Community Cohesion Policy

Statement of intent:
At Burley Oaks Primary School, we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Burley Oaks Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

The main priority is to prevent an emergency from occurring in the setting; however, this is sometimes, unfortunately, out of the hands of the school. In an emergency, staff members at Burley Oaks Primary School will endeavour to take all reasonable actions in order to ensure the safety of pupils.
The procedures outlined in this policy aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils, staff members and visitors.

This policy was agreed in January 2025 and will be reviewed in January 2028.

Chair of Governors Christine A Smith Date 30th January 2025

Headteacher Date 30th January 2025

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This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Home Office (2023) 'Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023)'
- DfE (2015) 'The Prevent duty'
- DfE (2014) 'Equality Act 2010: advice for schools'
- DfE (2014) 'Promoting fundamental British values through SMSC'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy (Trust)
- Prevent – tackling extremism/radicalisation
- School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- MLT Equalities policy and information (Trust)
- MLT Preventing sexual harassment (Trust)
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy (Trust)

Rationale

We recognise that there is a duty for our school to promote community cohesion as defined in the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Community cohesion lies at the heart of what makes a strong and safe community. It must be delivered locally through creating strong networks, based on principles of trust, and respect for local diversity, and nurturing a sense of belonging and confidence in our local community. Effectively delivering community cohesion also tackles the fractures in society which can lead to conflict, and ensures that the gains that come from being part of a cohesive community are a source of strength to our school and our local community.

1. **What is community cohesion**?

1.1. 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 is 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

2.1. At Burley Oaks Primary we define '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 –Europe and international links.

3. Our strategic aims

3.1. Burley Oaks' contribution to community cohesion can be grouped under several headings, including the following:

- Teaching, learning and curriculum
- Equality and excellence
- Engagement and ethos

3.2. Our teaching and the curriculum provision support high standards of attainment, promote common values, and help pupils understand and value the diversity that surrounds them.

3.3. 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.

3.4. At Burley Oaks Primary School, 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.

3.5. Effective procedures exist within our school to tackle prejudice, bullying and harassment.

3.6. Our admission process promotes community cohesion and social equality.

3.7. Burley Oaks Primary School prides itself in providing opportunities for young people and their families to interact and build positive relationships with people from different backgrounds, including links with different schools and communities locally, nationally and internationally where possible.

3.8. Engagement with parents through an open-door ethos, parents' evenings, festivals, other celebrations and open school events are considered a priority at our school to support our pupils' education.

3.9. 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. This takes many forms but can be through leadership roles within school, charity work, events involving the Arts or our geography curriculum which teaches about our environment and environmental issues.

4. How do we contribute to community cohesion?

We believe our school, as the 'belong' element of our motto suggests, has a key part to play in promoting community cohesion.

4.1. Burley Oaks Primary School, as well as all others, is responsible for equipping our pupils to live alongside people from many different backgrounds – our PSHE curriculum, RE curriculum and the wider curriculum is planned carefully to ensure this happens and children are knowledgeable and accepting of others when they leave us

for secondary school. Part of this work involves pupils in Y4 taking part in the Linking Schools Project.

4.2. Through our existing partnerships in the local and wider community (Police, parents, outside agencies, local care home, churches, Love Burley Group etc…) we support community cohesion to a great extent, and the promotion of community cohesion permeates our aims as outlined in the School Development Plan, subject action plans and as identified in events/projects planned into our school calendar.

4.3. Strong links are fostered and encouraged, enabling multi-agency working between the school and other local agencies, such as the police, social care and health professionals.

4.4. We participate in and support local community events and strive to work together on key issues in the locality i.e. working towards becoming a plastic free community.

4.5. We have an ethos of charitable support and hold many fundraisers throughout the course of the year.

4.6. Burley Oaks PTA is an important and valued strength of our closer community, organising a great number of events for our children and adult communities to enjoy and learn from. It also acts as an important link to the community of Burley-in-Wharfedale village.

4.7. Burley Oaks Primary School ensures that:

- staff members and Governors are trained in their responsibilities.
- all staff members are able to promote community cohesion.
- partnerships are developed.
- the admissions policy reflects the catchment area.
- all pupils can access the full curriculum.
- there is equal access to education and training.
- pupils are heard and can affect change.

5. Protecting pupils from extremism and radicalisation

5.1. Every school is required by law to teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical (SMCMP) development of pupils.

5.2. At Burley Oaks, we safeguard against biased or unbalanced teaching and the promotion of partisan political views.

5.3. Under all circumstances, pupils will be protected from extremism and radicalisation through our tackling extremism/radicalisation policy.

6. School development plan

6.1. Our priorities under this policy are in-line with the school development plan.

6.2. Curriculum action plans are outlined in the school development plan, and the curriculum leader is responsible for ensuring the development of community cohesion across school. This is embedded through the teaching of a balanced, broad and specifically designed curriculum, phase and whole school events, local community projects, linking projects with other schools, links with schools in other countries, assemblies, trips and visitors.

7. Accountability

7.1. The curriculum leader is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the community cohesion curriculum. The primary accountability is to the governing body, headteacher and senior leadership team.

8. Monitoring and review

8.1. Performance is monitored by the curriculum leader throughout the school year, and reported back to the governors in terms of participation, pupil voice, parent views and safeguarding reports which make up a part of the headteacher's report.

8.2. Pupils' views are fed back to staff members to constantly improve professional development.

8.3. This policy is reviewed by the governing body every ~~5~~3 years.