Community cohesion policy

Key staff members:	All staff
Responsible body:	Project Steering Group/Local Governing Body
Adopted:	June 2017
Last reviewed:	n/a
Next review:	June 2018

1. Introduction

There is a duty for schools to promote community cohesion under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

2. Principles

Mulberry UTC aims to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our learners and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. Our aim is to develop confidence, creativity, leadership and learning skills in all of our students.

We already consider this part of our role, and work in ways which promote community cohesion. As migration and economic change alter the shape of our increasingly diverse local communities, it is more important than ever that all schools play a full part in promoting community cohesion. Our school should be a thriving, cohesive community, but it also has a vital part to play in building a more cohesive society.

Every school, whatever its intake and wherever it is located, is responsible for educating children and young people who will live and work in a country which is diverse in terms of culture, faith, ethnicity and social backgrounds.

We aim to promote a common sense of identity and support diversity, showing learners how different communities can be united by common experiences and values.

We believe that it is our duty to address issues of 'how we live together' and 'dealing with difference' however controversial and difficult they might sometimes seem.

3. Definitions

By community cohesion, we mean 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, religions 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.

4. How we define 'community'

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

- the school community – the learners we serve, their families and the school's staff;

- the community within which the school is located – the school in its geographical community and the people who live or work in that area,

- the community of Britain - all schools are by definition part of this community;

- The global community – formed by EU and international links.

  In addition we work with other school communities – for example, the networks formed by Mulberry School for Girls through which the UTC has links with a wide range of schools across the world.

Accordingly our school will contribute to community cohesion in the following areas:

4.1 Teaching, learning and curriculum – to teach learners to understand others, to promote common values and to value diversity, to promote awareness of human rights and of the responsibility to uphold and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.

We need to ensure:

- Lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help students to value differences and to challenge prejudice and stereotyping – for example, opportunities in citizenship classes for students to discuss issues of identity and diversity and what it means 'to live together in the UK'.

- A programme of curriculum based activities whereby students' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through visits and meetings with members of different communities.

- Support for students for whom English is an additional language (EAL) to enable them to achieve at the highest possible level in English.

- Involvement of learners in the governance and organisation of the school in a way that teaches them to participate in and make a difference in school, in their local community and beyond.

4.2 Wider Curriculum – we have an extensive out of hours learning programme where students have an opportunity to be involved in a wide range of activities. Students and staff have an opportunity to suggest new activities to be provided as part of the out of hours learning programme. Through our Creative Industries specialist, students have many opportunities to take part in creative and artistic activities.

4.3 Equity and excellence – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest level possible, removing barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities and eliminating variations in outcomes for different groups.

To use the school tracking systems to enable us to evaluate progress of different groups and to tackle underperformance by any particular group.

To monitor incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment. Monitoring of whether students from particular groups are more likely to be excluded or disciplined than others should be accompanied by appropriate behaviour, and other policies in place to deal with this.

4.4 Engagement and ethos – to provide a means for children, young people and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations, including links with different schools and communities locally, across the country and internationally.

To work in a range of different partnership with other learning organisations locally, nationally and internationally in order to promote mutual understanding.

To work in partnership activities with the local and wider community including:

- Working together with community representatives, for example through mentoring schemes or bringing community representatives into school to work with learners, ensuring that the learner voice is heard and able to effect change.

- Maintaining strong links and multi-agency working between the school and other local agencies, such as the youth support service, the police and social care and health professionals.

- Engagement with parents through information sessions, adult learning courses, family learning courses, curriculum events and family liaison work.

- Provision of extended services, and in particular aiming to bring parents together from different backgrounds through parenting and family support and community use of facilities.

Community Representation within the School - we are keen that the local community is present at all levels within the school and work hard to ensure that our staff team is both diverse and representative of the communities we serve.. We actively recruit governors in order to provide an effective balance of gender, ethnicity and community representation. We work with volunteers at school in a number of ways, including through our industry and university sponsors and partners, as well as with parents who are encouraged to take up the wide range of opportunities available for parents within the Mulberry Schools Trust. We ensure that students have access to a wide variety of visitor and speakers from the local community as well as from a broad range of backgrounds and skill areas.

5. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school will develop an annual action plan through the strategic strand of "Community" to implement its policy for community cohesion. This will be led by a named member of the Senior Leadership Team, monitored by the SLT and the local governing body Progress reports will be presented regularly to the local governing body and the Mulberry Schools Trust Board.