



St Mary  
Magdalene  
Academy

# THE COURTYARD

## COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY

The Courtyard aims to offer an outstanding educational and social provision that will equip our students with the skills and experiences needed to discover and live out their potential.

## COMMUNITY COHESION - POLICY STATEMENT

**ST MARY MAGDALENE ACADEMY  
THE COURTYARD**

<b>Approval Committee:</b>	<b>Full Governing Body</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Head of The Courtyard</b>
<b>Last reviewed:</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> June 2017</b>
<b>Next review date:</b>	<b>June 2020</b>
<b>Required to publish on website?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Statutory?</b>	<b>No</b>

# **COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY**

## **Scope**

This policy applies to The Courtyard Services, young people and adult services that provide support for people where The Courtyard has a duty of care. This policy should be read in conjunction with other Courtyard policies including: Safeguarding and Child Protection, Anti-Bullying and Complaints .

## **Rationale**

There is a duty for schools to promote community cohesion under the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Community cohesion lies at the heart of what makes a community inclusive, strong and safe. Schools contribute to the creation of cohesive communities through the development of strong networks, based on principles of trust, and respect for the local diversity whilst nurturing a sense of belonging and confidence in local people.

## **Vision**

The vision for the Courtyard is to recognise and celebrate the diversity within our local area and we welcome the contributions which different groups and individuals make to the community. As a Special School for young people aged 14-19 with ASD/SLCN, we believe it is our responsibility to foster a sense of community which looks beyond itself in order to create a greater understanding of others, respecting and valuing differences. We believe that community cohesion incorporates and goes beyond the concepts of race equality and social cohesion. A cohesive community is one where there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities and where the diversity of origins and circumstances are appreciated and valued.

It is vital that Courtyard pupils are aware of acts of discrimination. Discrimination is defined as the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex.

A key commitment of the Courtyard is to build and promote community cohesion within the school and wider community through a range of outreach and partnership activities.

## **Responsibilities**

The Courtyard constantly questions how effective we are in identifying what needs to be done to promote community cohesion in our locality taking into account the needs of all our stakeholders. Thus:

- How do we promote the engagement of all our students, particularly those from hard to reach groups such as those from more socio-economically deprived groups, or those looked after children, or those for whom English is an additional language?
- How effective are we in contributing to the cohesiveness of the wider community through developing a wider diversity of learner groups, and in promoting a deeper understanding of the UK community, through a common identity and values? How do we foster in our learners the appreciation and value of diversity, the awareness of human rights and the necessary skills for participating in society?
- How effective is the Courtyard in contributing to the cohesiveness of the wider community through developing learners' understanding of other communities both in Europe and globally?

## **Strategy**

We value our relationship with community groups and our partner schools and develop these links through outreach and collaborative initiatives which aim to develop interaction, mutual respect and understanding through:

- In-service training
- Engagement of community and business leaders to enhance the curriculum and promote aspiration.
- Extended school programme
- Parental support and involvement
- Enrichment programme
- Working with partner schools and other educational institutions

## **Teaching, Learning and the Curriculum**

Promoting community cohesion through teaching, learning and the curriculum is at the heart of the new duty. This is described as 'helping children and young people to learn to understand others, to value diversity and to promote shared values, to gain awareness of human rights and to apply and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action'. Our PSD/Life Skills/Self-discovery curriculum instils and promotes such values. Every subject has a role and a direct relevance to promote community cohesion.

The following areas will also help in meeting the new duty.

### **Courtyard Ethos**

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Disability and Accessibility Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Peer Projects
- Volunteering and mentoring
- Admission arrangements

### **Personalisation Agenda**

- Evaluating progress/attainment of different groups
- Tracking underperformance
- Monitoring of behaviour and of incidents of bullying or discrimination
- Student voice

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting**

Evaluation of this policy will take place every 3 years. This policy is intrinsic to:

- The school improvement plan
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Disability and Accessibility Policy.

The Community Cohesion Policy should:

- Be reviewed and approved by the Governing Body on a 3-yearly basis
- Be hosted on the Courtyard website.