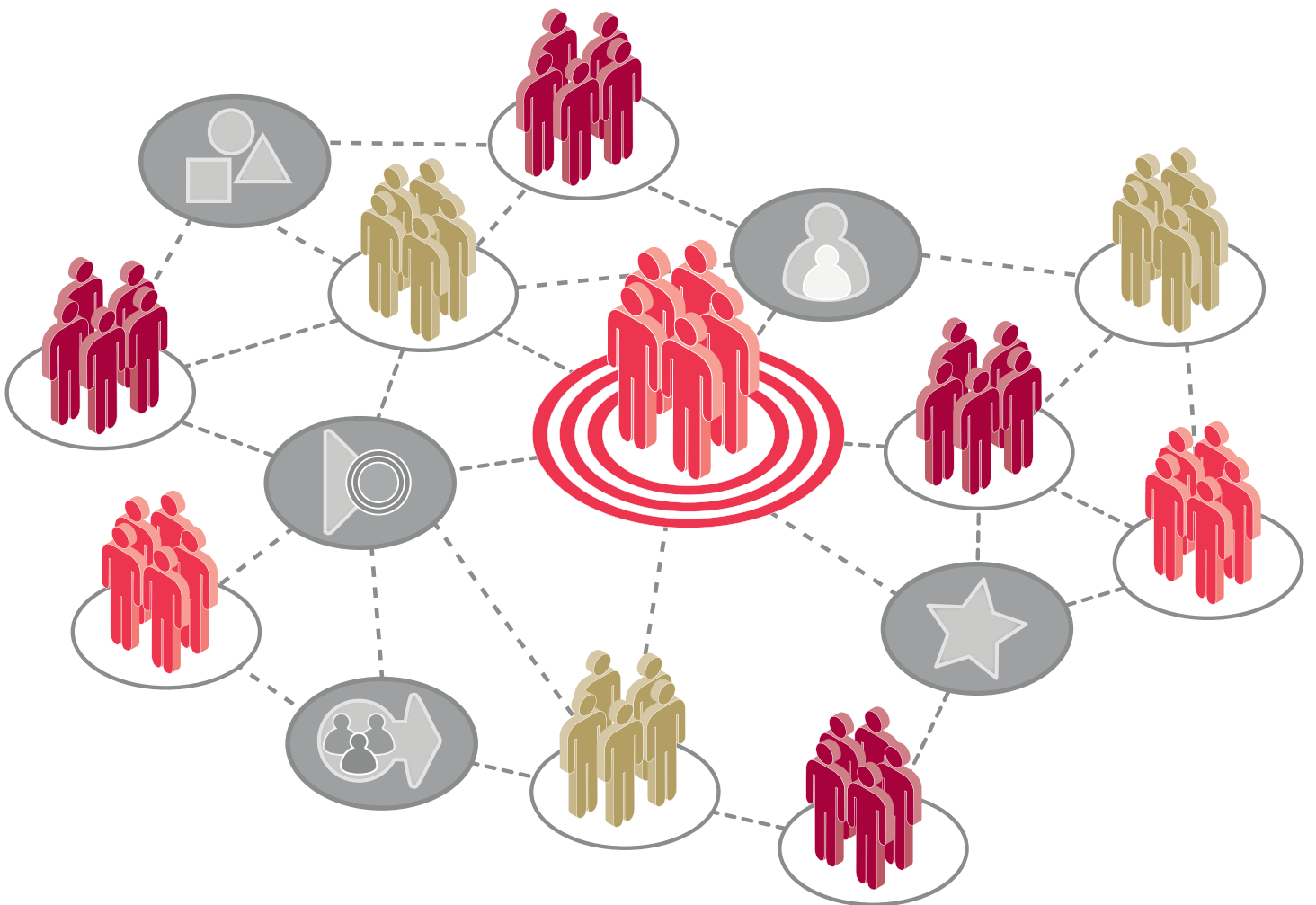


Promoting community cohesion: the role of extended services



Promoting community cohesion: the role of extended services

All maintained schools have a duty to promote community cohesion and, from 2010, to provide access to a core offer of extended services. This guidance explains how the duty to promote community cohesion and the provision of extended services can work together to support and reinforce each other – to help prepare every child for the challenges of the 21st century. This publication includes real-life examples that show how schools across England are already using extended services to make a positive difference to all the communities they serve.



Defining community cohesion

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) defines community cohesion as:

“... 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”.

Alan Johnson, Secretary of State for Education and Skills, Guidance on the Duty to Promote Community Cohesion (DCSF, 2007)

In its report, *Our Shared Future* (2007), the Commission on Integration and Cohesion explored and expanded the Department’s definition.

The report suggests that a cohesive community is one where “there is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision for a neighbourhood, city, region or country”. A “sense of belonging” is taken to mean that individuals identify with a particular place, take pride in it and have faith in the capacity of local institutions to act fairly and openly.

The Commission also stresses the importance of not only tackling gaps in equality but being seen to do so, ensuring that all individuals come to expect fair treatment as a right.

Building better relationships

Manchester Creative and Media Academy

Manchester Creative and Media Academy was created in September 2009 to replace North Manchester High School for Boys and North Manchester High School for Girls. Executive Principal Barry Fishwick has overarching responsibility for almost 2,000 students. He sees the new academy as a chance to build more positive relationships with the local community.

A first step was to get involved with the local residents’ group. “In the past, there’d been problems with anti-social behaviour at lunchtimes linked to the school,” Barry says. “By meeting local people face to face, we’ve been able to show them that we’re committed to making a fresh start.”

Barry met young people and their parents and subsequently arranged for them to use the academy’s gym and sports facilities after hours. As well as giving young people a safe place to be, this is helping parents to engage with the academy. The number of

activities available to local people has more than doubled since the academy came into being. “We want to create a positive culture,” says Barry, “and – hopefully – start to raise people’s aspirations.”

