Milton Keynes
City Council

Equality and diversity in Milton Keynes.

Part 2: Information and guidance for schools and settings in Milton Keynes

23 May 2024

Version 3

Content

Foreword

Dear colleagues

I am very pleased to be able to write the foreword to the latest version of Equality and Diversity in Milton Keynes. I am proud of the inclusive, welcoming place that Milton Keynes is in 2024 – and the progress that has been made since this publication was first issued in 2002.

Of course, there is still more work to do. For example, continuing to enhance understanding of the diverse communities across our city and addressing the gaps that persist in critical areas like educational attainment and health outcomes. This comprehensive resource will help us to continue tackling these, and other issues, together. I am grateful to all the colleagues and community groups who have contributed to it.

Michael Bracey Chief Executive
Milton Keynes City Council

Introduction

The first edition of *Equality and Diversity in Milton Keynes* was published in 2002, in response to schools' recognition that the borough and its early years settings and schools had become increasingly diverse. Through continued updates it has provided accessible information about the local diverse black and minority ethnic (BME) communities, their faith backgrounds and language heritages and has become the basis for many schools' understanding of cultural diversity in our borough. *Equality and Diversity* is now used as a training tool across the council acting as a quick reference guide for practitioners who seek to gain a deeper insight into the diverse communities inMilton Keynes. This fourth edition recognises that Milton Keynes is continuing to grow and diversify.

It is set out in two parts.

Part 1: Communities
Background information on three key aspects of diversity: communities andculture, religion and belief, and language backgrounds

Part 2: Information and guidance for schools and settings in Milton Keynes

Apart from the introduction and context neither part is intended to be read cover to cover but is a source of information as need arises. Over time readers will build up a deep understanding of our local communities and how to support them successfully.

Information and guidance relating to the inclusion of children and young people from diverse communities in Milton Keynes schools and settings. Available [here](#).

This publication has been created by the Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) Network, which provides quality support to close attainment gaps for vulnerable and underperforming black and minority ethnic (BME) children and young people across all maintained settings and as a traded offer with academies. This includes children and young people of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller origin.

EMA Network staff work in partnership with early years settings, primary and secondary schools, supplementary schools, local communities and agencies; not only to raise educational standards, but importantly to promote inclusion and community cohesion within schools and across communities. This is through advice and guidance, training, in-school support and maintenance of professional networks and the EMA Network website.

Context

Milton Keynes' growing super-diversity

The proportion of the Black and minority ethnic (BME) school population has grown from 31% in 2010 to 45.51% in 2020 and to 51% in 2023, with proportionately higher growth of the BME communities compared to white British. The growth in the percentage of pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL) from 16.7% in 2010 to 26.08% in 2020 is well above the national averages of 21.3% in primary and 17.1% in secondary. Pupils learning EAL are at a wide range of stages of English language acquisition; from new arrivals, with limited English, to advanced learners who operate at a high level of English, at or above age-related academic expectations. The most recent secure estimate (2018) for the proportion of MK pupils at the early stages of English acquisition is 11.6% of primary aged pupils. Qualitative information indicates that these high numbers have been maintained, but there has been no national data collection since 2018.

Local BME communities have changed from a few well-established Asian, Chinese, Italian and Black Caribbean groups to a diverse range of African, Eastern European, Middle Eastern and other Asian backgrounds. The 2021 census identified ten specific communities numbering over a 1000 in MK with Romanians the largest European group (6189), Ghanaians the largest African group (2017) and Indian the largest South Asian group (3443). The school census indicates that diversity in schools continues to grow, with 51% of pupils from minority ethnic groups in the 2023 school census.

The range of language backgrounds of pupils has grown from 87 spoken in 2008, 129 in 2010, 155 in 2020 to 184 in 2023. This presents opportunities and some challenges for integration and cohesion in schools and across the wider local community.

Milton Keynes Council's equality commitment

Equality, diversity and cohesion lies at the very heart of everything the council does in employing people, providing services to people and in shaping the place they live and work. This is encapsulated in the Council's Equality Vision:

"Improve the way we engage, think, plan and act to deliver equality and accessibility for everyone, every day." (MKCC Equality policy)

Working to a standard beyond compliance to the Equality Act, the Council will consider the impact of its services by actively working to create opportunities and removing barriers. This is what we mean by equality and inclusion.

The Council works with partners to advance equality in Milton Keynes. This includes working with those partners who are not public authorities, but who exercise public functions, to ensure they meet their equalities duties, as set in the Equality Act 2010.

The Council understands that inequality and issues of discrimination are part of a broad and complex social context. The council has adopted a Council Plan, which describes objectives to meet the broader issues of inequality, support for vulnerable people and poverty.

This publication supports the council's equality commitment to:
- Deliver equitable services
- Shape the development of the borough by -
    - understanding the needs and preferences of local people
    - advancing equality of opportunity for individuals and families
    - fostering good community relations, where everyone is treated with respect
- Build a diverse and competent workforce, volunteers and councillors.

The council's equality policy can be found at:
https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections/council-information-and-accounts/accessibility-and-equality/milton

There is a high level of commitment by our settings and schools to provide for diverse needs and all establishments are encouraged to maintain a dedicated co-ordinator of ethnic minority achievement (EMACo).

Information and guidance for schools and settings in Milton Keynes

The EMA Network can provide wide ranging advice to settings and schools on aspects of the inclusion of black and minority ethnic (BME) pupils, including those learningEnglish as an additional language (EAL) and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI).

EMA Network moved to a traded basis in April 2023. Services are outlined on the EM Network web page:
https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong- learning/ethnic-minority-achievement
and via the MKPDC site:
MKPDP - Milton Keynes Professional Development Portal

This information is also relevant for council services and other organisations working with children and young people and their families.

Addressing the pupil or family

Our name is fundamental to our identity. It is vital that everyone who uses it shows the respect it deserves. It is important for the pupil and family's name to be recorded, pronounced and used accurately and with consistency.

School staff should be aware that some pupils' names can become marginalised and undervalued.

- Parents sometimes try not to offend a teacher by allowing their child to be called by a more 'acceptable' (English) name in school, while using his or her real name at home. This creates a division between home and school identity and does not promote inclusion. Pupils often say that they agree to their name being changed out of politeness, rather than willingness. It is helpful to check with parents that the pronunciation of a pupil's name is accurate.
- A pupil's name should not be shortened. This often leads to Anglicisation of the name e.g., Harpreet to Harry; Davinder to Dave; Sudesh to Sue.
- Every effort should be made to pronounce the name correctly, even when it appears difficult or long. Ask for help from the parent or pupil and do not be afraid of making mistakes as you perfect your pronunciation.
- Some pupils may have a different name at home, which is used among family and close friends; for example, those of African and Asian backgrounds. It may be different from their formal name, which has been provided to the school. This can cause some confusion for young children/pupils as it may be the first time they have been addressed by this name. Schools should ask parents which name should be used daily and discuss this with the pupil.
- Pupils often have names which have an important meaning and a significance within their culture. In most cultures, naming a child is a very special occasion, marked and celebrated with ceremony.
- It is important to understand the ordering of family and personal names, to ensure children don't become confused or alienated by traditional English naming conventions. Naming conventions are explained in Part 1: Communities.

Assemblies, collective worship and religious education

Collective worship is legally required to take place every school day and 'shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character' (1988 Education Act). Schools can organise the Act of Collective Worship in a more flexible way than under previous legislation; therefore, it is possible to include the varied religious backgrounds of pupils without compromising their belief. A basic understanding of the principles of the major faiths, as outlined in this document, will ensure that the pupils do not experience conflict. Maintained schools can request a 'determination' from the local SACRE[2] to change their focus from being broadly Christian in character. None have done so in Milton Keynes to date.

All pupils have a spiritual entitlement, which can be found in experiences which evoke the following:

A sense of:
- Awe, wonder and mystery, transience and constant change
- Pattern, order and purpose

An awareness of:
- Their relationship with the natural world
- Relationships with others as feeling, thinking persons
- Community and its demands, values and rituals
- Achievement, celebration and joy
- Loss, sadness and suffering
- Life involving choices: between good and bad, right and wrong, being outgoing and being selfish. Worship which reflects the listed entitlements can be used with pupils from a wide range of religious backgrounds and remain within the law.

Some suggestions to consider:
- Regularly share stories and traditions from around the world, including Gypsy and Traveller culture, so that they are normal and not exotic. Inclusion does not mean celebrating festivals alone.
- Ask children and young people to become involved, and to give advice with planning when using, for example, themes and topical events
- Make comparisons and highlight them, but do not presume commonalities that all faiths worship the same god. This may cause offence and mislead.
- Within each major faith there may be significant variations in belief and practice

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[2] Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

- At prayer time, allow children to pray to their own god, or to think about the meaning of the assembly message
- Be aware that some Muslim children and young people will not be allowed to join in the singing of hymns, Christmas carols or enactments of Biblical scenes. Most Muslim parents will allow their children to sing songs about Christian stories but will not be happy for them to refer to Jesus being the son of God. This is where they deem that it is worship and not curricular learning. It is polite to ask parents if they mind if their children join in and demonstrate how you will be including their cultural background in assemblies. Make sure there is a range of songs, which include all the children and young people. This should be both as part of a school group and at times as a member of an individual cultural background.
- Jehovah's Witnesses believe that religious education is the responsibility of the parents and do not sanction worship of any form in school.

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is an advisory body that advises the Local Authority on matters related to Religious Education and Collective Worship, such as syllabus, teaching methods, materials and teacher training. A local SACRE comprising school representatives and representatives of faith and non-faith groups participate in termly meetings to review Religious Education in the local context.

The SACRE bases its approach towards equality and diversity on the Milton Keynes Council's equality principles and objectives. The key points are to:

- Promote a positive attitude to difference
- Challenge stereotypes
- Communicate directly with local people

SACRE aims to help schools to develop their successful approaches further in including all children and young people and their communities. Some examples of good practice are listed below:
- Opportunities are taken across the curriculum to promote shared values, respect difference, address sensitive and controversial issues, and challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping
- Curriculum based activities enrich and deepen understanding, such as visits to places of worship, meetings with community groups and leaders, community drama and music performances
- Assemblies involve members of the local and wider communities, promoting shared understanding and developing the ethos and values of the school.

The local SACRE has produced an information booklet on collective worship and guidance is available on the SACRE page on the council website: https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/information-for-schools/sacre

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

The terms refugee and asylum seeker are legal terms, which have specific meanings.

