

Guidance on the Duty to Promote Community Cohesion

Consultation Response Form

The closing date for this consultation is: 3 July
2007

Your comments must reach us by that date.

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THIS FORM IS NOT INTERACTIVE. If you wish to respond electronically please use the online or offline response facility available on the Department for Education and Skills e-consultation website (<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations>).

The information you provide in your response will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations, which allow public access to information held by the Department. This does not necessarily mean that your response can be made available to the public as there are exemptions relating to information provided in confidence and information to which the Data Protection Act 1998 applies. You may request confidentiality by ticking the box provided, but you should note that neither this, nor an automatically-generated e-mail confidentiality statement, will necessarily exclude the public right of access.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.

Name: Hetan Shah, Director
Organisation (if applicable): Development Education Association (DEA)
Address: River House 143-145 Farringdon Road London EC1R 3AB

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact Alison Calvert on:

Telephone: 0207 925 5519

e-mail: communitycohesion.consultation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit on:

Telephone: 01928 794888

Fax: 01928 794 113

e-mail: consultation.unit@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

Please indicate which ONE of the following best describes you as a respondent.

<input type="checkbox"/> Headteacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Local authority
<input type="checkbox"/> Other government department	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Carer	<input type="checkbox"/> School governor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational association	<input type="checkbox"/> Union	<input type="checkbox"/> Faith body
<input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Please Specify:

The DEA is a national umbrella body with 250 members. It works for education that encourages and enables all people to think critically and to aspire and work towards a more just and sustainable world.

This question relates to section 2 of the draft guidance.

1 From a school's perspective, how helpful are the definition of community cohesion and the description of the term 'community' for schools?

<input type="checkbox"/> Very helpful	<input type="checkbox"/> Helpful	<input type="checkbox"/> Not very helpful
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not at all helpful	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither helpful nor unhelpful	

Comments:

'Community cohesion'

- 'Common vision' is not coherent, it is not consistent with the second sentence about valuing diversity. We need to recognise diversity and work to respond positively to this not recognise diversity then deny it by trying to construct an artificial 'common vision'.
- Diverse perspectives and dialogue between them are essential in responding to the world

'Community'

- The global community would be better described as: 'formed by formal relationships such as with the EU and interdependence across countries and the connections that exist with other people all over the world
- It might be better to separate European Union community from global community

This question refers to section 3.1 of the draft guidance.

2 Do you agree that this broadly describes a school's contribution towards community cohesion?

<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree	

Comments:

- Learning needs to be put in a global context for pupils to make sense of diversity.
- Recognition is needed of diversity within as well as between ‘cultures’
- ‘for other schoolsopportunities for interaction between pupils from different backgrounds’. This needs expertise and support in order to lead to mutual understanding and positive relationships. DfES needs to do more research on what works best in this area.
- Phrases like ‘promote a common sense of identity’ (p1, not this section) can be damaging and alienating when talking about a diverse society where pupils have multiple identities.
- Education cannot be about indoctrination into particular ‘common values’. It must be about providing the language, confidence and safe environment to discuss values. Schools can model particular civic values such as being more democratic. Pupils respect others when they are respected.
- We welcome the mention of pupil participation and human rights and recommend they be strengthened.
- ‘links ... internationally’ – please note that a recent Ofsted report ‘Evaluating internationalism in schools’ (HMI 2683) recommended that “The Department for Education and Skills and the British Council should draw schools’ attention to the importance of promoting understanding of multicultural Britain, as well as internationalism and global awareness, when discussing their application for the ISA [International School Award]”. In other words, this does not happen automatically.

This question refers to section 3.2 of the draft guidance.

3 Are there any other considerations for schools in fulfilling their duty to promote community cohesion?

Yes

No

Not sure

Comments:

- Promoting 'community cohesion' cannot be separate to other work on the curriculum and ethos
- Some of the guidance on international linking (which is also fairly limited and lacking in evidence base) may help schools considering domestic linking, see www.globaldimension.org.uk/default.aspx?id=206.
- (Although we have not seen it, we understand that the DfES/DWP International Unit recently completed an evaluation of their www.globalgateway.org)
- Further work needs to be done to ensure more diverse backgrounds amongst teachers recruited.
- Foundation stage is important in forming children's views on the world and could be explicitly mentioned

This question refers to section 4 in the draft guidance.

4 Would it be helpful to include case studies in the final version of the guidance and do you have a good example of a school that is successful in promoting community cohesion? Please send us any such examples.

Yes

No

x Not Sure

Comments:

- The proposed 'dimensions' to the new QCA secondary curriculum are relevant (and are likely to have case studies)

This question refers to section 5 of the draft guidance.

5 Are there any further sources of information that would be useful for schools to implement the new duty?

x Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

There are useful resources signposted at www.globaldimension.org.uk

This question refers to section 5 of the draft guidance.

6 What training, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and workforce development programmes for community cohesion would schools find useful to support their staff?

Comments:

CPD is very important here. See www.globaldimension.org.uk/cpd for some suggestions.

7 Please use this space if you have any further comments.

Comments:

There is a lack of joined up thinking. Other education and broader government agendas work against 'community cohesion'. For example, 'community cohesion' is not consistent with faith schools or the 'choice agenda'. See, for example, the Runnymede report, "School Choice and Ethnic Segregation - Educational Decision-making among Black and Minority Ethnic Parents".

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply

Here at the Department for Education and Skills we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

xYes

 No

All UK national public consultations are required to conform to the following standards:

1. Consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of the policy.
2. Be clear about what your proposals are, who may be affected, what questions are being asked and the timescale for responses.
3. Ensure that your consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible.
4. Give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy.
5. Monitor your department's effectiveness at consultation, including through the use of a designated consultation co-ordinator.
6. Ensure your consultation follows better regulation best practice, including carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment if appropriate.

Further information on the Code of Practice can be accessed through the Cabinet Office Website: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/consultation-guidance/content/introduction/index.asp>

Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 3 July 2007

Send by post to: Alison Calvert, 4R Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT

Send by e-mail to: communitycohesion.consultation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk