationship with St Johns Special School. This has enabled students from St Johns to become actively involved in both curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

Our academic provision is also inclusive of peer mentoring provision, through which Year 12 and 13 students can volunteer to train for the role of Guardian Angels.

Inclusion

Our School has developed an informed Disability Access Policy, which has at its heart a desire to enable departments within School to develop their capacity to respond to the needs of both current, and future pupils. In addition our Governing Body is aware of the responsibility to improve via reasonable adjustment features of physical access to our School premises, and our philosophy in this area can be clearly observed with reference to recent building, and refurbishment projects, and planned future projects.

As a School we have also developed a complex range of provision that supports inclusion particularly with regard to pupils who exhibit behaviour and social needs. These programmes which include:- the Good Pastor Programme, Learning Mentor Programme, Chaplaincy, and Hermitage all of which have been praised by Ofsted, and shared with the Specialist Schools and Academy Trust through the Lead Practitioner Programme. The School at present is committed to sharing these resources with other schools within the London Borough of Redbridge, with whom we have established an agreed protocol for sixth day provision for excluded pupils.

Our School also supports a flourishing extra-curricular/extended school programme. The diverse range of activities on offer which include:- Music/Drama/Sport/academic qualifications/Gospel Drama/YouFra/Tauists. Provide accessible and enjoyable social interaction opportunities of all pupils in our School so that they can develop personal interests, and positive relationships with each other that contribute towards the effective functioning of our School as a cohesive community. Over time we have evaluated the profile of pupils who attend such groups and we are content they are reflective of the cultural and academic range of the pupils within our School. We have also developed specific provision to encourage participation for pupils with more profound disabilities, and this is reflected in our inclusive play groups, and faith groups.

Spiritual and Moral

As a School we have adopted the ethos of the Franciscan order. Our School is served by the local Franciscan community, and is built on land that was bequeathed by a common founder. We attempt to promote the ethos of the order through the

prayer life of our School and this is particularly evident in our daily Mass, and our Tauist and YouFra groups. Indeed, our Young Franciscan movement is unique in Britain.

The mission of our faith groups has enable us to deliver an understanding of the dyamnics that influence the building up of an effective community. The main objectives of our faith groups can be described as fraternity, and the building up of God's church. These objectives are directly linked to the vision of St Francis. It is interesting to note that these groups are truly representative of the gender, ethnicity, and special educational needs characteristics of our School's population. In other words, they provide a welcoming environment within which children can relate to each other in a positive manner, develop their relationship with God and reach out through charitable work to others in need in both the local, and global community.

From a whole School prospective, all of our pupils are invited to serve as disciples, though our Discipleship programme. The main aim of this programme is to provide a formal framework through which we can support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Through promoting pupils involvement in the above programme we invite, and enable all pupils to play their part in the development of our School's ethos in accordance with our vision, and to recognise their responsibilities towards others who are in need in both our local, and global communities. Our Discipleship Programme allows pupils to participate in a variety of ways in accordance with their age, and appitude. Tasks range from watering flowers, through to being involved in our School Council, Raphaelite programme, or Telco groups. Our work in this area can be observed in the numerous, and well supported charity projects and also through the work of our Sixth Form Telco group which can campaigned for an ethical Olympics, living wage for all Canary Wharf workers and has also played a part in the Mayor's campaign "Strangers into Citizens", in which the needs of marginalised migrant workers are recognised.

Through all of the above work we are aiming for pupils to gain clearer understanding of the moral, and social issues that are present within the world of today. We invite them to reflect on particular issues, and to formulate an informed response. Through their experience we hope to positively influence their opinions in relation to such matters as they leave School and enter into wider society.

Employment Practices

Our School is a member of the Telco movement, and as a result, we have a concern for ensuring that all employees are paid a "living wage" as defined by the group. The School has responded to this challenge through making additional payments to contract staff who work in our School's kitchens. We also recently in August 2007 took over responsibility for our own cleaning contract. This allowed our School to set fair terms of conditions of employment. As a School we recognise that employees in the area of catering, and cleaning often come from ethnic minority backgrounds whose employment opportunities are often curtailed by language barriers.