



## **NALDIC Response to Guidance on the Duty to Promote Community Cohesion**

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Naldic recognises that the education system is well placed to educate tomorrow's citizens in terms of knowledge, skills, understanding and values about Britain's diverse society. Through modelled behaviour and social experiences at all educational settings, as well as through taught content, pupils develop their own views and values towards all forms of diversity. Clear explicit expectations on schools to promote debate and to extend pupils' experiences of diversity are welcome. The role of community schools, and how they fit into the new extended schools is a vital part of this picture.

As the national language body, Naldic is especially interested in the aspects of the guidance concerning linguistic diversity. The role and status of Britain's many, and ever-changing community languages has long been a subject of debate, and recent well-publicised comments from senior politicians have caused us concern. Our position is:

- Community languages form an essential aspect of our pupils and their communities' heritage and it is important that the educational system improves its recognition of them, including providing first language materials and other support in the mainstream. Community schools working cohesively with the mainstream are well placed to deliver parts of this agenda.
- The entitlement to learn English must be promoted and catered for, without pressure or compulsion, through high-quality provision which recognises recognised educational theory and best current practice. Schools should be well supported in order to meet a changing need. The erosion of additional funding for pupils with English as an additional language has eroded our capacity, especially by reducing the number of bilingual staff in the system. Opportunities should be offered to improve and extend this provision through extended schools,

Clear messages need to be sent out along with the guidance that tokenistic responses will never promote community cohesion. A systematic, progressive curriculum for learning about diversity needs to start with the pupils' own experience and work its way out. It needs to reflect the school's own context in terms of ethnic, religious, cultural and other diversities, and move beyond into the wider community of Britain as a whole. Increasing emphasis on valuing and promoting linguistic diversity is an essential part of this.