



# Community Engagement Policy

**Author: Headteacher**  
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**We are a rights respecting school. All our policies and procedures are written and reviewed to ensure that children's rights, as detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, are respected and promoted and this policy ensures:**

*Article 3 (best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.*

*Article 5 (parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities) Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and carers to provide guidance and direction to their child as they grow up, so that they fully enjoy their rights. This must be done in a way that recognises the child's increasing capacity to make their own choices.*

For more information on the convention and the rights of each child visit: <http://www.unicef.org.uk/>

# **St Mary & St Thomas Church of England Primary School**

## **Community Engagement Policy**

### **Introduction**

At St Mary & St Thomas C.E. Primary School we recognise the pivotal role we play in developing community cohesion and are committed to supporting this by:

- developing a common vision and sense of belonging;
- developing an appreciation of the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances;
- creating opportunities for all pupils to achieve their potential;
- building strong and positive relationships.

We recognise that migration and economic change is altering the shape of our increasingly diverse local community and that although our school is predominantly mono-cultural we need to prepare our pupils for life in modern Britain and work in a multi-cultural society and world.

The term 'community' has a number of dimensions for us including:

- The school community ~ the pupils it serves, their parents, the staff and school committee and community users of the school's facilities and services;
- The communities created by the networks we establish with schools, colleges, work-based learning providers and other partners;
- The local communities of St Helens, Widnes, Liverpool and Merseyside;
- The U.K. Community;
- The Global Community.

### **How do we contribute towards community engagement?**

We help to build community engagement by:

- Promoting equality of opportunity and an inclusive culture for all pupils, irrespective of background and protected characteristics as defined by law
- Promoting school values and encouraging pupils to engage with views, beliefs and opinions that are different from their own in considered ways and to show respect for the different protected characteristics.

The school's contribution to community engagement can be grouped under three headings:

#### **i) Teaching, learning and curriculum**

Helping pupils to understand others, to value diversity, respect human rights and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.

ii) **Equity and excellence**

To ensure all pupils have equal opportunity to achieve their potential.

iii) **Engagement and extended services**

To provide focused and purposeful opportunities for pupils to interact with people from different backgrounds and cultures;

To contribute to the development of our local communities;

To build links with different schools and communities;

To provide extended services.

**Where are we now?**

Promoting community engagement is already strongly embedded in our existing practice as detailed below, but we are committed to developing this aspect of our work further.

**Teaching, learning and curriculum**

- We are a Multi Academy Trust, closely linked to the Northwest Learning Partnership (NWLP) and Maths Hub, working with all across the Trust and beyond.
- We are an effective school with very high standards of teaching, learning and curriculum provision. We are ambitious for all our pupils and we set challenging individual achievement targets.
- There are opportunities across the taught and wider curriculum to promote shared values and help pupils value differences and to challenge prejudice, discrimination, derogatory language and stereotyping. This is particularly evident in Collective Worship, RE, History, Geography, PSHE & RSE (Personal, Social and Health Education & Relationships and Sex Education), Financial Education, Citizenship programmes and through our Super Leaders Initiative.
- An extensive programme of curricular and extra-curricular activities enrich pupils' understanding of community and diversity through focus days/ weeks and visits including the school residentials, visits to places of worship, our curriculum and opportunities to meet with members of different communities.
- A comprehensive programme of Collective Worship and assemblies which include links to the Fundamental British Values, Christian Values, UNICEF Children's Rights Charter, Sustainable Global Goals, promotion of global awareness days and inputs from members of the local and wider community.

**Equity and Excellence**

- We promote high standards of achievement for all. We set challenging individual targets for all our pupils, monitor their progress regularly and have robust strategies of intervention and support.
- We make sure there are no barriers to achievement and work to remove disparities in attainment between different groups.
- We promote an inclusive, caring, supporting ethos and maintain a highly effective pastoral system.

- We expect the highest standards of behaviour and have effective approaches in place to deal with incidents of prejudice, derogatory language, bullying and harassment.

## **Engagement and Extended Services**

### School to School

- We have extensive links with other schools.
- Through our School PE curriculum and after school clubs and teams, pupils are given the opportunity to go to local primary schools to take part in competitive tournaments.
- Teachers have links with other schools through a range of activities including: The Three Saints Academy Trust, NWLP and Maths Hub & various networks.

### School Parents and the Community

- Pupils have a strong voice and opportunities to take responsibility through our system of pupil leadership opportunities including our Star Leaders initiative.
- Star Leader Groups and other groups of pupils across the school support the local community in various ways e.g. supporting Teardrops foodbank and the Mini Police initiative
- We engage with parents through a range of activities including family learning workshops, parent insight, mentoring conversations, Parent Forum, coffee mornings, family worship opportunities and questionnaires.
- Our Pastoral Team, working with other agencies, is sensitive to the needs of families requiring additional support.
- We have strong links with external agencies including social services, the health service and police.
- We engage with local community groups, providing facilities for activities including training and meetings e.g. Scouts. We have particularly strong links with our local church, a range of local sports clubs and local charities.

### Extended services

The school offers:

- Childcare e.g. breakfast club, after-school club.
- Varied menu of activities, and extra-curricular programmes.
- Swift and easy referral e.g. good links with external agencies.
- Parenting support (see above)
- Community access e.g. use of our facilities by the local community.