

Community Cohesion Toolkit for Nottingham City Schools

About this toolkit

The purpose of this toolkit is to support schools to consider how they are meeting the new duty to promote community cohesion. In many ways schools are almost uniquely placed in terms of their potential to support and develop community cohesion.

- As a universal service they are accessed by children and young people of all races and religions/beliefs within the community and by children and young people across the whole spectrum of disabilities
- They are responsible for educating children and young people about the diversity of people's experiences and beliefs
- They are located physically within a community and provide the opportunity for the community to use it as a resource
- They form their own community of pupils, staff, governors, and parents/carers – with a set of values, an ethos and vision

As such, much of the daily life of a school whether consciously or not, is actively promoting community cohesion. The aim of this toolkit is to offer head teachers and other staff some conscious (or focused) thinking about a number of key issues in implementing the new duty.

The Tool Kit has 6 sections

1. Defining community cohesion
2. Barriers and overcoming them
3. The role of extended services in promoting cohesion
4. Providing evidence for Ofsted through the SEF
5. Mapping of Nottingham schools' activities
6. Useful web links

It has been developed by drawing on a variety of sources – published guidance documents, national research, local knowledge and input from EIP and local authority colleagues. We hope it will stimulate your thinking and encourage debate about how your school can contribute to promoting cohesion amongst our children and young people and the communities they live in.

1. What Is Community Cohesion?

Since 2001, much work has been undertaken to develop the community cohesion agenda following civil disturbances in northern towns of England. Since the Cantle Report into these disturbances was published in 2002, there have been many attempts to develop a full understanding of what features a cohesive community might display – and there have been as many attempts at defining the term.

What is perhaps clear is that community cohesion points to more than ensuring race equality – or indeed gender and disability equality. It refers directly to how people are better integrated within communities but also places upon public institutions and organisations a duty to promote equality for all. The government has now established a working definition (Feb 2008) which is as follows:

Community cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to community cohesion is integration which is what must happen to enable new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another.

Our vision of an integrated and cohesive community is based on three foundations:

- *People from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities*
- *People knowing their rights and responsibilities*
- *People trusting one another and trusting local institutions to act fairly*

And three key ways of living together:

- *A shared future vision and sense of belonging*
- *A focus on what new and existing communities have in common, alongside a recognition of the value of diversity*
- *Strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds*

For schools, guidance on the duty to promote cohesion has been issued by the DCSF. This guidance defines the communities schools should consider in developing their response to the duty. These are as follows:

Community from a school's perspective

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

- the *school community* – the children and young people it serves, their parents, carers and families, the school's staff and governing body, and community users of the school's facilities and services
- the *community within which the school is located* – the school in its geographical community and the people who live or work in that area. This applies not just to the immediate neighbourhood but also to the city or local authority area within which a school is located
- the *UK community* – all schools are by definition part of this community
- the *global community* – formed by EU and international links

In addition, schools themselves create communities – for example, the networks formed by similar or different types of schools, by schools that are part of the specialist schools network, or specifically in Nottingham by schools that work collaboratively through Education Improvement Partnerships.

2. Barriers and Key Issues in Schools Promoting Community Cohesion

MORI polling conducted for the Commission on Integration and Cohesion found that:

- 18% of people surveyed identified immigration/migrants as the main issue facing Britain today – with this answer overtaking crime in MORI's regular surveys in May 2006
- More than half of people (56%) felt that some groups in Britain get unfair priority when it comes to public services like housing, health services and schools. (Although this seems to be a stronger national than local perception – locally only 25% feel that some groups get unfair priority)
- Of the 14% of people surveyed who said they were not proud of their area, the main reasons were crime (55%), a feeling of lack of community spirit (43%) and concern about poor facilities (29%)

This gives a sense of the barriers to building cohesion: mistrust of different groups, particularly those new to the local community; a perception that public agencies are giving others special treatment; and a lack of spaces for meaningful interaction.

It would appear that for schools, the barriers to cohesion can be broadly divided into two:

1. General deprivation and community issues
2. The specific actions and performance of schools, and the local authority and other public agencies that have an impact upon schools

Deprivation and Community Issues

In terms of deprivation and community issues, schools are frequently at the forefront of understanding the impact of deprivation and also the changing nature of the local communities they serve. Schools have to deal with the impact of poor health and diet, children living in poverty, the impact of crime, bullying and racial tensions. Through admissions, they are among the first public organisations responding to changes to inward migration or specific local issues such as an increase in traveller families.