A refugee is a person who has left his or her country and is unable to return to it *'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.'*

An asylum seeker is *'a person who has crossed an international border in search of safety and is seeking refugee status in another country'.* It is a temporary position, awaiting a decision upon being granted refugee status from the Home Office. This can take a varying amount of time and can be subject to appeal.

After being granted refugee status in the UK or another European country, people are then free to move about and seek employment anywhere in Europe. They are keen to leave the stigma of the word refugee behind them.

Current situation
Small numbers of asylum seekers from different countries have arrived in Milton Keynes since the borough was created. Since April 2000, the Government's policy of 'dispersal' has resulted in very few new asylum seekers arriving here. Milton Keynes is not a 'dispersal area'; however, some families who have already been granted refugee status elsewhere have moved here to be near to their relations or other members of their community.

Refugee and asylum seeker children could have been either directly or indirectly affected by civil strife. Parents have specified that they want their children's culture to be valued in school, but for example, in the case of the Somali community they do not want them to be taught about the war.

Support strategies for Asylum Seeker and Refugee children and their families

The Human Rights Act 1998(Amendment order 2005), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 and the Education Act 2011 require refugee and asylum seeker children to be provided with education. Refugee and asylum-seeking children under 17 years have the same right to attend school as all other pupils.

- When pupils enrol, schools should ensure that they have local access to healthcare and provide them with information about support agencies. Schools need to be aware of financial hardships that families are likely to experience and signpost them appropriately to organisations that provide support.

The Citizens Advice Bureau has an immigration lawyer who can help with a variety of issues, including clarifying date of birth for pupils without birth certificates. http://www.miltonkeynescab.org.uk/

- Schools should seek appropriate translation facilities for the initial enrolment interview and after the pupils have begun to settle in. This might be by asking another member of the community to help or by using the Milton Keynes language service. The EMA Network can provide current advice on this.
- Information should be given about free school meals
- Schools should ensure that parents understand how the English education system works and the methods to be used to teach their children. They may be very different from their previous experience. The EMA Network can provide information on this. Many pupils will be used to a more formal type of teaching and some will have had no previous formal teaching.
- All staff within school should be aware of the situation the pupils come from and that they need a time of adjustment and coming to terms with being homesick, grieving, missing family members and possibly coping with fear and difficult memories. Refugee pupils may have experienced multiple traumas, added to which they may be experiencing major cultural change.
- Refugee pupils may suffer from racism and need to be clear about the procedure for reporting bullying and racism and their parents made aware of the school's equalities policy. Issues relating to racism and equality should be taught throughout the curriculum.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking or refugee children

The national protocol for the number of unaccompanied asylum seekers (**UASCs**) produces a cap of **69** in Milton Keynes. Currently, over 40 UASC are supported by Milton Keynes Virtual School and Children's Social Care.

The Virtual School team complete an initial UASC personal education plan (PEP) with the support of a translator. They explore the pupil's experience of education, their journey and their current situation in order to identify their education starting point in the UK and what support services they may require in the educational context. The Virtual School works closely with schools and, in the case of post-16 students, MK College.

The MKCC Participation team coordinate activities for UASC residing in Milton Keynes. The Virtual School have sought to provide additional language acquisition opportunities for UASC over summer holiday periods via external tuition partners.

Milton Keynes Virtual School works with pupils from 2-18 years old who are in the care of Milton Keynes. Many of these pupils will have experienced distress, loss and trauma which may influence their development and education. The Virtual School also offers support and advice to parents, schools and social workers working with children who are previously looked after and those on the edge of care.

Afghan and Ukrainian resettlement schemes
As a result of Operation Pitting, the evacuation of 15,000 people from Afghanistan, took place in August 2021. Government schemes include Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), and the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP). People eligible for resettlement continue to arrive in the UK, and those temporarily accommodated in hotels continue to move into settled accommodation. As of 31 August 2023 the Home Office ended its bridging contracts with all bridging hotels and serviced accommodation sites and a new accommodation model has been introduced. For more information, see Afghan bridging hotel exit operational data. Two hotels operated in Milton Keynes providing for over 80 families during the programme. The majority of families moved on to locations outside of Milton Keynes, but some resettlement locally has been possible with Afghan pupils attending 12 Milton Keynes schools in March 2024.

Since the onset of conflict in Ukraine in March 2022, two schemes were introduced to support Ukrainian families. The Homes for Ukraine scheme (14 March 2022) allows individuals, charities, community groups and businesses in the UK to bring Ukrainians to safety – including those with no family ties to the UK. Ukrainians arriving in the UK under this scheme will be granted 3 years leave to remain, with entitlement to work, and access benefits and public services. For more information or to record interest visit the Homes for Ukraine webpage.
The Ukraine Family Scheme allows family members of British nationals, UK settled persons and certain others to come to or stay in the UK.
Around 174,000 people had moved to the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme as of 9 May 2023

Hong Kong Chinese
An immigration route opened on 31 January 2021, providing British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) status holders from Hong Kong and their eligible dependants with the opportunity to come to the UK to live, study and work, on a pathway to citizenship.
This route reflects the UK's historic and moral commitment to those people of Hong Kong who chose to retain their ties to the UK by taking up BN(O) status at the point of Hong Kong's handover to China in 1997.
Funding of up to £850 per adult is available to support access to English language classes for those on the BN(O) route.

Cultural behaviour and practices

Cultural norms vary greatly but there are commonalities in behaviour patterns there are evident among pupils from all cultural backgrounds. Sensitivity to difference is always paramount.

Cultural behaviours may be observed in pupils. However, pupils tend to display universal behaviour patterns as part of the modern day-to-day living and response to interacting with adults and when making a stance or voicing their opinion.

For most cultures, wider family ties are important; grandparents, aunts and uncles may take a central role in bringing up the children. These relatives may be closely involved in educational decision-making. In some cultures, all significant adults are called 'aunty' or 'uncle', or 'brother' or 'sister', as a sign of respect. They may not be a blood relative but may still influence a child's up-bringing.

Culture can be influenced by religion, for example, which may place a high value on modesty, as in the Islamic cultures. This will influence:
- Dress
- Physical contact; especially with members of the opposite sex; for example, a male should not shake hands with a Muslim woman and a female should not offer to shake hands with a male Muslim. If a Muslim person offers their hand to you, it is acceptable to shake it. An act of comfort, such as putting an arm around someone, may cause embarrassment.

Various communities socialise in single-sex groups, while others prefer mixed grouping. Mixed seating in school social events may exclude women who feel uncomfortable sitting amongst men, whereas some people will find being forced apart just as uncomfortable.

Conversely, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils spend a lot of time in adult company and can be comfortable conversing with adults as equals. As a result, pupils may unwittingly seem over-familiar and perhaps disrespectful when interacting with staff members.

It can be impossible to understand all cultural nuances. Hence, it is important to build our own knowledge and understanding of the identity of the people we work with. The mixed messages between home and school may be confusing for pupils and their families; therefore, it is essential to explain expectations and it is vital that we ensure communications are understood. Above all we need to talk with each other and ask questions to learn more.

Dietary requirements

Pupils may follow specific religious dietary observances. It is important that schools are aware of these and that this information is passed on to all school staff, particularly mid-day supervisors. Some parents will inform the school, whereas in some cases the school will be able to make judgements based upon religious background. If there is any doubt parents should be consulted.

When cooked meals are provided by the school it is suggested that they should reflect the culinary background of the pupils. Where possible, halal meat should be provided for Muslim children, although it is recognised that contracts may dictate that this is difficult. Many BME pupils are registered in schools as vegetarian because parents do not want their children to eat prohibited meats.

Most **Hindus** are vegetarian. Many pupils will not eat meat, including foods containing animal derivatives, such as gelatine. As this does not apply to all pupils it is recommended that parents be consulted upon the pupil's entry into school. Hindus do not eat beef. Some Indian pupils may bring 'tiffins' as a packed lunch. Tiffins may contain, for example, chapatti and vegetable dhal curry.

Jewish pupils may only eat Kosher foods, including specially butchered meat and may follow regulations about food combinations. Examples of food which may be precluded are non-Kosher meat, pork products and shellfish, including prawns. Some Jewish people do not eat dairy and meat products in the same meal, and they should be prepared using different utensils.

Practicing **Muslim** pupils only eat Halal meat, which has been specially butchered. They do not eat pork. Some pupils do not eat products which contain animal derivatives such as some gelatine, biscuits, crisps and sweets. Muslim pupils may eat all forms of fish, except shellfish and prawns. All fish is considered to be 'halal'. Food, which is prohibited, is called 'haram'.

Other religious groups have different dietary observations; Seventh Day Adventists, for example, do not eat pork or shellfish.

Dress codes and school uniform

Dress styles often follow religious belief. As in other customs, there will be variation in practice, but styles of dress are often related to culture and country of origin.

Muslim women usually cover their heads, arms and legs. This is different from the normal school dress code. Young girls may be able to wear knee length dresses and may not cover their heads until they reach puberty. This is usually a choice made by the girl herself.

The 'hijab' is the name of the headscarf worn by some Muslim girls and women. They may only take it off at home within the immediate family. Hair will not be visible. Some women wear a 'burka', a black, loose fitting cloak (Jilbab) and headdress, over their clothes when leaving the home. Occasionally women choose to wear the 'niqab' covering their face apart from their eyes.

Good parental consultation can often overcome misunderstandings and there are many examples of solutions. Schools have tended to readily adapt the dress code and allow pupils to wear traditional clothing such as the 'hijab', long skirts or trousers if Muslim and the turban if a Sikh. All items can reflect the colour code of the traditional school uniform. Pupils should be encouraged to feel that it is normal for them to wear their traditional clothing at school as well as at home. Today, it is normal to find that pupils who are third or fourth generation of migrants readily wear the given school uniform without any conflict. This is inclusivity.

Some suggestions are provided below for creating an inclusive dress code:
- Asian salwar (trousers) and kameez (shirt) in school colours if pupils and their parents choose to wear traditional clothing
- The production of a list of uniform items which includes salwar, kameez and hijab scarf and states colour options
- PE uniform includes optional tracksuit bottoms and a long-sleeved T-shirt. Swimwear includes T-shirt and leggings, with a swimming costume underneath.

In general, women of African, Hindu and Sikh origin have similar modesty codes. These include covering heads, arms and legs; however, there is wide variation in choice and practice. Some Christian groups such as women from Pentecostal churches and the Plymouth Brethren, as well as Orthodox Jewish women also follow these modesty codes.