Forming partnerships with primary schools and other local organisations is another priority. “We provide free space to a local youth theatre group,” says Barry. “It helps them and it’s another way of getting people into the academy. We’re also hosting a local disabled cycling club. As a direct result, we’re now forming our own cycling group for all local people, not just pupils and their families.”

In future, the academy hopes to play a key role in local youth provision. It is currently working with Youth Zone, a social enterprise, to build a youth centre that is scheduled to open in 2011. “The idea is to model it on Bolton Lads Club,” says Barry. “We want to work with local businesses and charities and turn the academy into a real hub for the community.”

The role of schools

All schools, being at the heart of their community, have a key role to play in building a fair, integrated and tolerant society by giving pupils the skills, knowledge and opportunities to learn with, from and about those from different cultures, beliefs and backgrounds and to develop shared values. In an increasingly diverse and globalised society, this is an important part of preparing our children and young people to meet the economic and social challenges of the 21st century.

Schools' own populations are becoming increasingly diverse, with more than 300 languages spoken by children in London's schools alone. Pupils must be given the opportunity to mix with and learn about people from different backgrounds in order to combat the negative effects of intolerance and harassment, build mutual respect and shared values between different groups and encourage a sense of commitment to common goals. For some schools, where the pupil population is less diverse or predominantly of one socio-economic, ethnic, faith or non-faith background, it is even more important to provide opportunities for meaningful interaction between children and young people from different backgrounds. Promoting pupil well-being, equality and community cohesion are integral in building resilience amongst children and young people.

Broadly, schools' contribution to community cohesion covers three areas:

- **Teaching, learning and the curriculum** – helping children and young people learn to understand others and value diversity; promoting awareness of human rights and encouraging participation and responsible action, for example, through the new 'identity and diversity; living together in the UK' strand within citizenship education
- **Equity and excellence** – removing barriers to participation in learning to narrow the attainment gap between different groups; cohesion is greatest when all share in success
- **Engagement and ethos** – creating opportunities for children, young people and their families to take part in activities and build relationships with people from different backgrounds, including by building links with other schools and community groups locally and further afield

This document focuses on the third area, engagement and extended services, and how this links to and supports other aspects of school provision. As the examples in this guidance show, many different types of school activity can promote community cohesion. We hope this document will prompt schools to look at how various aspects of their work are already supporting the integration and cohesion agenda, and to consider what more they may be able to do.

School partnerships

Suffolk County Council

Suffolk local authority has about 18 supplementary schools with an average of 20 pupils each. The schools provide education outside normal school hours, usually after school and at weekends, and are mainly for children and young people from minority faiths and ethnic communities.

To encourage closer partnerships between its supplementary and mainstream schools the local authority established a collaboration project between the schools. The local authority believe supplementary schools provide a valuable link between schools and the community and can assist

by offering cultural and holiday activities as well as by sharing their expertise.

At the mosque school, for example, pupils have traditionally been reluctant to attend pre- or after-school clubs. The school decided to try to boost uptake by getting parents more involved in the life of the school via a programme called SHARE, which gave them opportunities to come in and talk about their culture. SHARE is now running in about 120 schools in Suffolk, including half of all primaries, and headteachers report that parental engagement is growing.

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The duty to promote community cohesion

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The duty to promote community cohesion was set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and took effect in September 2007. From September 2008, community cohesion became part of the Ofsted inspection process.

According to guidance issued by Ofsted, if a school is to successfully fulfil its duty to promote community cohesion it should focus on the three key strands (faith, ethnicity and culture, and socio-economic factors) and demonstrate that:

- it understands the context of its own community
- it has planned and taken an appropriate set of actions, and
- these actions have had an evident impact on the cohesiveness of the school and community.

Schools should also ensure their Singular Equalities Plan addresses issues of gender, sexual orientation, disability and age – while recognising that the main focus of the duty is to promote cohesion across different cultural, ethnic, religious and socio-economic groups. They should also bear in mind that the term “community” operates at a number of different levels:

- The immediate school community, including pupils, parents/carers/families, school staff, governors and members of the local community who make use of the school’s facilities
- The school’s neighbourhood, town and/or local authority area and the people who live and work there, and other local schools
- The UK community
- The global community

Schools may also have formed their own unique communities, for example, when they started offering extended services to local people or establishing links and creating clusters with other schools.