Ensuring that your school has good knowledge about the local community can assist you in responding to and anticipating issues that may arise. In addition to generating your own intelligence about local issues, engaging with the following Nottingham-specific approaches should assist you in developing a better understanding of your community.

- a) Education Improvement Partnerships – through sharing knowledge and intelligence with other schools in your local area or faith community
- b) Integrated Children's Services Locality Management Group – three area groups, North, Central and South, that bring together representatives from all services that provide services for children. EIP managers represent schools. Each of the groups has a specific remit to develop accurate data and intelligence about local communities and issues.
- c) Neighbourhood Management – nine neighbourhood managers cover the City, aligned to the Council's Area Committee boundaries. Neighbourhood Management Teams draw together a wide range of agencies, e.g., police, health, housing, schools, leisure and environment, that provide access to a wider range of intelligence about local communities that have an impact upon cohesion.

Specific Actions Schools Can Take

The DCSF Guidance identifies three ways in which schools can concentrate their efforts in promoting community cohesion. These are:

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 or Nottingham’s Global and Anti-Racist Perspectives (GARP) planning tool for primary schools.

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; the provision of extended services; and 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.

A range of specific actions that support these three areas could include the following:

- Ensure that you take action to develop and promote understanding of equality and respect for the diverse range of cultures and religions/beliefs within the local area and in the UK as a whole
- Ensure you take effective measures to address racial harassment and bullying in line with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and Nottingham City LA’s requirements as part of the Common Monitoring Project
- Ensure that the syllabus on religious education promotes awareness of the importance of good inter-religion/belief relationships and, in this respect, contributes to citizenship education
- Ensure that you promote cross-cultural and inter-religion/belief contact within your own parental network
- Ensure that the disparities in educational attainment are being addressed (in terms of teaching and by use of role modelling and mentoring programmes)
- Obtain ‘value-added’ data on the educational attainment levels of the various groups (not just broken down by gender and ethnicity, but by socio-economic status also) in the community
- Develop school twinning and exchanges, to include teaching and learning projects, with schools with different intakes to promote cross-cultural and inter-religion/belief contact, respect and understanding
- Develop curriculum and extra-curriculum cross-cultural programmes and activities, e.g., for arts and sport, parental schemes. Actively involve parents from different communities in pre-school activities and out of school childcare
- Use Adult and Family Learning to encourage greater awareness, understanding and participation amongst ‘mature’ learners

3. Case Study

Extended Services Promoting Community Cohesion

Developing the core offer of Extended Services provides schools an ideal opportunity to embed good practice in the promotion of community cohesion.

The ethos of Extended Services dovetails very closely with the duty to promote cohesion in, for example:

- 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 their school and wider community
- Working with local voluntary and community groups to build stronger relationships with the community, increase the range of activities and services they can offer, and gain expertise in working with different groups who are already established in their area
- Embedding services and activities to their school improvement plan and to personalisation to ensure they support the achievement of pupils from all different backgrounds
- Support for all parents through providing information, advice, and evidence based parenting programmes which are designed to meet the needs of different groups

The NG8 EIP is based around the Hadden Park Family of Schools. In developing its extended schools agenda, it has had the benefit of Hadden Park High being the pilot Full Service Extended School for the City. However, in looking at the progress made by all the schools within the EIP towards meeting the core offer ahead of the 2010 target date, it is worth noting how far its experience and the activities it is developing support the community cohesion agenda.

- Multi-Agency Panel (CAF) Pilot – Hadden Park High has been running a Multi-Agency Panel identifying additional needs for pupils for over three years. By successfully bringing agencies together, pupils are being supported to overcome barriers to their achievement. Through the Panel, the school supports its extended schools target of ensuring swift and easy access to services, whilst also demonstrating its community cohesion commitment to ensure pupils from different backgrounds, and with different needs, are able to enjoy similar opportunities.
- Adult and Community Learning – a varied programme of adult and community learning courses are run every day of the week at sites across the family of schools. These are provided by a range of FE, private sector and community-based organisations. In an area where there are higher than average levels of unemployment and low skills, schools are now viewed as a community resource, and people who may otherwise be isolated due to worklessness are able to meet other members of their community. Courses aimed at new migrants from Eastern Europe and other groups of people with English as an additional language have regularly been run. Through this approach, schools are able to meet their extended school community engagement target, whilst promoting meaningful interaction for people from a variety of racial and religion/belief backgrounds.
- Childcare – the Jigsaw Out Of School Club is run from Glenbrook Primary School and offers after-school and holiday care for up to 24 children. Jigsaw's intake is from schools from three different families of schools, including a significant number from local faith schools. In this way, the childcare offer is ensuring children from a young age are mixing with children with different school experiences and religions/beliefs. In addition to the formal childcare, Hadden Park and Glenbrook Schools run a regular free holiday activity club which is open to all children between 8 and 14 living in the NG8 Area. Due to the