Effective engagement with parents and carers

Research has shown that parents are the first and the most important educators of their children. In certain communities, the first educators may be extended family members. All schools must recognise that they cannot work in isolation and that actively engaging with parents/carers is vital for improved educational and social outcomes for the children and young people. This is particularly important when supporting diverse, disadvantaged and new communities.

Effective home school links are crucial to parental engagement and involvement in their children's learning; however, there are many barriers to parental engagement. Schools need to understand their families and communities in order to identity these barriers and put effective measures in place.

Some barriers to engagement:
- Parents own negative experiences of schools may cause mistrust of the education system
- Parents new to the country may not understand the English school system or their role in supporting their children's learning
- Parents may lack confidence and knowledge of the curriculum subjects or learning styles
- Parents may not understand the importance of their involvement in school life
- Due to language barriers and poor English literacy skills, parents may not understand the communication/ literature provided by the school
- Most of the school/home communication is usually in written form
- Parents may only be involved with schools for negative reasons rather than positive things
- There may be a negative stereotyping of some parents and community groups within the school.

For effective school/parent partnerships, schools need to acknowledge that:
- Parents are their children's first educators and remain key educators throughout their school career and life
- Most parents want to be involved in their children's learning but may not know how to do so
- Parental involvement in a pupil's schooling between ages of 7-16 is more powerful than the size of family and the parents' level of education
- Families and communities play a crucial role in developing identity and self-esteem and this is clearly linked to educational success
- The importance of listening to parental concerns and recognising pupils' achievements in and outside of school.

Many BME parents have very high educational and life aspirations for their children but they may need support to help their children in their learning. In some cultures it is usual for schools to lead education as the experts and parents to only specifically be involved to support a school's actions when requested by the school. Parents may be afraid of causing offense by becoming involved in their children's education.

Key factors for effective school/home partnership

Positive and inclusive school ethos: Successful schools have a clear, positive and inclusive ethos and nurture a culture of mutual respect for learners, staff and the community. Inclusive curriculum and transparent paths to resisting bias and discrimination are embedded. Emphasis is on inclusion rather than exclusion. Effective schools use a range of ways to ensure that parents and carers from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds feel welcomed and respected.

Effective communication to ensure two-way dialogues: Successful schools have two-way strong communication with their parents and the wider community. This is achieved in many ways, such as: prompting strong parental/pupil voice; linking with supplementary schools; ensuring staffing reflects the school community; an open door policy; initiating communication; staff training; monitoring attendance and actively approaching hard to reach parents to become more involved in different ways.

Strategic drive for parental involvement and engagement: Successful schools with strong leadership have been key in driving the development of home school links. Effective strategies have included:

- Ensuring that the inclusion and engagement of parents is driven strategically and at the forefront of the school improvement plan
- Identification of vulnerable BME parents/groups through data and targeted support
- Robust school policies in creating inclusion and equal opportunities
- Structured support for parents to ensure they understand the school's approach to learning and teaching and participate as key partners, e.g. organising reading or writing partnership training; parent workshops (bilinguals where necessary) for home learning, ICT, ESOL
- Setting clear expectations of the school and the parents from the beginning
- Obtaining accurate background information of schools' families through a strong induction procedure
- Ensuring the role of EMA co-ordinator is a strategic and leadership role
- Staff training in raising the attainment of BME pupils is prioritised
- Support staff or Parent Ambassadors (see below) work with new arrivals and engage parents and the school to work together.

Community cohesion and local research

A successful bid for funding from the Ministry for Communities, Housing and Local Government (MHCLG) led to the Creating Cohesive Secondary Communities (CCSSC) project and the appointment of Parent Ambassadors in 11 secondary schools and MK College in 2018. The Parent Ambassador is a flexible role that allows the setting to target the most vulnerable parents and pupils. In all cases this has included working with BME pupils and their parents and in most cases involved work with disadvantaged white British pupils and their parents. The training, provided by the EMA Network, was extended to primary schools. The project has generated an extensive range of materials and guidance, including those relating to parental engagement and involvement that have specific relevance to BME communities. For more information contact the EMA Network or explore the EMA Network webpages.

The Equality Act and dealing with prejudice-based incidents and hate crime

This section explains the statutory responsibilities of settings and schools to ensure equality for all children, staff, parents and the communities they represent. They are held responsible under the duties of the 'Equality Act (2010)' and the 'Duty to promote community cohesion'.[3]

Equality Act (2010)
The Equality Act was created to simplify the previous Acts of Parliament and a range of legislation, replacing the existing anti-discriminatory laws with a single act, which is easy to access and understand. It aims to remove inconsistencies and harmonise definitions across the protected characteristics, to create common approaches.
It is unlawful to discriminate against anyone with the following protected characteristics:

- Age* [4]

- Gender reassignment

- Being married or in a civil partnership*

- Being pregnant or on maternity leave*
- Disability
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin

- Religion or belief

- Sex

- Sexual orientation.

Ofsted will consider how schools teach pupils about the protected characteristics. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-teaching-of-the-protected-characteristics-in-schools/inspecting-teaching-of-the-protected-characteristics-in-schools

An example of where the equality duty comes into play is around permanent exclusions. 2018-19 data showed a continued steady reduction in Milton Keynes' schools; however,

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[3] The Ofsted Education Inspection Framework, May 2019 emphasises the compliance with the Equality Act as a key area that inspectors will scrutinise to see how well schools comply with the legal requirement to implement the act and ensure community cohesion.

[4] * Protection against these protected characteristics does not apply to pupils in schools, but does the adults working in the school and parents/carers.

certain communities continue to raise concerns and record exclusions significantly higher than white British pupils. Gypsy Roma pupils (0.39%), Irish traveller pupils (0.27%) and Black Caribbean pupils (0.25%) have a particularly significant permanent exclusion rate compared to white British pupils (0.1%). The lowest permanent exclusion rates, 0.01%, continue to attribute to Chinese and Indian pupils.

The Public Sector Equality duty

This refers to the 'Equality Duty' (PSED) which the public sector, including schools, is duty-bound to fulfil.

The act provides clear and consistent protection through three general duties, where public bodies must pay 'due regard' to the need to:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
3. Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having 'due regard' means consciously thinking about the three aims of the general duty as part of the process of decision-making. This means that consideration of equality issues must influence the decisions reached by settings and schools in how they act as employers; develop, evaluate and review policy; design, deliver and evaluate services; and how they commission and procure from others.

Having 'due regard' to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves considering the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.

The act extends the scope of legislation to include the use of positive action.

Complying with the general duty may involve taking positive actions, for example:

- Making provision specific for the advancement of opportunity for certain under-represented, under-achieving children or for those facing difficulties
- Building good community relations through awareness of minority or majority cultures.

Terminology

Race includes: (a)colour; (b)nationality; (c)ethnic or national origins
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/9

Religion means any religion and a reference to religion includes a reference to a lack of religion

Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and a reference to belief includes a reference to a lack of belief.
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/10

The general duty is underpinned by **specific duties for schools** which provide a framework to help schools meet the general duty. The specific duties require schools to:

1. **Publish information about their performance on equality, so that the public can hold them to account**
- Schools must publish information to show that they have considered the three aims of the general duty across their functions
- The information published must include information on the effect that the school's policies and practices have on equality for service users, and (for those with 150 or more staff) on equality for their employees. Schools with 150 or more staff are expected to publish information on significant and long-standing inequalities, such as the gender pay gap and the proportion and distribution of disabled employees and staff from minority ethnic communities.
- To comply with the general duty, schools need to understand how their policies and practices will influence outcomes and affect equality for different groups. This involves looking at evidence and includes engaging with staff, pupils and parents. It will mean considering the effect of what the school does on the whole community.
- Schools must publish this information in a manner that is accessible to the public. This means it should be available not just to pupils and parents, but also to other interested parties and stakeholders. It does not have to be formally published but must be in a format which they could provide to a member of the public on request.

2. **Set one or more specific, measurable equality objectives**
- Schools should publish at least one equality objective that will help the school to further the aims of the general duty, based upon equality evidence and analysis. Objectives must be specific and measurable. Subsequent objectives and accompanying information must be prepared and published at least every four years.

- These objectives will enable the school to meet the general duty outlined in Section 149 of the Equality Act, for instance by improvements in the following areas:
  a. Dealing with and eliminating prejudiced based incidents
  b. Closing the gap in attainment for all children
  c. Engagement with local communities
  d. Policies and practices that promote equality and address inequities.

Community cohesion and equalities

The term "community cohesion" means 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 peoples' backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; where similar life opportunities are available to all; and where strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in settings and schools, the workplace and in the wider community.

Whilst the legal duty to promote community cohesion in schools is still in place, the explicit requirement on Ofsted to monitor compliance has been removed. Ofsted is still required to report on the following:
- Behaviour and attitudes and how well the school handles prejudice-related bullying; the use of offensive language and exclusion data linked to the protected characteristics
- Personal development with a specific focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils and on how well the school meets the needs of diverse groups of pupils, particularly in terms of access to the curriculum and cultural capital in order to achieve positive future life opportunities. The groups include those protected under the Equality Act and additionally pupils who are living in poverty and are eligible for free school meals and in receipt of Pupil Premium funding and children in care.
- Leadership and management, with consideration of incidents of bullying or prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour linked to safeguarding, and the role of governors/trustees in ensuring that the school fulfils the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Milton Keynes' settings and schools have already developed successful approaches to including all pupils and their communities. Some examples of good practice are listed below:
- Opportunities are taken across the curriculum to promote shared values, respect difference, address sensitive and controversial issues, and challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping
- Curriculum based activities are used to enrich and deepen understanding, such as visits to places of worship, meetings with community groups and leaders, and community drama and music performances.

- Assemblies which involve members of the local and wider communities promote shared understanding and the development of the ethos and values of the school
- Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) and the effective removal of barriers to learning for pupils from vulnerable and underperforming BME groups is a priority
- Targeted engagement with parents and provision of translation, where appropriate, results in increased involvement in school.

Settings and schools should consider the following:
- Self-evaluation of their effectiveness in meeting diverse needs
- How far they have closed the achievement gap between their vulnerable and underperforming groups and both others in their school and all pupils nationally. They should consider how they have, and can further, remove barriers to access, learning, participation, progression and attainment.
- How their school's ethos and curriculum develop pupils' common values of citizenship; based on dialogue, mutual respect and acceptance of diversity and their ability to contribute to good community relations
- Their success in challenging and eliminating discrimination and inequality.