The role of school governors

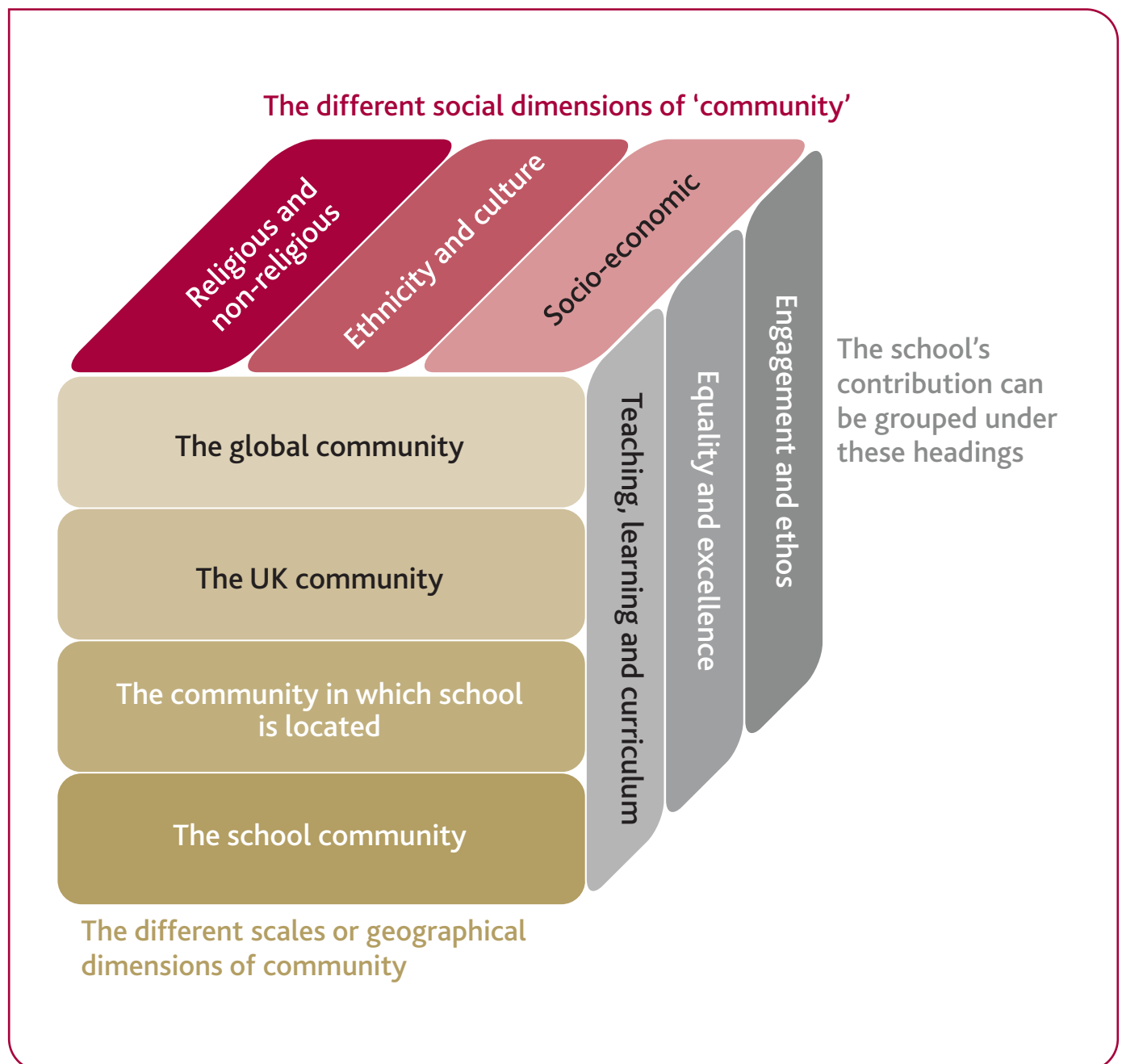
The duty to promote community cohesion rests on the governing body, which is also responsible for shaping schools’ overarching strategies. As members of the community, the governors are well placed to use their understanding of the school’s context to guide the school. The governing body promotes and supports community cohesion by:

- creating an ethos that supports equality of opportunity
- ensuring the promotion of strong and supportive relationships with and between pupils, parents and staff, local people and partner organisations
- ensuring the school actively works to tackle barriers – such as social and economic disadvantage or ethnicity – that could stand in the way of pupils’ achievement
- ensuring the school curriculum celebrates diversity, promotes tolerance and builds resilience
- ensuring the school reaches out to the community by involving parents in the life of the school and bringing community groups into the school
- considering how the school’s workforce and governing body should reflect the diversity of the community they serve, and
- ensuring that there are no barriers to participation in school governance for people from some socio-economic and ethnic groups at risk of exclusion
- ensuring the school effectively monitors the impact of its community cohesion policies.

The National Governors’ Association has developed a training package to support governors in meeting the duty to promote community cohesion. This can be found at www.nga.org.uk/cohesion/

The dimensions of community cohesion

The cube diagram on this page was developed by Ofsted to illustrate the different dimensions of community cohesion and the different aspects of schools' provision that can be used to promote it. The diagram shows that 'community' should not simply be viewed as being local and that community cohesion is as much about relationships between people from different ages and socio-economic groups as it is about different ethnicities.



Extended services

The Government's 21st century schools vision is for every child to enjoy their childhood, achieve their full potential and turn 18 with knowledge, skills and qualifications that will give them the best chance of success in life. Extended services offered in and around schools have a key role to play in making this vision a reality. Schools are expected to work in partnership with others and with wider children's services and to engage with pupils, parents and the community to establish their needs. When extended services are designed to meet those needs and are integrated into whole-school planning, they can remove barriers to learning, support classroom practice and provide life-changing opportunities and experiences.

By September 2010, all schools must have in place the core offer of extended services:

- A varied menu of activities, including study support
- Year-round childcare between 8am and 6pm in primary and special schools, as well as a 'safe place to be' in secondary schools
- Parenting support, including access to structured, evidence-based parenting programmes, family learning sessions and information plus informal opportunities for parents to engage with the school
- Swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services for children and young people who have additional needs or who are at risk of poor outcomes
- Community access to school facilities and services

Schools are not required to deliver these services alone. The intention is that schools work in partnership with each other and with other organisations and groups to deliver services that the community needs while avoiding duplication.

Each local authority has at least one extended services adviser whose role is to work closely with local schools, children's centres and providers to develop and deliver extended services. Local authorities are also responsible for administering the more than £1bn in funding that the DCSF has allocated to extended services between 2008 and 2011.

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Reaching out to parents

The E13 learning partnership, Newham

The E13 learning partnership in Newham, east London, comprises Lister Community School – a specialist performing arts school serving 1,350 students – and seven local primary schools. The area is economically deprived and ethnically diverse: at Curwen Primary School, for example, 90 per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The schools work closely together to provide support for local families, for instance, by co-funding a team of family support workers.