number of special schools within the NG8 EIP, a focus on disability inclusion is beginning to ensure that disabled and non-disabled children and young people are able to play and socialise with each other in an out of school setting. This provision supports the extended schools childcare target whilst promoting equality of life opportunity for children who may be excluded from meaningful activities due to poverty or disability.

- The NG8 Band – music teachers in local schools recognised that children who had enthusiastically played an instrument at primary school often dropped the instrument on transition to secondary school. In part it was thought that this may be due to losing contact through attending different secondary schools with friends who they had played music with in primary school. A solution was to organise an area-wide band through a partnership between Extended Services, the EIP and College Street. The band draws children from primary schools across the area and from secondary school pupils who attend schools across the City but who live in the NG8 postcode area. In this way, children and young people mix across the key phases with pupils from a wide range of schools and, importantly, are becoming a focus for local community pride. Performance opportunities within the local area are being sought to encourage this local identity and pride (a particular focus being on playing for older people to promote inter-generational contact). Performances in the wider City, and in the future, further afield, demonstrate the sense of community shared by young people from the area.

4. Providing Evidence of Promoting Community Cohesion

Ofsted will begin the formal process of inspecting schools' implementation of the duty to promote community cohesion from September 2008. Clearly, then, it is of benefit to schools to evidence the work it is currently doing and identify areas for development through the SEF.

The SEF provides a number of opportunities for you to evidence the social context you are working in and the particular work you are doing to promote community cohesion. The following sections are those that offer the most specific opportunities:

1a The main characteristics of the learners. Provide social and economic profile of pupils, e.g.:

- Free school meals/social deprivation (particularly IDACI data)
- Ethnic minority/travellers/EAL etc
- SEN pupils
- Male/female ratio

1b Your distinctive aims and special features. Key features to highlight could include:

- Mission statement, aims and values
- Religious character
- Partner links with local schools (e.g. through EIP and Extended Schools)
- Extended provision
- Specialist status/special provision
- Other Units including Children's Centres etc
- Work-related links
- Significant external agencies

1c Contextual issues that act as aids or barriers to raising performance

- Mobility of learners
- New migration

2a How you gather the views of learners, parents/carers and other stakeholders

- Analysis from correspondence, questionnaires, interviews, parent support workers, school council, PTA
- Stakeholders include pupils, parents, teaching staff, support staff, governors, religious institutions, community groups, local employers, other schools

3a How well learners achieve and standards in their work

- Cohesion focus could be on how your school supports pupils from different backgrounds to experience similar life opportunities, through closing the attainment gap

4a To what extent learners adopt healthy lifestyles

- The role of sport/exercise in adopting healthy lifestyles has a well-evidenced impact on community cohesion. Organised sport (particularly team sports) provides opportunities for pupils to experience developing concepts of rights and responsibilities, mix with different communities, ethnic and religious/belief groups and develop a sense of community identity.

4b To what extent learners feel safe and adopt safe practices

- Behaviour policies including sanctions
- Anti-bullying policy
- School rules, rewards systems, positive behaviour strategies
- Care and control around the school, start and end of day, in class moving between lessons, lunchtimes and break times

- Racial equality policy
- Feedback from pupils, parents, support staff
- Health and safety policy
- Impact of Drugs Education, Sex and Relationships Education

This is a particularly important section in terms of evidencing how your school ensures that pupils develop strong and positive relationships across racial, religious/belief, gender and disability lines. It also offers an opportunity to evidence how pupils can develop trust in the school as an organisation to ensure equity and fairness.