Hate Crime
Hate crime can fall into one of three main types:
- physical assault
- verbal abuse
- incitement to hatred

Physical assault
Physical assault of any kind is an offence. If you've been a victim of physical assault you should report it. Depending on the level of the violence used, a perpetrator may be charged with common assault, actual bodily harm or grievous bodily harm.

Verbal abuse
Verbal abuse, threats or name-calling can be a common and extremely unpleasant experience for minority groups.
Victims of verbal abuse are often unclear whether an offence has been committed or believe there is little they can do. However, there are laws in place to protect you from verbal abuse.

Incitement to hatred
The offence of incitement to hatred occurs when someone acts in a way that is threatening and intended to stir up hatred. That could be in words, pictures, videos, music, and includes information posted on websites.
Hate content may include:
- messages calling for violence against a specific person or group

- web pages that show pictures, videos or descriptions of violence against anyone due to their perceived differences
- chat forums where people ask other people to commit hate crimes against a specific person or group
Find out more about what constitutes an on-line offence: Internet Hate Crime - True Vision (report-it.org.uk)

Hate incident

Any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.

Evidence of the hate element is not a requirement. You do not need to personally perceive the incident to be hate related. It would be enough if another person, a witness or even a police officer thought that the incident was hate related.

How to get help and report a Hate Crime (True Vision)

True Vision is a national police scheme to help victims of hate crime report the incident and get the help and advice they need. Wherever you are in the UK, if you've witnessed or been the victim of hate crime you can report it using the True Vision online or downloadable form. Visit report-it.org.uk to find out more.

Thames Valley Police have further information on how to report a hate crime.

School attendance – term time holidays and extended leave

School Attendance | Milton Keynes City Council (milton-keynes.gov.uk)

Currently, all Milton Keynes schools have their own attendance policies and are responsible for managing pupil attendance. Parents should refer to the attendance policy at their child's school for information.

Regular attendance at school is vital to help children achieve and get the best possible start in life. Children who frequently miss school often fall behind. In fact, there is a strong link between regular school attendance and achieving good grades at GCSE - having an attendance rate of 80% is equivalent to missing a day a week.

Children must receive a full time education between the school term after their fifth birthday and the last Friday in June in the school year they turn 16 (Y11). If a child fails to attend school regularly the parents may be guilty of a criminal offence and this could result in a prosecution. The NHS has produced guidance for parents on what to do if their child too ill for school. Is my child too ill for school? - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

Authorised and unauthorised absence
If a child cannot attend school, the parents should contact the school as early as possible to explain why the child needs to be absent and to obtain permission to ensure the absence is authorised.

Only the school can authorise a child's absence. An authorised absence is where the school has given approval in advance or has accepted an explanation for the absence afterwards. In most cases this will be due to a child being ill. If your child has a lot of absence due to illness the school may ask for GP or other medical evidence to enable them to make a decision about authorising the absence.

If the school does not accept the reason for absence or no reason is given the absence will be marked as "unauthorised" and the parents will be at risk of prosecution or of receiving another financial sanction.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance
In Milton Keynes, as well as nationally, we are seeing an increase in children and young people experiencing difficulty in attending school due to emotional reasons like anxiety. Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a broad umbrella term used to describe this. EBSA can present differently across individuals, but can often involve fear and anxiety, misery, complaints of feeling ill without an obvious cause, and/or reluctance to leave home. You can read more about EBSA here.

Medical appointments
Parents are encouraged to arrange appointments during school holidays, at weekends or after school hours. When this is not possible, parents should try to give as much advance warning as possible and take the appointment letter or card into school to ensure they are aware of the absence and the reasons for it.

Religious festivals
Parents should approach the school in advance for time off for religious reasons. Only the day of the actual religious festival/celebration will be "authorised"

Exceptions
It's important to acknowledge that children with long-term medical or more serious mental health conditions, and those with special educational needs and disabilities may face additional barriers. For children who face complex barriers to attendance, schools should have sensitive conversations with children and families and work with them to put support in place for their individual needs.

If a child is facing barriers to school attendance due to special education needs or disabilities (SEND), schools, local authorities and wider services are required to work together to provide the right support in the first place.

Summary
A child must attend every day that the school is open, unless:

- A child is too ill to attend that day.
- Parents have asked in advance and been given permission by the school for their child to be absent on that day due to exceptional circumstances.
- A child cannot attend school on that day because it is a day when they are taking part in religious observance.
- The local authority is responsible for arranging your child's transport to school and it is not available on that day or has not been provided yet.
- They are a gypsy/traveller family with no fixed abode, and they are required to travel for work that day meaning their child cannot attend their usual school.

Proposed changes to attendance regulations - The Education Hub, DofE.
[Fines for parents for taking children out of school: What you need to know - The Education Hub (blog.gov.uk)](#)

The government is introducing a **new national framework** which will mean all councils have the same rules in place for when they need to consider a fine. Under the new national framework, all schools will be required to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons.

From August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country will be £80 if paid

within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days. Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. Where prosecuted in court because their child hasn't been attending school, a fine can be issued up to £2,500.
The vast majority of fines for unauthorised absence (89%) are issued for term time holidays.

For more information about school procedures visit the school attendance site at: http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/school-attendance or contact the school attendance team at attendance@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

Festivals

The EMA Network informs schools of the main religious festivals which may be celebrated by the various communities in Milton Keynes. Festival timetables are on-line or through the EMA Network (ema@milton-keynes.gov.uk)
Festivals are important to all communities and schools should acknowledge and develop an awareness of these significant events in the lives of their pupils. Whilst it is valuable to have planned curriculum-based recognition, it is equally vital for staff to express an interest in the pupils' involvement on a personal level. Sensitivity should be shown towards the wishes of pupils to be identified/not identified in the school community as a participant in a particular festival or rite.

Learning about festivals should be taught within a broad and balanced curriculum, which reflects pupils' daily cultural/religious experiences. In some cases, parents may request absence for one day of a festival. This may be authorised. Further detailed information is available from the school admissions team or the EMA Network.

The Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter hold a significant place in UK culture and are designated national holidays. However, there is a range of other Christian festivals celebrated throughout the year that are of significance to certain Christian groups and of immense cultural importance. Eastern Orthodox churchgoers often observe a different calendar for traditional celebrations, so may celebrate outside of national holidays.

The main festivals celebrated by Jews include Passover, Rosh Hashanah, Purim and Yom Kippur. The commonly celebrated festivals by Sikhs include Baisakhi, Diwali, Birthday and Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev. Hindus main festivals include Diwali and the New Year Day (day after Diwali) and the main Buddhist festivals include Vesak (Buddha Day) and Dhammacakka Day.

Schools should use their discretion where a parent does not belong to a religious body, as they may want to celebrate an alternative festival that they feel is important to them, such as Pagan or Wicca festivals.

Ramadan and Eid
The two main festivals celebrated by Muslims are Eid-ul-fitr (marking the end of Ramadan) and Eid-ul-Adha (marking the end of Hajj). These Muslim celebrations occur according the lunar calendar in different countries and it is difficult to predict when pupils may need to be absent from school until very close to the day itself. For example, Eid-ul-fitr and Eid-ul-Adha come 10 days earlier every year and can change according to when the moon is sighted; however, there may be occasions when a festival falls twice in a calendar year.

Due to its significant effect on school life Ramadan may also be of importance for schools and teachers' awareness.

- Ramadan is a lunar month of fasting that Muslims observe and is obligatory from the age of about twelve, although some children may choose to do a day or two at a younger age
- The fast starts at the break of dawn and ends at sunset. Between these times, Muslims do not eat or drink.
- There are exceptions to fasting for pregnant women and girls menstruating, nursing mothers and people who are travelling or ill
- Children may be tired because the family routine has changed. The whole household will wake earlier and go to bed later, particularly during the summer.

There is no evidence of negative effects of Ramadan. Schools should expect pupils to continue their normal work, but aspects of the curriculum could cause some problems for them. This might include energetic PE lessons, swimming - where a child might swallow water, tasting activities in science, television - as some families may not watch television in Ramadan, and music when singing is best avoided.

The celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr marks the end of fasting. Eid means that it is an Islamic festival and Fitr means that it is the breaking of the fast. It is sometimes known as 'Little Eid.'

Fasting happens in various religious groups and schools will understand issues better in consultation with parents, but suggestions include:

- Informing parents how pupils who are fasting will be supported in school
- Maintaining a daily register of pupils who are fasting in primary schools
- Discussing with parents if younger pupils who are fasting become distressed
- Making lunchtime provision for fasting pupils who stay at school
- Pupils should be allowed to bring prayer mats and slippers if required
- Checking the short-term planning to ensure that activities do not cause pupils to involuntarily break the fast or undergo undue exertion.

Shia Muslim pupils will be expected to take a day off school on the day of 'Ashura'. In addition, they observe the 40th day after the event of Ashura and pupils will be expected to take a day off school. During this Islamic month, known as Muharram, birthdays and special occasions will not be celebrated. Ashura falls on the 10th day of Muharram.

If a school has a significant population celebrating a festival the school may use this opportunity to celebrate a festival as a whole school community to help to improve understanding of, and respect for, other faiths and promote community cohesion.

Local Initiatives: LGBTQ+ forum

Q:HUB

Q:Hub is an early support Hub exclusively for LGBTQ+ young people aged 13-19 years. Q:Hub is a safe space for young people to access support for their mental health and wellbeing, without needing a referral or appointment. The sessions are provided by Q:alliance: https://www.qalliance.org.uk/

Q:alliance also facilitates the Q:YOUTH group (13-18) that provides a "fun and supportive space for the LGBTQ+ youth community": qyouthmk@qalliance.org.uk

Q:alliance MK facilitates a termly **LGBTQ+ School Forum** which addresses challenges, celebrates success and provides information and guidance.

Q:alliance MK also has dedicated youth support, youth outreach and school outreach workers.

EMA Network is mindful of the cultural challenges that might present themselves where new arrivals in the country have come from situations where gender issues and sexual preferences are subject to different laws and opinions. Q:alliance works with schools and settings to prepare for current and future challenges; and to celebrate Milton Keynes diversity.

Local Initiatives: MK Music Hub

Music Hub outreach

MK Music Hub offers support to a range of vulnerable groups both in and out of the school setting. Recent examples include working with the Ukrainian community and with the MK LGBTQ+ schools forum to provide music experiences to bring people together and provide emotional support. If there are vulnerable children/young people who would benefit from nurture or music activities, email the music@milton-keynes.gov.uk or explore their webpage Music Hub for more information.