Support workers encourage families at all the E13 schools to attend adult learning courses and to join in a family learning programme run by the West Ham United Learning Zone. There is also a regular mothers and toddlers group and a toy library run by local parents. Paul Harris, Headteacher at Curwen, holds regular coffee mornings for parents. "It's important to find out what they want," he says. "Consultation makes parents feel they have more ownership of the activities and relationships with the school have improved as a result."

The partnership schools identified that parents from some ethnic groups were only engaging with the school if and when behavioural issues needed to be addressed. They therefore set out to develop dedicated groups aimed at building better relationships with these parents. These include the Bangladeshi Parent Support Group, which is run by one of E13's family support workers and offers a range of activities largely shaped by parents, including coffee mornings, speaker sessions and courses in English and ICT. The family support worker signposts to services such as benefits and housing as well as providing emotional support.

In its October 2009 Ofsted inspection, Curwen was rated outstanding for its community cohesion work. "The school works consistently to break down the potentially insular existence of many of its pupils," said inspectors. "[Its] exceptional work to engage families, particularly those who are traditionally hard to reach, helps pupils to grow and flourish."

Promoting digital inclusion

UK Online Centres provide communities with access to computers and the internet, along with help and advice on how to use them. Their mission is to connect people to digital skills and opportunities, using technology to improve lives and life chances. Schools that wish to provide community access to their computing/ICT suites can apply to become UK Online Centres. www.ukonlinecentres.com/corporate/regions-and-network/becoming-a-centre

This may contribute to how a school can demonstrate its commitment to creating digital and social equality in its community. Whether or not a school becomes a member centre it can promote and use the free Myguide facility www.myguide.gov.uk to help parents, grandparents and others to get the best from the internet and use it safely. This easy-to-use interactive service shows people how to use online resources to engage with their children's learning, health and well-being, to save money, find jobs and much more.

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Community arts

Hollins Technology College, Lancashire

The Hollins Technology College is a leading-edge and specialist technology college in Accrington. In 2009/10, the school ran a six-week arts project, Cohesion Through Creativity, in partnership with Cool Canvas Community Arts. Students produced storyboards and vox pops based on six themes – aspirations, friendship, transition, family, the community and our world – using a range of creative media.

Members of the community, including students from another school, families, community groups and charities, also joined in the sessions by working alongside students. The storyboards were sponsored by local businesses and community groups and the grand unveiling was held at a local Italian restaurant. Students, school staff and local people all attended the ceremony.

In February 2010, the storyboards went on a 'tour' of the local area, starting at the Global Conference Centre in Oswaldtwistle before moving on to local libraries and the Howarth Arts Museum. As a result of the project, students have formed stronger relationships with their peers and have a greater understanding of the local community and its diversity. They are more confident and more interested in attending other after-school classes and clubs.

The project has also given students the chance to make a direct and positive contribution to their local community. "The whole experience was fantastic and lots of fun," said one student in year 11. "Meeting and working with lots of new, different people was really great."

Parents' mornings

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Language College, Islington

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Language College is a girls school with 900 students aged 11-16. The school employ bi-lingual parent support advisors whose remit is to work with Somali, Bengali, Portuguese and Turkish parents. Their work includes hosting community mornings, where parents can talk informally to each other and learn more about the school and education system. Topics covered include behaviour policy, bullying, helping your daughter to learn, GCSEs and attendance. The school has now set up a parents' forum to bring parents from different ethnic groups together and give them a say in how the school is run.

Understanding different faiths

Treales Church of England Primary School, Lancashire

This very small rural school plans activities to give its pupils an awareness of a range of faiths in addition to developing a distinctive Christian ethos. Ofsted found that pupils' "understanding of the difference between lifestyles and cultures in this small rural community compared with those in towns with mixed ethnic populations is developing well". The extended services activities include visits to a mosque and school in nearby Preston, giving pupils an opportunity to meet children from different faith groups informally and providing an authentic introduction to Muslim belief and practice.

Partnerships with police

Loughborough Primary School, Lambeth

Loughborough Primary School in Brixton, south-west London, is part of a successful federation incorporating three primaries, a children's centre and the Lambeth Visually Impaired Service. The school serves an ethnically diverse and socio-economically deprived urban catchment area.

"We want to use extended services to make our school the hub of the community," says Richard Thornhill, the federation's executive headteacher. He has opened up holiday provision to all local children, not just the school's own pupils – which is one of the dimensions of community cohesion. The Metropolitan Police provides financial and practical support, driving the minibus on outings and organising football matches.

The scheme attracts around 300 children over the course of the summer. "It's an effective way of engaging young people and giving them something constructive to do, rather than getting into trouble on the housing estates," says Richard Thornhill. At the same time, the scheme is helping to improve relations between the local community and the police.

Richard Thornhill believes the school is raising standards of achievement and acting as an increasingly valuable resource for the whole community by offering extended services like the summer scheme. This view is backed by Ofsted, whose inspectors commented in June 2008: "[Loughborough] has been successful in its aim of building a very inclusive school. The school has gained the wholehearted support of the local community."

Linking extended services to community cohesion

There is a clear overlap between the elements of the extended services core offer and the community cohesion agenda. The core offer aims to eliminate barriers to attainment and ensure that all pupils and their families play a positive and active role in the school community. It presents clear opportunities for schools to work in partnership with each other and other organisations, including community groups. Fully understanding the context of a school's community can support and strengthen planning and the quality of provision, including extended services.

In seeking to promote community cohesion, schools can benefit by:

- adopting a whole school approach to community cohesion that recognises how this can link to improved attainment levels, well-being and other school priorities
- consulting and engaging with pupils, parents, families and the wider community to ensure that activities and services truly meet their needs
- working in clusters with other schools and in partnership with other children's services
- linking to schools with markedly different types of community
- working with local voluntary and community groups to build stronger relationships, offer a wider range of activities and services and gain a greater understanding of the local community
- being sensitive to cultural differences in the design of extended services
- embedding extended services in the school improvement plan and action planning for community cohesion and ensuring they support the achievement of pupils from a wide range of backgrounds, and
- encouraging parents to engage in their children's learning.