4c How much learners enjoy their education

- Planned opportunities for cultural development
- Procedures to improve rates of attendance/punctuality and attendance records
- Exclusions, procedures in place
- SEAL, PSHE, circle time programmes
- Feedback from pupils, parents etc
- Evidence of opportunities to make visits, receive visitors etc

This is an opportunity to identify how the school promotes a common vision which pupils respond to and identify with, as reflected by attendance and behaviour.

4e How well learners make a positive contribution to the community

A community cohesion specific section – clearly this section allows you to identify progress in pupils' understanding of and participation in their wider local and global community.

- Links with other schools, including international
- Children taking responsibility across the school
- School council, pupil interviews and questionnaires
- Playground monitors/buddies
- Community involvement, charities, fund raising
- Peer mentoring

4f How well learners prepare for their future economic well-being

- Mentoring schemes
- Work experience
- Business links

As discussed earlier, the impact of economic deprivation is the key factor in determining lack of cohesion within communities. Efforts by schools to improve pupils' future economic well-being will have the most significant bearing on the likelihood that they will add to the cohesion of communities they live in as adults.

5b Quality of provision: the curriculum and other activities

- Extra-curricular activities, outdoor education, clubs
- Community involvement through visits and visitors
- Inclusion for identified groups, e.g., provision for able and gifted children, special needs, EAL, etc
- Home-school links
- Enhancement through EIP partner schools, other institutions
- Vision for the extended schools

Questions to Consider in Developing Your Response to the Duty

As part of an EIP network workshop to consider community cohesion, a set of questions were devised to stimulate thinking and discussion that you may wish to consider with your governing body, staff, pupils or parents.

Living with diversity

How well does the school currently prepare young people for living together with people from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds, disabled people and diverse sexual identities? Are there ways in which the school goes beyond providing knowledge of diversity to equipping people with the skills for living together?

Promoting multiple identities and a shared sense of belonging

What does the school do to reflect the multiple identities of its pupils and other people in the locality? How does it cultivate a sense of commonality between people of different ethnic, religious/belief, disability and sexual identities?

Equality and inclusion

How does the school respond to the educational needs of different communities? Are there any communities or people who are alienated, excluded or disadvantaged in accessing your services?

Social responsibility

How well does the school respond to disadvantage and exclusion within the community of the school, neighbourhood or religious/belief groups.

5. Mapping of Community Cohesion Activities in City Schools

Through the network of EIPs in the City, a mapping exercise was undertaken in December 2007 to identify the range of activities schools are involved in that support the promotion of community cohesion. This was not an exhaustive audit but an illustrative exercise to provide examples for this toolkit. The results are grouped under broad headings and can act as an aide-mémoire to prompt your thinking about what your school currently does, or as an ideas bank to develop future activities.

Community Focus

- Working with Area Committees, community partnerships, police/wardens
- Involvement with Neighbourhood Week of Action
- BSF – developing schools as a community resource, community engagement in planning and consultation activities
- Local environmental projects
- Engagement with local churches, mosques and temples
- Extended school activities – childcare, holiday play schemes, health sessions, adult and community learning classes
- Playground notice boards – promoting community events
- Involvement in local planning issues (working with developers of new buildings)
- Business sponsorship/volunteers in schools

Participation, Cooperation, Personal Skills and Development

- School Councils (and area/city wide forums)
- SEAL
- Pupil counselling services
- Philosophy 4 Children teaching
- Transition programmes and support
- MALT

Support for Emerging Communities

- EAL classes – pupils and parents
- Supplementary schools hosted on school premises
- Refugee Forum – access to advice via school

Learning/Aspiration/Parental Engagement

- MFL work
- Mega Read/Literacy Projects
- Beth Shalom Links
- Family Homework Clubs
- Reading Mentors
- BME Mentoring
- AimHigher/Aspire
- Links with universities – student placements and volunteers
- Healthy Schools Award
- Family Learning
- Parenting Classes
- Parent/family counselling

National/International Dimension

- European School Linking – Madrid/Vienna
- International visits and school links
- Charity Fundraising
- International Student Placements
- Specialist Schools Trust Network
- International Schools Award

Sports

- Inter school competition and festivals
- Youth sports leader awards
- Sports volunteers
- Adult coaching courses
- Links with community sports clubs (coaching/facilities)

Creative

- Area Bands
- Community Murals
- Creative Partnerships
- Community Arts Festivals
- Family of Schools Music Festivals
- Art competitions

