

# **Ryhope Infant School Academy**

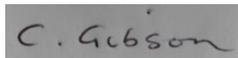
## **Community Cohesion Policy**

**Updated:** February 2026

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**Ratified by:** Governing Body

**Signed:** 

**Chair of Trustees**

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## Statement of Intent

It is our belief that every school, irrespective of its intake and location is responsible for educating young people who will live and work in a country which is diverse. The curriculum of Ryhope Infant School Academy promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of all our pupils to prepare them for wider responsibilities, experiences and opportunities in life after they leave our school.

Our duty is to promote community cohesion through eliminating unlawful discrimination, and encouraging equality of opportunity and good relationships, both physical and mental, between people of different groups.

As migration and economic change alter the shape of our local and national communities, it is more important than ever to support community cohesion. RISA is, and will continue to be, an integral part in building a more cohesive society.

This policy supports the work of the school's Mission Statement and other school policies such as:

- Equality
- SMSC
- Staff Behaviour
- Behaviour
- Vision and Values.

To prepare our pupils for living in a diverse and cohesive society, we strive to:

- Encourage the development of pupils' individual identities.
- Encourage positive and open attitudes towards diversity, and the development of the skills, understanding and confidence to challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping.
- Support pupils in becoming active members of society who recognise their rights and responsibilities.
- Ensure they receive a broad and balanced, rich and creative education and succeed in reaching their potential.
- Provide opportunities for positive interaction with people from a variety of backgrounds in the local and wider community.

## **1. What is community cohesion?**

We define 'community cohesion' as working towards a society in which:

- There is a sense of belonging by all communities.
- The diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and valued.
- Similar life opportunities are available to all.
- Strong and positive relationships exist, and continue to be developed in the workplace, school and wider community.
- Social mobility is encouraged and facilitated.

## **2. Community from the school's perspective**

Ryhope Infant School Academy defines 'community' in a number of ways:

- School community – the pupils we serve, their families, and our staff members.
- Our local community – our geographical community, and the people who live and/or work in our area.
- The community of Britain – all schools, by definition, are part of it.
- The global community – formed by the European Union (EU) and international links.

## **3. Our strategic aims**

Ryhope Infant School Academy contribution to community cohesion can be grouped under the following headings:

### **3.1 Teaching, learning and curriculum**

Our teaching and the curriculum provision supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values, and helps pupils understand and value the diversity that surrounds them. Lessons taught across our curriculum provide various opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding and empathy, promote awareness of the rights of individuals, and to develop the teamwork, skills of participation and responsible action.

### **3.2 Equality and excellence**

At Ryhope Infant School Academy there is a focus on securing high standards of attainment for all pupils and removing barriers to learning both in the classroom and in the wider world. Effective procedures exist within our school to tackle prejudice, bullying and harassment. Our admission process promotes community cohesion and social equality.

### **3.3 Engagement and ethos**

Ryhope Infant School Academy prides itself in providing opportunities for young people and their families to interact and build positive relationships with parents through an open-door ethos, parents' evenings and regular assemblies. We also promote positive relationships between people from different backgrounds, including links with different schools and communities locally, nationally and internationally. Our school works in a cluster partnership with local schools including Primary and Junior schools to support our pupils' education. Engagement with parents through open invitations to festivals including our traditional Easter Bonnet Parade, our Annual Summer Fayre and other celebrations are considered a priority at the school. It is important to involve children in decision-making and the organisation of the school, teaching pupils the importance of participation and making a difference to the school, local community and beyond.

## **4. How do we contribute to community cohesion?**

Ryhope Infant School Academy, as well as all others, are responsible for equipping our pupils to live alongside people from many different backgrounds.

Through our existing partnerships in the local and wider community, we support community cohesion to a great extent, and the promotion of community cohesion permeates our aims as outlined in the School's Mission statement.

Ryhope Infant School Academy ensures:

- Training of staff members and Governors their responsibilities.
- That all staff members are able to promote community cohesion.
- The development of partnerships.
- That the admissions policy reflects the catchment area.
- That all pupils can access the full curriculum.
- That there is equal access to education and training.
- Pupils are heard and can effect change.

### **4.1 Protecting pupils from extremism and radicalisation**

Every school is required by law to teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the SMSC development of pupils. A part of this is to safeguard against biased or unbalanced teaching and the promotion of partisan political views. Under all circumstances, pupils will be protected from extremism and radicalisation through our robust Safeguarding policies and procedures (PREVENT duty).

### **4.2 Monitoring and evaluation**

Performance is monitored by the SMSC leader throughout the school year, and evidence is gathered. Pupils' views are fed back to staff members to constantly improve professional development. The SMSC leader is Mrs A Simpson.

### **4.3 School development plan**

Our priorities under this policy are in-line with the School Improvement Priorities. Action plans are outlined in the School Development Plan, and the SMSC leader is responsible for communicating and implementing the action plan.

### **4.4 Accountability**

The Key Governor for SMSC is Kathryn Pinchen. Mrs A Simpson, the school SMSC leader, is directly responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the SMSC including community cohesion curriculum. The primary accountability is to the Governors, Headteacher and senior leadership team (SLT).