MK Music Hub's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy was developed by Dr Phil Mullen alongside regional partners and agreed by the Hub Board in June 2021. The 4-year strategy and outlines clear targets to be achieved each year. At the suggestion of the Hub Board priorities are extracted from the targets for each year. New priorities are identified each year and approved by the Board.

Current strategies include:

- Joint Co-op/hub bursary for instrumental lessons for children

- Concessions for Music Centre membership and Instrument Hire

- Underground project and Open music group funded by Music Hub

- Participation in the government's Holiday activities with food

- Nurture group projects in schools and at Ukraine supplementary school

- Regular reminders to schools that Pupil Premium can be to fund instrumental lessons

- Funding Children Looked After to have instrumental lessons

- Offering Rap, Hip Hop and Grime sessions to vulnerable groups of young people both in and out of the school environment

Newly arrived and new to English

Milton Keynes' schools regularly welcome overseas pupils at different stages of their education. They bring with them a cultural heritage and unique set of experiences that enrich the cultures of our schools and communities. Recognising and celebrating this diversity is important in helping a pupil adjust and engage, while retaining their cultural identity and individuality. Cultural awareness training and guidance on ensuring the well-being and support of newly arrived overseas pupils is available from the EMA Network.

Schools receiving overseas pupils should inform the EMA Network using the EMA new arrivals notification form on the MKCC website.

Admissions
On admitting an overseas newly arrived pupil to school a comprehensive induction process ensures vital information is acquired early and that transition to a new school system runs as smoothly as possible. Information gathering needs to continue over time as parents are sometimes unable or reluctant to provide information that can help the school in meeting the child's needs. Parents may initially be reluctant to identify their child's first language as other than English or acknowledge that a child has special educational needs. Gaining the confidence of parents may take time but is vital to ensuring that a child's needs are fully recognised and addressed.

Induction checklist:
- Gather as much information as possible before and after arrival. An extended admissions form is helpful.
- Prioritise pupil well-being over academic attainment
- Address potential barriers:
    - limited vocabulary and knowledge of language structures required for a specific task
    - unfamiliar subject context
    - new teaching style
    - lack of confidence
    - unwelcoming environment
- Maintain a dialogue with parents.

English as an additional language (EAL)
Most newly arrived overseas pupils will come from a school or country where little or no English is used. Children born in the United Kingdom may also have had limited exposure to English before starting school. Pupils are described as having "English as an additional language" (EAL) to acknowledge that they have language proficiency in

their dominant language. Some pupils with EAL are confident speakers of several languages. The Milton Keynes 2023 school census identified 156 languages and dialects spoken by pupils.

Schools are encouraged to view English language acquisition as distinct from national curriculum English and to track progress using a dedicated language acquisition framework such as that provided by the Bell Foundation. These EAL language acquisition frameworks ensure that planning for EAL learners reflects their needs all the way through to academic English competency. EAL learners may develop the language of social interaction very quickly, but the "academic" language required to fully engage with the curriculum may take many years in the education system to acquire. A Bell Foundation commissioned report (February 2020) found that: "even six years after starting Reception as New to English (entry level Proficiency in English), two-thirds of pupils still have not transitioned to Competent or Fluent; which means that they have not gained the academic linguistic proficiency to fully access the curriculum and achieve their potential. For the 31% who do progress from New to English to Competent whilst at primary school, it takes, on average, 4.6 years to make the transition"[5].

Overseas parents with EAL are encouraged to develop their English skills to better support their children and to enhance their own opportunities. Community Learning Milton Keynes (CLMK) offers a range of English courses for adults; in many cases these are free to learners. Several Milton Keynes' schools have provided their own English courses for parents, either as informal classes during the school day or as more formal ESOL classes after school.

Migration to the UK
The Immigration Bill set to be introduced in January 2021, places EU and non-EU citizens on a level footing. The new system will be points based and encourage those earning higher salaries. The expected general salary threshold of £25,600 will make it more difficult for lower income bracket migrants to achieve the necessary points total.

Uncertainty concerning residency status following Brexit may be a cause of anxiety for pupils and their families. The rights and status of EU, EEA and Swiss citizens living in the UK will remain the same until 30 June 2021 (EEA includes the EU countries and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway).

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[5] Lindoff and Strand (Feb 2020) English as an Additional Language: Proficiency in English, educational achievement and rate of progression in English language learning. University of Oxford.

Uncertainty concerning residency status following Brexit may be a cause of anxiety for pupils and their families. The rights and status of EU, EEA and Swiss citizens living in the UK will remain the same until 30 June 2021 (EEA includes the EU countries and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway).

To continue living and working in the UK after 30 June 2021, EU, EEA and Swiss citizens must make an application under the EU Settlement Scheme to gain "settled" or "pre-settled" status.

The Home Office has opened a new voluntary immigration scheme – the European temporary leave to remain (Euro TLR) Scheme – to provide a route to apply for this immigration status. Successful applicants to the Euro TLR scheme will be granted a period of 36 months' leave to remain in the UK, running from the date the leave is granted. EU citizens and their family members will be able to move to the UK and live, study, work and access benefits and services as entitled, but will need to apply for a UK immigration status granting them permission to stay.

Safeguarding

Milton Keynes Council is committed to making sure that everyone living in Milton Keynes is safe and protected and that our specific statutory responsibilities to safeguard children and vulnerable adults are effectively met (MKC Equalities policy).

Safeguarding issues may occur in BME communities as a result of cultural differences, particularly if the families are new to the country. Maintaining a high profile for safeguarding is critical as recent migrants may be genuinely unaware of UK law and procedures, and established communities may feel challenged by cultural differences.

Many Milton Keynes' settings and schools:
- Use the admission interview to emphasise policy and legal requirements regarding behaviour management and gender equality
- Offer parenting courses or parents' meetings that include reference to aspects such as physical chastisement and gender equality
- Send home information regarding safeguarding and include it on their website
- Establish relationships with local community and faith leaders to explore and promote key messages regarding safeguarding.

Safeguarding in Milton Keynes

The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) brings together Children's Social Care with other professionals to deal with concerns about the safety and well-being of a child

The MASH has a core team of representatives from Children's Social Care, police, health and adult safeguarding. It also has links with education, probation, housing, youth offending team and CAMHS (Child and adolescent mental health).

The council is part of the Milton Keynes Together Safeguarding Partnership, which is the key statutory mechanism for ensuring organisations in Milton Keynes work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

MK Together is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of partnership work across organisations and it monitors how local services and professionals cooperate in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people across Milton Keynes.

Safeguarding: Extremism and radicalisation – the Prevent Duty

Prevent is the government's counter-terrorism initiative aimed at the early identification of behaviour and attitudes that might lead to radicalisation and extremism.

Prevent operates in a pre-criminal space, providing support and re-direction to vulnerable individuals at risk of being groomed into terrorist activities before any crimes are committed. Radicalisation could be comparable to other forms of harm and abuse. It is therefore considered a safeguarding issue and thought of alongside the wider safeguarding agenda.

Prevent aims to challenge all forms of terrorism, including the influence of far-right extremists. It defines **extremism** as *'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs'*. The definition of extremism includes calls for the death of members of our armed forces.

Radicalisation is defined by the UK government within this context as *'the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups'.*

Channel

Channel is a multi-agency programme which provides support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Channel provides a mechanism at an early stage, for assessing and supporting people who may be targeted / or radicalised by violent extremists.
Milton Keynes has an established Channel Panel. This meets regularly in a secure environment to discuss cases of concern.

If there are concerns about someone being radicalised, the Thames Valley police Prevent team should be contacted at PreventReferrals@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or through the Anti-Terrorist Hotline**:** 0800 789 321

Faith or belief linked abuse

Abuse linked to faith or belief is where concerns for a child's welfare have been identified, and could be caused by, a belief in witchcraft, spirit or demonic possession, ritual or satanic abuse features; or when practices linked to faith or belief are harmful to a child. Examples include:
- Abuse as a result of a child being accused of being a 'witch'
- Abuse as a result of a child being accused of being possessed by 'evil spirits'
- Ritualistic abuse which includes prolonged sexual, physical and psychological abuse
- Satanic abuse which is carried out in the name of 'Satan' and may have links to cults
- Any other harmful practice linked to a belief or faith

Child abuse linked to faith or belief is not confined to one faith, nationality or ethnic community. Examples have been recorded worldwide across various religions including Christians, Muslims and Hindus. The number of known cases suggests that only a small minority of people who believe in witchcraft or spirit possession go on to abuse children and adults.

Indicators of child abuse linked to faith or belief include the following:
- Physical injuries, such as bruises or burns (including historical injuries/scaring)
- A child reporting that they are or have been accused of being 'evil', and/or that they are having the 'devil beaten out of them'
- The child or family may use words such as 'kindoki', 'djin', 'juju' or 'voodoo' - all of which refer to spiritual beliefs
- A child becoming noticeably confused, withdrawn, disorientated or isolated and appearing alone amongst other children
- A child's personal care deteriorating (e.g. rapid loss of weight, being hungry, turning up to school without food or lunch money, being unkempt with dirty clothes)
- It may be evident that the child's parent or carer does not have a close bond with the child
- A child's attendance at school or college becomes irregular or there is a deterioration in a child's performance
- A child is taken out of a school altogether without another school place having been arranged
- Wearing unusual jewellery /items or in possession of strange ornaments/scripts.

How to report belief or faith-based abuse
Concerns should be referred to the school's designated safeguarding lead in line with school policy. If there is a suspicion that child abuse is taking place, inform the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub or report directly to Thames Valley Police: How to report possible child abuse page.

If a non-professional wants to express concerns, they can email children@milton-keynes.gov.uk

There are several laws in the UK that allow the prosecution of those responsible for abuse linked to faith or belief. One of the biggest challenges is raising awareness and encouraging victims and witnesses to come forward.

For more information about abuse linked to faith or belief, go to the Thames Valley Police webpage: https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/caa/child-abuse/faith-based-abuse/

Conflicting cultural and faith practices and beliefs may present significant challenges to schools in the pursuit of their safeguarding duty. Factors such as isolation and conflicting ideologies are well described in the NSPCC's Culture and faith: learning from case reviews: https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1332/learning-from-case-reviews_culture-and-faith.pdf.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)
FGM is a practice stemming from the cultural traditions of certain communities. FGM is a deeply embedded social norm, practised by families for a variety of complex reasons. It is often thought to be essential for a girl to become a proper woman.