A varied menu of activities

The varied menu of activities element of the core offer provides many opportunities for meaningful interaction between different parts of the immediate community.

For instance, schools can use activities to promote community cohesion through:

- activities aimed at specific groups in the community
- activities that bring together different groups within the community
- activities designed to engage particular pupils or groups
- activities that take place in the community and involve community groups or organisations
- study support activities that support curriculum work on diversity, equality and cross-cultural understanding, and
- activities designed to benefit the community, such as volunteering.

Community access

Schools can use this element of the core offer to promote community cohesion by:

- providing space for community groups and hosting community activities
- providing access to services for individuals and community groups
- hosting community services such as drop-in clinics and specialist support, and
- offering access to school information technology and training so there is no 'digital divide' in the community.

Swift and easy access

Schools working closely with multi-agency partners can promote community cohesion by:

- ensuring school staff have information on community needs and issues from a range of services, including police, housing, social care and health
- offering targeted support and services to individual pupils and cohorts, and
- intervening early to prevent youth crime.

Childcare

High quality childcare can be a focal point for different groups to meet and provide support for working parents. Offering childcare is also often the first chance schools have to establish relationships with parents.

Parenting support and family learning

Strong parental support is important to ensure that prejudices and stereotypes are not perpetuated and extended services – including family learning and parent-focused activities – can help with this. Schools can use to this element of the core offer to promote community cohesion by offering:

- personalised communication with parents in their own languages
- parent groups to promote engagement among particular groups in the community
- activities that bring together different groups of parents in the community
- targeted work with individual parents
- parenting skills relating to particular groups in the community
- activities that promote diversity, tolerance and shared values, and
- adult learning opportunities aimed at particular groups.

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Reducing anti-social behaviour

Castle High School, Dudley, West Midlands

Castle High School in Dudley has around 1,000 students, of whom one-third are from either Asian or Afro-Caribbean backgrounds. The school's catchment includes areas that are among the 10 per cent most deprived in the country.

Criminal damage and anti-social behaviour were becoming major problems. Home Office figures show that young people commit 60 per cent of anti-social behaviour and that 60 per cent of excluded young people go on to commit crime. So when the police approached the school about providing diversionary activities, the response was enthusiastic.

The Friday Night Club started in 2007. Initially, about 12 pupils met each week to play football, with police officers joining in. Numbers are now up to about 35. The club runs between 7pm and 9pm, identified as the time when most anti-social behaviour occurs.

Historically, the school had found it hard to engage Asian pupils in after-school activities but getting an Asian adult to promote a second Friday night club, the Kashmir Youth Forum, has proved effective. Now, about 50 pupils come along to the football sessions. The Forum has its own league but also plays against the Club teams. In summer 2009, more than 100 Asian pupils and parents came together to celebrate the Forum's achievements.

Outcomes include changing attitudes – the young men attending the Forum show respect and appreciation for the support and there has been notable improvement in attitudes towards the police – and a measurable impact on crime. In 2008, incidents of criminal damage in the town centre fell by 73 per cent on the previous year. The total was down by 172 cases.

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Targeted support

The Ashley School, Suffolk

The Ashley School in Lowestoft, Suffolk, is a special school catering for 127 students with moderate learning difficulties. The school also has specialist college status for cognition and learning. It serves a wide geographical area.

In 2000, the school decided to open up its Duke of Edinburgh Awards unit to learners from other schools, particularly those with additional needs. Weekly after-school sessions cover volunteering, developing new skills and sport. There is also a three-day canoeing expedition. The sessions are helping to break down barriers between students, encouraging collaboration with other schools and – through the volunteering strand – having a direct positive impact on the local community.

More recently, the school has turned its attention to providing targeted support for students at risk of becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training) and their families. Two teaching assistants were given additional training by partner agencies, including health, drugs, crime prevention and Connexions, and are now entirely focused on supporting families. Another member of support staff is now focused on transition, working with year 11 leavers to support their decision-making and help them make positive choices about their futures.

The school's efforts to engage with its community of schools, with people living nearby and with its parents and carers have helped bring about a significant reduction in the NEET population. Ofsted inspectors, visiting in March 2009, observed that "... parents are fully involved in their child's learning" and that "pupils have a very well developed culture awareness."

Challenging stereotypes

Joseph Leckie Community Technology College, Walsall, West Midlands

Joseph Leckie Community Technology College in Walsall, West Midlands, has 1,200 students and serves three distinct communities: a white working-class area and two areas of high deprivation with communities that are predominantly Asian. In the past, tensions between groups of students have led to problems, including violent incidents and the posting of inflammatory videos on the internet.

The school believes that friendship groupings based on ethnic or religious divisions reinforce stereotypes, foster mutual mistrust and undermine community cohesion. It has, therefore, launched Challenge to Change, a five-day residential programme in Aberdovey, Wales, where students from a range of

backgrounds take part in Outward Bound activities that present individual and team challenges.

The school is also using the extended services disadvantage subsidy to help support a cluster-wide programme of holiday activities. A parent volunteer and a number of students help to run the programme, which is also supported by the Safer Walsall Borough Partnership and the Walsall Youth Service.

Speaking at a local tenants' meeting, Police Sergeant Gary Iliff pointed to a 25 per cent reduction in crime in the area over the summer period. The school also reports improved relationships between pupils from different communities.

School self-evaluation of community cohesion

Schools need to demonstrate clear evidence that they are working in a structured and effective way to promote greater cohesion among their pupils and workforce and also in the wider community, locally, nationally and internationally. A school's self-evaluation process can be a good vehicle for seeking and collecting evidence that can then be used in the self-evaluation form (SEF).