An additional mapping exercise has been undertaken by Jane Daffé which identifies key local initiatives against the Every Child Matters outcomes. This table is reproduced below:

Initial Guidance For Schools: A Selection of Activities Which Evidence Support for the Community Cohesion Agenda

Evidence mapped against the ECM outcomes

(Individual schools will certainly have further examples)

BE HEALTHY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-bullying strategies • Restorative justice/peer counselling (ABC) • Counselling services in schools • Creative Journeys - art therapy sessions for pupils from asylum seeker/refugee families • Post-trauma counselling sessions for pupils from asylum seeker/refugee families displaying emotional/mental health issues • SEAL/PSHCE • DARE
STAY SAFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-bullying/restorative justice services/peer counselling • Effective systems for dealing with and reporting racist incidents/ Common Monitoring Project • ERACISM course for Yr 5 pupils • SEAL/PSHCE • Behaviour and attendance strategy • Disproportionate exclusions pilot
ENJOY AND ACHIEVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour and attendance strategy • Disproportionate exclusions pilot • GARP – Integrating Global and Anti-racist Perspectives within the primary curriculum • Citizenship curriculum • SEAL • EMAG funding in schools – support for pupils with English as an additional language and other ethnic minority groups at risk of underachieving • Ethnic Minority Services consultant work with schools – curriculum and resource development, INSET/advice and guidance re needs of vulnerable or underachieving groups • EMS – support with admissions, induction and integration of pupils from asylum seeker/refugee families, traveller families and those new to English • BPAP - Black Pupils' Attainment Programme • BCAP - Black Children's Attainment Programme • EAL Toolkit • National Strategies intervention funding to schools • NRF funding – academic coaches/isolated EAL pupils in non-EMAG funded schools • Target setting for ethnic minority groups • Gender/ethnicity data monitoring • AimHigher – priority groups/criteria for positive action on Higher Education • Black Teachers' taster course – positive action • Community schools – developing partnerships with mainstream schools

MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disproportionate exclusions pilot and links with Nottingham Black Families in Education (NBFE) • Anti-bullying strategies • Restorative justice services/peer counselling (ABC) • Effective systems for dealing with and reporting racist incidents/Common Monitoring Project • ERACISM course for Yr 5 pupils • Primary Parliament • School Council • Pupil Voice initiatives • SEAL • Art therapy sessions for pupils from asylum seeker/refugee families • Post-trauma counselling sessions for pupils from asylum seeker/refugee families displaying emotional/mental health issues • Fund-raising activities • Activities within local community
ACHIEVE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work experience placements • AimHigher – priority groups/criteria for positive action on Higher Education • Extended schools • Parental involvement and training opportunities • Parenting Strategy • Specific parenting programme for BME parents • PATRA training opportunities
SERVICE DELIVERY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Structure (Equalities Shadow Board, BME Working Group, Children and Young People's Shadow Board etc) • International Dimensions/Global and Development Education (MUNDI etc) • Schools work to celebrate diversity/create ethos and environment that is respectful/inclusive • LA officers'/schools' links with wider community (voluntary and community sector groups) • Multi-agency working practices

6. Community Cohesion, Diversity and Inter-Faith Web Links

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/Communitycohesion - Discussion, reports, case studies, resources

www.schoolslinkingnetwork.org.uk - National school linking programme – strongly promoted by DCSF to support schools duty

www.globalgateway.org - International version of linking programme

www.multiverse.ac.uk - Resources for teachers on attainment of pupils from diverse backgrounds

www.garp.org.uk - Primary teachers' planning tool to enable incorporation of global and anti-racist perspectives (produced by colleagues in Nottingham)

www.britkid.org - A website about race, racism and life as seen through the eyes of the Britkids – interactive teaching resource for KS2/KS3

www.qca.org.uk/qca_6753.aspx - QCA Respect for All section – resources for promoting diversity in the curriculum

www.runnymedetrust.org - Resources for promoting multi-ethnic Britain

www1.coventry.ac.uk/researchnet/icoco - Institute of Community Cohesion - resources, conference papers, research findings, case studies

www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk - Reports and news items from government commission on cohesion

www.diversityanddialogue.org.uk Interfaith and secular groups working with young people to enable contact and dialogue to build understanding across communities

www.aauk.org Alif Aleph UK website – British Muslims and Jews promoting positive contacts between communities

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