FGM is not an issue that can be decided on by personal preference – it is an illegal, extremely harmful practice and a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. (Department of Health, May 2016)

Milton Keynes operates a joint approach to reducing Female Genital Mutilation in the local community and runs a range of operations addressing and responding to community priorities in this area. In January 2017 a six-month community led pilot project named 'Be Bold' commenced, engaging in targeted work with local communities to try and promote zero tolerance to FGM.
Two of the key outcomes of the 'Be Bold' project include:
• Establishing a local network of community parent and youth champions and a peer led support group to support change within communities, by communities
• Gaining a closer understanding of the health needs of those affected by FGM.

Background (World Health Organisation Feb 2017)
• Female genital mutilation (FGM) includes procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons
• The procedure involves the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other damage to the genital organs
• The procedure has no health benefits for girls and women
• Procedures can cause severe bleeding and problems urinating, and later cysts, infections, as well as complications in childbirth and increased risk of new-born deaths
• More than 200 million girls and women alive today have been cut in 30 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia where FGM is concentrated
• FGM is mostly carried out on young girls between infancy and age 15
• FGM is a violation of the human rights of girls and women.

In July 2020, the government released revised [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation](#) (FGM). The guidance is clear and comprehensive, including definitions, the legal situation, duties, and background information on countries where FGM is an established cultural practice. It reports that an estimated that 103,000 women aged 15-49 and approximately 24,000 women aged 50 and over who have migrated to England and Wales are living with the consequences of FGM. In addition, approximately 10,000 girls aged under 15 who have migrated to England and Wales are likely to have undergone FGM.

FGM and the law
FGM is illegal in England and Wales under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. As amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015, the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 now includes:
• An offence of failing to protect a girl from the risk of FGM; (refers to persons with parental or carer responsibility for the girl)
• Extra-territorial jurisdiction over offences of FGM committed abroad by UK nationals and those habitually (as well as permanently) resident in the UK
• Lifelong anonymity for victims of FGM;
• FGM Protection Orders which can be used to protect girls at risk; and
• A mandatory reporting duty which requires specified professionals to report known cases of FGM in under 18s to the police.

Procedural information is provided in the government's '[Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation](#)'. Teachers have a duty to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health.

Settings and schools' ethos

A setting or school's ethos and culture is made up of many unique characteristics: school aims and visions, demonstration of high academic and educational aspirations for all pupils, shared beliefs and attitudes, and relationships between stakeholders and responsibilities modelled and embedded within the whole school community. It needs to be clear, positive and inclusive for all.

How the setting or school ethos is perceived and practised is an important factor in achieving the positive outcomes for pupils. A strong sense of nurturing, inclusiveness and community feeling plays a crucial role in pupils' wellbeing, engagement and achievement in settings and schools.

Pupils, staff and parents/carers and the wider school community all need to be stakeholders in deciding the qualities which contribute to the school's sense of identity and togetherness. The school community needs to work actively to promote tolerant beliefs and behaviours in order to create a fair, respectful and inclusive learning community for all.

Aspects to consider are how your setting or school:
- Encourages, celebrates and values the diverse cultural, religious and traditional backgrounds of your school community
- Values and promotes the significance of home languages and culture
- Supports all parents to take a more active role in their children's learning
- Designs the curriculum to reflect the community and allow full access to all its pupils
- Initiates and maintains strong communication with all parents, promote an active parental and pupil voice
- Challenges bias and promotes equal opportunity for all
- Maintains high expectations and aspirations for all its pupils
- Delivers and monitors the engagement of all groups in wider school activities
- Knows and understands pupils' experiences outside the mainstream context.

School visits and extra-curricular activities

When organising school visits and extra-curricular activities schools should work closely with parents/carers and be sensitive to cultural differences and expectations. Parents need to be reassured that their children's needs will be respected. As long as schools know their pupils' backgrounds and cultures well, planning for visits and extra-curricular activities is an extension of the good practice they follow in the school day.

For all pupils the following apply, and schools should:
- Be sensitive to pupils' dietary requirements. If pupils usually bring packed lunches, schools may not be fully aware. Check if venues can provide halal, kosher and vegetarian options.
- For pupils from all cultures where modest dress is expected there should be single sex changing facilities. Some pupils will only be comfortable in individual changing facilities.

Consideration should be given to the following when organising trips for Muslim pupils:
- Ensure that parents are made aware of the objectives and purpose of the trip. Class outings for educational purposes should not generally pose any problems for Muslim pupils and their parents. For overnight residential trips, Muslim parents would be more comfortable with single gender groups.
- Be aware that some activities may require parental consent; e.g. swimming, dress codes and changing facilities
- Reflect on how to include pupils in shared refreshments; for example, if giving a sweet treat make sure they do not contain gelatine so that all pupils can have the same things
- Think about planning social interaction and grouping; for example, some Muslim pupils may not be able to participate in some mixed gender activities where there is physical contact
- Muslim pupils may require provision during the day for prayer (time and place).

Extra-curricular activities
It is advised that schools maintain a robust record of pupil participation by background in extra-curricular activities. Successful schools ensure all pupils have a high involvement in deciding activities being offered. Some activities may have a low up-take from BME pupils due to cultural barriers. Schools, which offer activities relevant to pupils' cultural experiences and lifestyle, may be more successful in pupil engagement; for example, home language, dance or cookery classes.

The timing of extra-curricular activities may affect attendance. Many BME pupils attend supplementary schools either immediately after school, or after a brief snack. Lunchtime clubs may address this.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Milton Keynes local authority (LA) is committed to the achievement of all pupils. With a high proportion of the school population made up of BME pupils (51% - 2023) and those learning English as an additional language (EAL) nearly 20% in 2023, a proportion of these pupils similar to non-EAL learners will have special educational needs and/or disability (SEND). However, addressing the learning difficulties of BME pupils and those learning EAL can present specific challenges. Schools may encounter cultural taboos or social stigma relating to SEND conversations. Overseas new arrivals and EAL learners may need time to adjust to an unfamiliar context and address their emotional needs. Pupils may have had limited schooling or simply need more time to develop their English language skills. Pupils learning EAL have specific linguistic needs, but this should not be confused withspecial educational needs:

"Identifying and assessing SEN for young children whose first language is not English requires particular care. Early Years practitioners should look carefully at all aspects of a child's learning and development to establish whether any delay is related to learning English as an additional language or if it arises from SEN or disability. Difficulties related solely to learning English as an additional language are not SEN."[6]

Teaching English well first

Almost every school has some EAL learners and therefore teachers and support staff should be equipped to teach EAL learners effectively. The EMA Network provides settings and schools with a range of guidance documents and resources to support this. Any assessment of whether an EAL learner has SEND must always start by evaluating if the teaching of EAL is strong and appropriate.

If there is a cause for concern
- Use the **First Assess Communication Tool (FACT)** to assess the speech, language and communication of all pupils with additional needs.
- Review English language acquisition assessments, compared with national curriculum outcomes and progress. The EMA Network recommends termly English language acquisition assessment for EAL learners.
- Consider the pupil's previous experience of learning; for example, some new arrivals from overseas may not have had prior formal learning or it may have been very different.

If a cause for concern has been identified

Reference the EMA network EAL and SEN guidance document to support the review of EAL and cultural factors that may influence progress. An extract follows that supports

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[6] Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, 2014, Section 5.3

schools in asking important questions about BME pupils causing concern.

Questions to support schools in assessing BME pupils causing concern:

- Is the culture and ethos of the school and the curriculum inclusive?
- How well has the school ensured that its systems and processes, and the curriculum ensure that BME and pupils learning EAL can access learning?
- Has enough time or opportunity been allowed for the development of proficiency in English?
- Is teaching and learning differentiated appropriately for a pupil who is new to English?
- For a more advanced EAL learner, has the pupil developed good conversational English, but not the formal academic language needed for learning? Rapid learning of conversational English often masks insufficient academic English.
- For a BME pupil whose first language is English has the pupil got previous gaps in learning, or is the curriculum culturally inaccessible?
- Is the pupil experiencing the emotional effects of racism or other stressful life events, particularly for newly arrived or refugee pupils?
- Has a specific language disorder been identified?
- Does the pupil have special educational needs?

In considering these questions a range of tasks should be carried out. These include:

- First language assessment to compare responses in both English and the language the pupil most frequently uses. Careful consideration needs to be used to make sure that comparison is fair; for example, a pupil may be orally fluent but not able to write or may be reticent to use first language in a school context.
- Discussions with teachers, support assistants, language assistants and parents, including a review of teaching and learning strategies employed; how the pupil learns well at home and in different languages, and previous education experiences
- Formative and summative assessments
- Consideration of changes over time, particularly the pupil's response to efforts made to improve the learning environment and the pupil's access to the curriculum.

Any single assessment is not enough. These tasks should be considered in context, in a cyclical manner, and over a period of time.

To support settings and schools, the local authority SEN teams have created 'Good practice guidance for all learners through the graduated response' and the EMA Network is able to give additional advice. A joint booklet: 'A SEN and EAL intervention guide' is available from the EMA network.

Supplementary schools

There are over 100 supplementary schools known to the EMA Network in Milton Keynes, including 22 madrassahs (Islamic schools), with nearly 5000 pupils on roll. As an example, some of the schools serve the following communities: Afghani, Bangladeshi, Bulgarian, Chinese, French, German, Ghanaian, Greek, Indian, Lithuanian, Middle Eastern, Nigerian, Pakistani, Polish, Russian,Somali, Spanish, Sri Lankan and Ukrainian.

Supplementary schools compliment mainstream schools and usually operate after school during weekdays or at weekends. Local community organisations use a range of venues to run these voluntary schools, including mainstream school premises, community centres and faith centres. The schools' curriculum is usually focused on one of the following: national curriculum subjects (particularly English, mathematics and science); religious education linked to a specific faith; cultural studies; home languages or enrichment activities. Some schools combine elements, such as religion and culture.

The EMA Network supports supplementary schools to provide learning that complements mainstream school learning and ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements. Training is provided on effective teaching and learning, safeguarding and leadership and management. Good practice is shared across an EMA Network supplementary schools forum to improve the quality and impact of leadership and management, and to develop community cohesion across schools and our borough. All mainstream and supplementary schools are encouraged to be actively involved and have a clear voice in this forum.