Key questions

Ofsted inspectors will report on a school's duty to promote community cohesion in the leadership and management section of the inspection report.

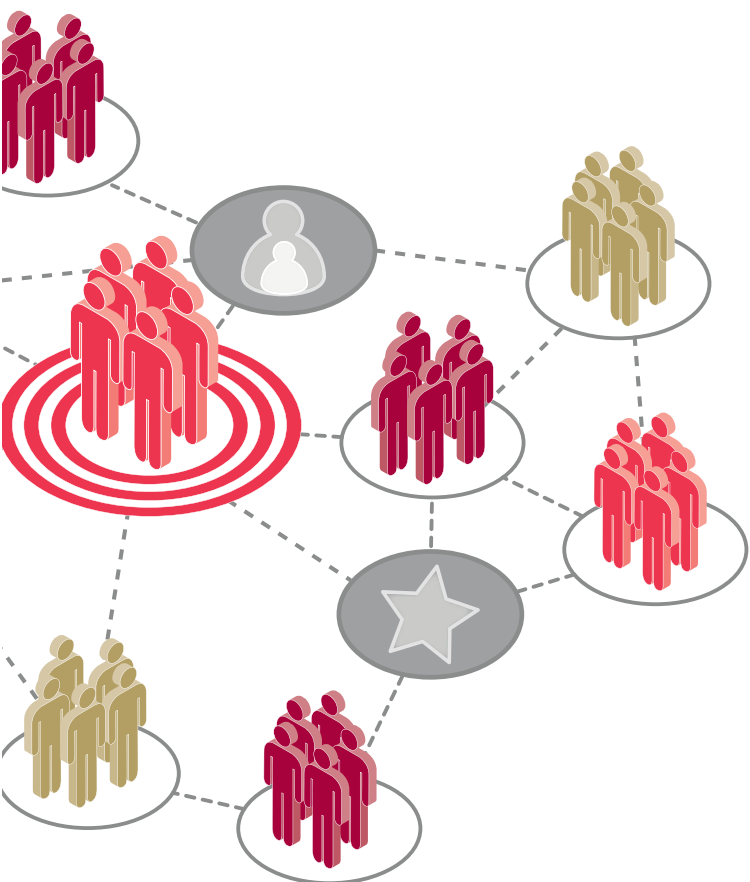
The guidance suggests that inspectors should be asking the following three questions:

- **What do you know about the context of your school in respect of community cohesion?** As a minimum, a school should be able to show that it has considered its context in relation to faith, ethnicity and culture and socio-economic factors and that it understands how its own immediate community compares with local and national ones
- **Have you planned and taken an appropriate set of actions to promote community cohesion?** Plans should be clearly based on the school's analysis of its own context and priorities and should include some outreach activities
- **What impact are you having?** As a minimum, a school should be able to show that it is evaluating the impact of its actions on cohesion in relation to faith, ethnicity and culture and socio-economic factors in the school and local community

The opposite page sets out the type of questions schools may wish to explore when demonstrating the impact of their extended services and how they are promoting community cohesion.

Ongoing self-evaluation

As part of good practice in self-evaluation, schools should regularly update the SEF and RAISEonline with data about the school and its community. A school should also bear in mind that the views of pupils, their knowledge of their community and their assessment of the school's community cohesion work will form an essential part of the evidence base. Inspectors will want to talk to pupils about the diversity of their local and national communities, their own interactions with different groups and what they believe the school is doing to promote good relationships and mutual understanding.



Effective evidence

The questions on this page are designed to help schools develop an action plan or to review how effectively their activities are promoting community cohesion. When evaluating the long-term impact on attitudes and behaviour, schools also need to consider how to accommodate staff turnover and ensure data collection is consistent and ongoing.

Planning and preparation

- Is your community cohesion work part of a planned, whole-school action plan that includes extended services?
- Have you planned how you will evaluate the effectiveness of your extended services in promoting community cohesion? For example, did you conduct an attitude survey before offering the services? Comparing attitudes before and after the services were introduced can reveal any lasting impact.
- How have you aligned school and cluster planning with the children's and young people's plan – including local authority community cohesion plans and national indicators – to enable you to demonstrate and measure impact?

Understanding your community

- How do you gain an in-depth understanding of the context of your own community and its varying needs? Does the school draw on existing audits and surveys to deepen its understanding of the community and context?
- What processes – consultation, independent surveys, etc – have you used to understand the context and needs of your school/local/national/global community? For example, have you consulted your local authority for information and data on demographic patterns and trends or the achievement and behaviour of specific groups of learners?
- What is your understanding and analysis of the pressure points of the relationships in the communities you serve? For example, what community tensions, stereotypes and negative attitudes exist both within your school and in the community your school serves? What actions can be taken to build greater cohesion and how will you measure their effectiveness in terms of faith, ethnicity and socio-economic context?

Approach to offering extended services

- How does your school encourage different groups of children and young people to understand that they are entitled to access a number of different services and activities?
- How does your school foster close relationships with partner schools in contrasting parts of the UK and/or the world? How do you evaluate these links and what are the benefits of these relationships?
- How are you ensuring that everyone can access services? Is cost an issue for some members of your community? Are the location and timing of services suitable for all members of the community?
- How are your extended services supporting or building on classroom work linked to community cohesion?
- How is your school using extended services to encourage pupils to see themselves as belonging to a wider geographical community? How are you helping staff to understand this? What do they know about local culture and traditions that can foster pride in the community?

Evidence for self-evaluation

- Schools are often very good at listing their activities but have you put in place processes to measure their impact quantitatively and qualitatively? How have you considered and planned for the impact of those activities so that you can evaluate and quantify it?
- How does your school encourage members of the local community to participate in school activities? What partnerships have you established and worked with locally (neighbourhood partnerships), nationally and globally to support your community cohesion activities/plan?
- When evaluating the impact of extended services on community cohesion, how does your school consider the short-, medium- and long-term changes to the attitudes and behaviour of pupils and staff? How are you evaluating the contribution of each area of provision, including extended services?
- How does your cluster/confederation/partnership of schools evaluate community cohesion together to share effective practice and support each other rather than 'reinvent the wheel'?
- How can you evaluate staff attitudes to community cohesion? When evaluating the long-term impact on attitudes and behaviour, what is in place to ensure data collection is consistent, ongoing and accommodates staff turnover?

The SIPF and the impact evaluation model

The School Improvement Planning Framework (SIPF) was developed by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) and the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services in partnership with more than 200 schools. The framework sets out a three-stage planning process – prepare and engage, identify objectives and ensure successful outcomes – underpinned by practical, user-friendly tools.

The framework can support schools' commitment to promoting community cohesion in a number of ways, including by encouraging the development of a shared vision and reducing gaps in attainment by focusing on ways of supporting all pupils to realise their potential. Many of the tools are also based on consultation with pupils, staff, parents and families and members of the community.

Kirkleatham Hall Special School in Redcar used the What's Working? tool to gather the views of pupils and parents on the school improvement agenda. Student

council representatives consulted their peers, carrying out a separate exercise in each classroom so that all pupils could have their say. Parents were asked to complete a questionnaire at parents' evenings. "We're gathering far more evidence than before," says Headteacher Gill Naylor, "and parents are getting much more involved."

The TDA has also developed an impact evaluation model, which is particularly effective when used towards the end of the planning process and before service delivery. The model aims to help local authorities and schools bring together qualitative and quantitative evidence and demonstrate the impact of a whole range of projects, initiatives and services. The resulting evidence will provide a valuable resource to draw on when seeking to demonstrate the impact of extended services, including on community cohesion, and when preparing for an Ofsted inspection.

Find out more about the SIPF at

www.tda.gov.uk/schoolimprovement

Find out more about the impact evaluation

model at www.tda.gov.uk/impactevaluation

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Family and community learning

Harton Technology College, South Shields, South Tyneside

Harton Technology College in South Shields has 1,354 students drawn from a catchment area that includes pockets of severe deprivation as well as relatively prosperous suburbs. The school was recently named one of the most improved secondary schools in England. The student profile is increasingly diverse, with a notable increase in Bangladeshi students.

During the Easter term, the school ran a parenting course, *Living with Teenagers*, in partnership with Parentline Plus. The programme covered a range of issues including drugs, alcohol, family relationships, exam stress and coping with divorce. The response was very positive and parents have now set up their own self-help group. Relationships with the school have improved. Harton also offers family learning programmes, including healthy eating and circus

skills, in partnership with South Tyneside Adult and Community Learning Services. Each session has attracted between 18 and 40 attendees and the strategy has proved an excellent way of engaging hard-to-reach parents, recruiting adult learners and building stronger bonds between parents and children.

The school held Global Diversity Days in July and November 2009. Engaging in cultural activities, such as African drumming, sushi-making and breakdancing, helped raise the young people's awareness of their status as global citizens, and the days culminated in presentations by the Red Card to Racism organisation. Feedback has been excellent, with parents reporting that their children have a greater appreciation of each others' cultures and a more positive attitude to minority groups.

Raising cultural awareness

My Heritage, My History, My Home, Middlesbrough

My Heritage, My History, My Home brought together six primary schools in east and west Middlesbrough in a programme aimed at raising cultural awareness, strengthening relationships between diverse communities and responding to concerns raised by headteachers regarding race-related tensions between pupils.

Participating pupils – many of whom had been identified by their schools as needing additional support – worked with education officers from Teesside Archives and the Dorman Museum, researching their family heritage and learning how Middlesbrough has changed since their parents and grandparents were growing up. The project culminated in a week of day-long workshops at the

museum, where all 50 children worked together to produce their own documentary film and artwork, and a celebratory event for pupils and their families.

Feedback from pupils was very positive. "It was an interesting project and while we were learning about things we also had loads of fun", said one. "I've absolutely loved this history project!" commented another. Teaching staff have reported a noticeable difference in some pupils, who had been disengaged from learning. They seemed more enthusiastic about learning and showed increasing levels of self-esteem. The project also successfully encouraged integration between different communities and brought together schools and partner organisations.

Further information and resources

DCSF

The Department has created a range of guidance and resources on community cohesion, including:

- Guidance to Schools (July 2007), which sets out how schools can contribute to promoting community cohesion and meet their new duty
[www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/Community cohesion/Community Cohesion Guidance](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/Community%20cohesion/Community%20Cohesion%20Guidance)
- An online resource pack, which provides schools with practical advice, support and examples of good practice to help them promote community cohesion and meet their new duty
www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/Communitycohesion/communitycohesionresourcepack
- A toolkit to raise awareness among schools of the threat from extremist groups and the risks for young people
www.dcsf.gov.uk/violentextremism/toolkitforschools/index.shtml
- The School Linking Network, which provides practical support to schools in setting-up links between schools – including independent and faith schools and those in different contexts – to provide opportunities for their pupils to interact with others from different backgrounds
www.schoolslinkingnetwork.org.uk

National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services

The National College has produced an online community cohesion resource to enable school leaders to develop an awareness and understanding of the complex area of community engagement. The resource aims to offer support, advice and guidance to help improve outcomes, consider the requirements of the 21st century school vision and meet the requirements of the new Ofsted framework with success and confidence.
www.nationalcollege.org.uk/community-cohesion

Specialist Schools and Academies Trust

The Trust has produced a toolkit and good practice case studies to support schools in promoting community cohesion.