Milton Keynes Supplementary Schools' Standards Framework (MKSSSF)

The MKSSSF tool is designed to support supplementary school leaders to ensure their school meets the standards which are widely recognised for a safe educational environment for an out of school setting in the United Kingdom. It sets out the minimum standards required by Milton Keynes' local authority and allows the standards of individual supplementary schools to be recognised under the following headings:
1. Creating a safe learning environment
2. Teaching and learning
3. Leadership and management (Training and professional development)
4. Links with mainstream schools
5. Engagement with the wider community and parents

The MKSSSF tool also supports settings aiming to progress to the Quality Mark endorsed by the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Schools (NRCSE).

For information and regularly up-dated supplementary school contact details, contact the EMA Network: ema@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Translation and first language use

Interpreter and translation services

Schools and settings are encouraged to establish contact with an approved translation service provider to support initial first language communication and assessment. Several Milton Keynes supplementary schools are sometimes able to offer interpreter services: for more information contact the [EMA Network.](#)
Schools are encouraged to regularly audit their own first language staff assets and make links with other schools to share first language proficiency.

Addressing first language needs

Access to the English school system is dependent upon understanding how schools are organised, both on a daily and long-term basis. This includes knowledge of the curriculum and assessment. It is extremely important that translation is made available for the children and parents of newly arrived pupils who are new to English. This should be part of the normal induction procedure. This will ensure that there is knowledge of the organisation of the school day, eating arrangements, school uniform, class and year groupings, the curriculum and homework. It is also invaluable in providing the school with information of the child's previous educational experience. It is rare that information is forwarded from schools overseas.

When sending general communications to parents, the school should always consider if all parents are able to access it. Many parents will speak English, so it is important to check before translating. Where there are significant numbers of pupils from the same linguistic background, it may be possible to send a written translation. This should be set up in consultation with the community. Not all community members may be literate in their home language; therefore, assumptions should not be made; for example, most Bangladeshi people in Milton Keynes speak Sylheti, generally an unwritten language. However, Bangla (Bengali) is the official language of Bangladesh and many Bangladeshis may speak Sylheti but be able to write and read Bengali.

On-line translation facilities are widely available, but unlikely to be 100% accurate and may well change meaning in important messages. Seek advice from first language speakers to ensure correct translation. If the matter is not confidential, in some cases it may be appropriate to use a parent or community leader to support translation.

Creating good home-school links depends on parents feeling included. Being able to communicate with the school effectively is vital to this. Several further suggestions are listed below:
- Schools are advised to use accredited interpreters and translators for all official and sensitive issues to ensure impartiality, confidentiality and accuracy

- Make contact with relevant community groups and enlist their support and advice. These groups have first-hand experience of issues facing their community members; however, confidentiality must be maintained. If in doubt be cautious.
- Use a bilingual staff to welcome parents and meet with them informally before and after school
- Pupils from the same community may provide support, but we should also be aware of confidentiality issues and possible divisions within the communities
- A translator should be available for parent's meetings. Until parents feel comfortable in joining a large group of monolingual parents it may be better to provide alternative times for them to meet in small groups, where they know they will be with other parents in the same position.
- Arrange translated curriculum guidance sessions for specific groups of parents; for example, support in sharing books with children at home
- Emphasise the importance of the home language. Language is integral to identity and should be valued and celebrated. Additionally, bilingualism is an asset in the developing global economy. Parents wishing to support their child in maintaining their home language could be made aware of the many language-focused supplementary schools in Milton Keynes.
- Parents should be made aware of free English courses available through Community Learning MK, some children's centres and local voluntary groups; so, they can better support their children in their school learning and improve their own opportunities. Some schools offer introductory English courses to parents on an informal basis.
- Where school websites have translation options, ensure that parents know it is there and can use it. Targeted parents' sessions and coffee mornings have been used effectively to convey this information.

Virtual School

The Virtual School exists to monitor and support the academic progress of children and young people in the care of Milton Keynes and includes unaccompanied asylum-seeking or refugee children.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking or refugee children
The national protocol for the number of unaccompanied asylum seekers (**UASCs**) produces a cap of **69** in Milton Keynes. Currently, over 40 UASC are supported by Milton Keynes Virtual School and Children's Social Care.

The Virtual School team complete an initial UASC personal education plan (**PEP**) with the support of a translator. This most commonly takes place in the child's Initial Child Care Review along with other professionals. They explore the child's experience of education, their journey and their current situation in order to identify their education starting point in the UK and what support services they may require in the educational context. The Virtual School identifies appropriate schools and colleges in the area where the child resides to make swift applications for the child to access education. Dependent on the point of arrival in the academic year, access to post-16 studies may be limited by college intakes and in instances where access to education is delayed, the Virtual School commission online tuition packages and associated technology for children as well as accessible language acquisition apps for use on phones or computers.

The MKCC Participation team coordinate activities for UASC residing in Milton Keynes. The Virtual School have sought to provide additional language acquisition opportunities for UASC over summer holiday periods via external tuition partners.

Milton Keynes Virtual School works with pupils from 2-18 years old who are in the care of Milton Keynes local authority. Many of these pupils will have experienced distress, loss and trauma which may influence their development and education. The Virtual School also offers support and advice to parents, schools and social workers working with children who are previously looked after and those on the edge of care. The Virtual School is a statutory local authority service which serves to promote the educational achievement of the children and young people it serves, these children and young people are not on the roll of Milton Keynes Virtual School rather they attend and remain the responsibility of the school at which they are enrolled.

Further information can be found here:
https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/virtual-school

Youth services and support

Work and Participation

The team works with young people aged 8 up to 19 (or 25 if care experienced or with an EHCP) and supports:

• Community enrichment - working with young people on a 1-2-1 basis who have been assigned community hours from the court
• 1-2-1 and group work with young people with specific needs open to Children's Social Care
• Raise Your Voice (Children in Care Council)
• Youth Council

The 16-19 careers information advice and guidance team
16-19 Team support and resources | Milton Keynes City Council (milton-keynes.gov.uk)

The 16-19 careers information advice and guidance team offer a free and confidential service for young people in Milton Keynes aged 16-19 (up to 25 with learning difficulties or disabilities) who are not in employment, education, or training.
We offer free and impartial advice and can support you with:
• Education and training courses
• Traineeships and Apprenticeships
• Looking for and applying for jobs
• CV writing
• Interview Skills
• Information on local provision

Young people we support
We can offer support if you are:
• not in education, training or employment
• currently in education and are identified by school or college as being at risk of not continuing in education, training or employment
• in care - we offer targeted one-to-one careers advice and guidance support up to the age of 18 while in the care of MK City Council
• leaving care - we support care leavers aged 16-24 who have been in the care of MK City Council
• working with Milton Keynes Youth Offending Team and are not in education, employment or training
• a young person up to age 25 with learning difficulties or learning disabilities with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)

The Milton Keynes Youth Mayor

The role of the Youth Mayor is to engage and attend social events as a representative and to raise the profile and voice of young people within the city. The Youth Mayor will be a representative on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee of Milton Keynes Council. They will also chair Advisory Group meetings. The first Youth Mayor was appointed on 21 June 2023.
Milton Keynes Youth Mayor | Milton Keynes City Council (milton-keynes.gov.uk)

Timetable of support services
16-19 Team support and resources | Milton Keynes City Council (milton-keynes.gov.uk)

One to one career information, advice and guidance support
These meetings are for young people aged 16-19 years (25 with an EHCP or leaving care) and are currently not in education, training or employment. Please contact us and a member of the team will get back to you.

Wellbeing and life skills programme
Are you aged 16-19 (25 with an EHCP) and currently looking to support your well-being, build confidence and upskill in preparation for employment, education or training? Then this short group course at the Christ the Cornerstone Church might just be the one for you!
We cover general themes like:
Mindfulness
Self-care and healthy lifestyles
Creativity
Confidence building
Budgeting
Next steps

Ready Set Go
Our programmes for young people are for anyone aged 16-19 years (or up to 25 for those with an EHCP). They are aimed at increasing confidence and communication levels and to help prepare you for future pathways into learning or employment.
Any young person not in education, employment or training is welcome to join the small and very welcoming group. We also offer Maths and English for young people. Bus passes and lunch will be provided.

Self-Care Café - drop in session
Cafés are held every Wednesday 11am to 12pm at Christ the Cornerstone Church.
If you're aged 16-19 (or up to 25 with an EHCP), not in education or work and currently looking to take time for self-care and build on your confidence, then these sessions will be just right. Join us for our free weekly informal group.
Sessions are participant led and can include mindful and creative activities.

Appendix 1

The Ethnic Minority Achievement Network (EMA Network)

Guidance

The EMA Network staff are experienced in supporting pupils of Black and minority ethnic (BME) heritage, including those who are learning English as an additional language (EAL), who are newly arrived, asylum seekers or refugees, as well as pupils of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller origin. EMA Network staff have up-to-date skills and knowledge to act as experts for settings and schools. They draw on the expertise of multiple providers in addressing schools' needs. The team interprets and shares local and national initiatives which are aimed at closing attainment gaps.

Areas of focus include:
- Achievement and attainment
- Assessment
- Equality and diversity
- Community and integration
- Faith and Cultural awareness
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)
- Safeguarding

Resources

The EMA Network resource centre, aims to support the learning of pupils from all backgrounds across all key stages.

It hosts a wealth of religious, cultural and language-based resources, including religious and cultural artefacts, dual language books, bilingual dictionaries (visual and talking), DVDS, games, fiction and non-fiction books reflecting the diverse backgrounds and community languages represented within Milton Keynes and the wider world. There are also many resources which explore and address identity and equalities.

These resources are available to all schools and pre-school settings as well as childminders, foster cares and other settings.

For up-to-date information, please contact the EMA Network: ema@milton-keynes.gov.uk or visit the EMA Network page on the MKC website.