www.ssatrust.org.uk/community

National Governors' Association

The National Governors' Association has developed a training package to support governors in meeting the duty to promote community cohesion. This can be found at www.nga.org.uk/cohesion/

Institute of Community Cohesion

The Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo) was established in 2005 to provide a new approach to race, diversity and multiculturalism. iCoCo is a not-for-profit partnership that aims to build capacity at all levels and in all local and national agencies to promote community cohesion. Its work focuses on building positive and harmonious community relations, using applied research to constantly develop practice and to build the capacity of all the agencies and individuals involved.

www.cohesioninstitute.org.uk

Improvement and Development Agency

This resource offers a range of guidance, advice and good practice on community cohesion issues. It comes from IDeA and a range of partners working in this policy area.

www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=8799335

Communities and Local Government

The research paper What Works in Community Cohesion was commissioned to contribute to the ongoing work of Communities and Local Government and the Commission on Integration and Cohesion. It considers 'what works' in terms of cohesion policy by investigating policy and practice in six case-study areas.

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/whatworks

Ofsted

Learning Together: How Education Providers Promote Social Responsibility and Community Cohesion (Ofsted 2010) surveyed seven local authorities and 38 schools (all phases) and further education colleges to find out how well they knew and understood their local communities. It reveals how they helped learners to become responsible citizens and make a positive contribution to society.

www.ofsted.gov.uk/content/download/10771/128413

Support for parents

Fiveways and Fairmeads special schools, Somerset

Fiveways and Fairmeads are special schools for pupils aged 4-19 with moderate or severe learning difficulties. Pupils are drawn from a 30-mile radius and, as a result, parents have limited opportunities to engage with the schools and each other. The schools have set up a programme of monthly coffee mornings with guest speakers, such as speech and language therapists, who offer advice and guidance on topics chosen by parents themselves. "I really enjoyed the coffee morning," says one parent. "It was good to chat with other parents. My son comes in by bus so there's no opportunity to have a chat in the playground like I do at my other child's school."

Community learning

Acle High School, Norfolk

Acle High School in Norfolk has 757 students aged 11-16. It serves a rural area covering more than 100 square miles and has always been a centre for community activity. The school operates a late bus service once a week so that the 70 per cent of students who travel by bus can access extended services. A travelling 'roadshow' visits all the local villages to promote the availability of extended services and consult parents about their needs. The school's open days have been particularly successful in involving the wider community in learning activities. Entry is free and includes workshops and theatre performances on themes such as forensic science and wildlife.

Positive intergenerational activities

Intergenerational community cohesion work in Wolverhampton

Wolverhampton's extended services team has established excellent working relationships with local neighbourhood partnerships (LNPs), which have welcomed the opportunity to work more closely with their local schools. Many of the intergenerational activities undertaken have made a hugely positive impact upon local communities by changing the perceptions of young and old alike.

Children from Bilston CE Primary School worked with a group of residents from Arthur Greenwood Court, a neighbouring block of high-rise flats mainly occupied by older people. The activities began with a gardening project and this has since been extended to monthly visits by the school's gardening group, which is working to further enhance the flats' communal area. The two groups also made bird boxes together for the school's eco project and the elderly residents continue to support these activities.

Tettenhall LNP created the Little Environment Group (LEG) with its local schools and community, initially in reaction to the possible loss of an area of woodland. This intergenerational group grew very quickly and gained funding to enable it to deliver environmental projects across local woodland areas. LEG has been successful in delivering joint woodland projects with schools, including building and erecting bird boxes and planting trees.

Two hundred and fifty children, including pupils from the local special school, also took part in a very successful environmental art project. Prizes and certificates were awarded in all the activities but, more importantly, new projects are being planned and are eagerly anticipated by community members of all ages.

Family holiday scheme

Westleigh cluster, Wigan

The Westleigh cluster is based in Leigh, Wigan, a former mining community with high levels of deprivation. The cluster – which includes one high school and six primaries – runs a holiday scheme that offers a wide range of activities for children and families. In summer 2009, more than 750 children aged four to 16 and 100 adults took part. Each school in the cluster was offered a set number of places, with priority going to the families with the greatest need.

The cluster used funding from the extended services disadvantage subsidy to support these families, for example, by helping to pay for daytrips. The scheme as a whole, and the use of the subsidy in particular, has given children and families the chance to share in activities that would not otherwise be available to them.

Many of the scheme activities were based at Westleigh High School, the cluster's lead school. In addition to the holiday scheme, the school's facilities are used extensively by parents and the community, seven days a week, throughout the year. There is a wide range of adult and community learning classes on offer and sports facilities are fully booked by local clubs.

The school believes that opening up its services to the community has made a positive impact on many aspects of its work and performance. Previously judged by Ofsted to be failing (pre-1997), Westleigh High had suffered significant problems with vandalism and crime and its roll was falling. Now, the school is oversubscribed and academic standards have never been higher. Community use has helped promote positive awareness of the school among local people and Westleigh High is now recognised and valued for its role at the heart of the community.

Bringing schools together

Kirklees Council

Kirklees is the ninth most segregated metropolitan authority in the UK. Children growing up there are likely to find themselves living and learning alongside members of the same ethnic group. "It's not that Kirklees isn't diverse," says David Raven-Hill of Kirklees Council, "but there is a tendency for people to live in monocultural communities."

In 2003, a linking project was set up to bring schools together and give pupils the opportunity to learn about diversity at first hand. Initially, projects ran for a half-term or term but they have been so successful that each one now lasts a year. Typically, groups of

pupils meet half a dozen times and 54 local schools are currently involved.

Schools that express an interest in the project and state how they believe linking will benefit them are then given training and support. "The programme is constantly evolving," says David Raven-Hill. "We're bringing together schools with pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds as well as different ethnic origins. Parents get involved, too. We want it to be about community cohesion in the broadest sense."