In addition to the resources in this resource centre, Central Milton Keynes, Wolverton and Bletchley libraries also hold a range of dual language books and a wide selection of DVDS. For further information, please contact the Milton Keynes Library website: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/libraries

Appendix 2

Ethnicity in schools in Milton Keynes – 2019 and 2023 school census
Source: Vital Signs MK

Percentage of pupil population by the minority ethnic groups, 2019 and 2023
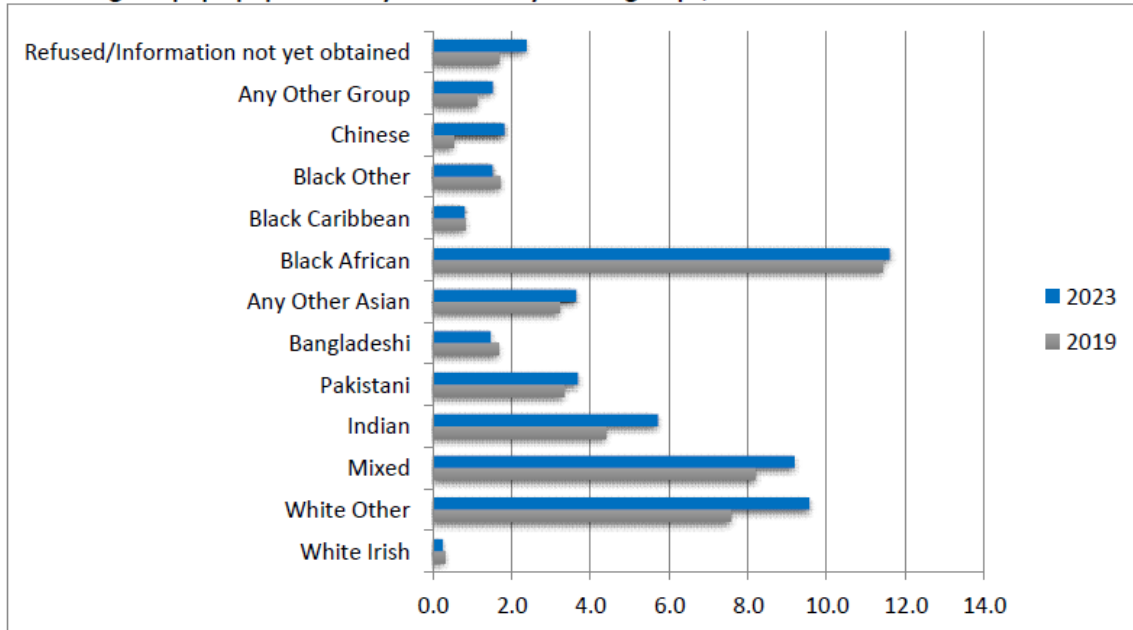
The graph above outlines the change in the proportions of pupils recorded in each minority ethnic group between 2019 and 2023. The White-Other Group has the largest number of extra pupils (1308 extra pupils), followed by Indian (841 extra pupils). White-British (-1774) experienced a decline. Chinese pupils have had the largest % increase (245 pupils in 2019 to 932 in 2023, 280% increase).
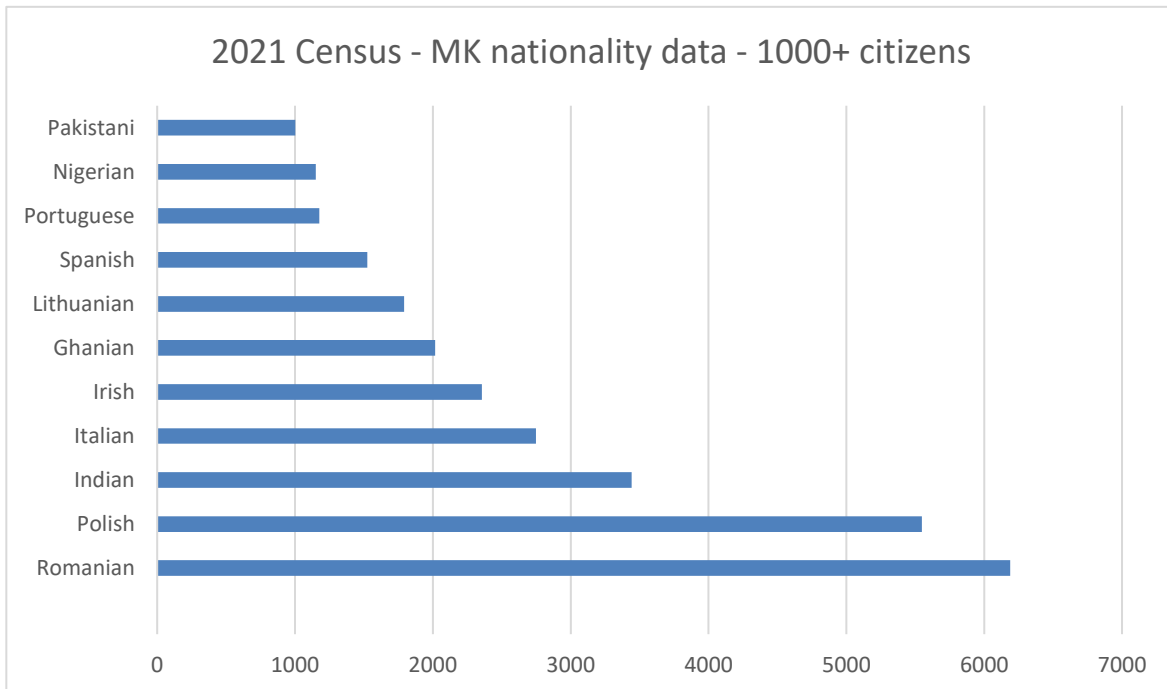

Top 10 languages spoken by MK pupils other than English
(2023 School census)
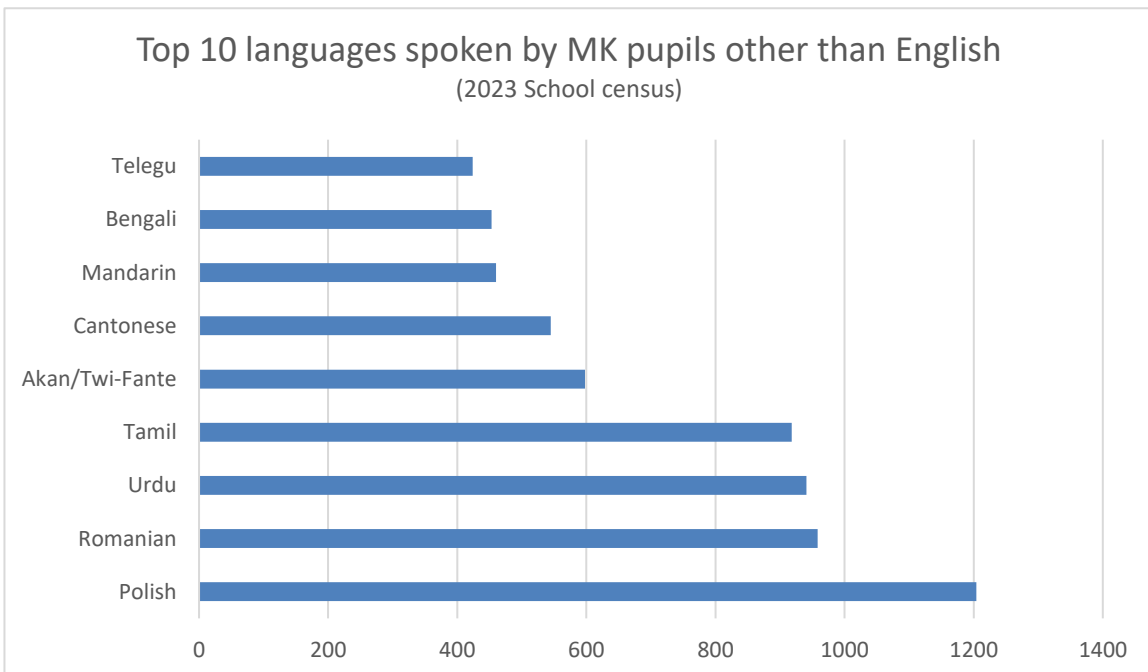
Languages spoken in schools in Milton Keynes – 2023 school census - (100 pupils+)

English	36317		Yoruba	251
Polish	1204		Portuguese	230
Romanian	958		Akan (Twi/Asante)	224
Urdu	941		Somali	213
Tamil	918		Russian	211
Akan/Twi-Fante	598		Panjabi	206
Chinese (Cantonese)	545		Gujarati	187
Chinese	469		Swahili/Kiswahili	186
Bengali	453		Shona	181
Telugu	424		Turkish	169
Hindi	318		Malayalam	165
Spanish	298		Persian/Farsi	157
Arabic	285		Hungarian	131
Italian	275		Igbo	125
French	273		Bulgarian	118
Lithuanian	265		Swahili (Any Other)	113
			Albanian/Shqip	110

2021 National census – MK data

2021 Census - MK nationality data - 1000+ citizens

Appendix 3

DFE CLASSIFICATIONS for groups referenced in this booklet

Ethnicity

DfE extended codes	Approved extended categories	DfE main code	Sub-category	Main category	Comments
AIND	Indian	AIND	Indian	Asian or Asian British	
APKN	Pakistani	APKN	Pakistani	Asian or Asian British	
ABAN	Bangladeshi	ABAN	Bangladeshi	Asian or Asian British	
AOTH	Any other Asian background	AOTH	Any other Asian background	Asian or Asian British	You cannot use AOTH if you have used codes AAFR - ASRO.
BCRB	Black Caribbean	BCRB	Black Caribbean	Black or Black British	Including Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago.
BGHA	Black - Ghanaian	BAFR	Black - African	Black or Black British	
BNGN	Black - Nigerian	BAFR	Black - African	Black or Black British	
BSOM	Black - Somali	BAFR	Black - African	Black or Black British	

DfE extended codes	Approved extended categories	DfE main code	Sub-category	Main category	Comments
CHNE	Chinese	CHNE	Chinese	Chinese	
OFIL	Filipino	OOTH	Any other ethnic group	Any other ethnic group	
OJPN	Japanese	OOTH	Any other ethnic group	Any other ethnic group	
WBRI	White - British	WBRI	White - British	White	
WIRT	Traveller of Irish heritage	WIRT	White	White	
WGRK	Greek	WOTH	Any other white background	White	
WITA	Italian	WOTH	Any other white background	White	
WEEU	White Eastern European	WOTH	Any other white background	White	Including Russian, Latvian, Ukrainian, Polish, Bulgarian, Czech, Slovak, Lithuanian, Montenegrin and Romanian.
WWEU	White Western European	WOTH	Any other white background	White	Including Italian, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese and Scandinavian.
WROM	Gypsy/Roma	WROM	Gypsy/Roma	White	Use this code for pupils who identify themselves as Gypsies, Romanies, Travellers, Traditional Travellers, Romanichals, Romanichal Gypsies Welsh Gypsies/Kaale, Scottish Travellers / Gypsies, and or Roma.

The full list of ethnicity codes is available at: https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/dashboards/ethnicity-classifications

Appendix 4

Events and organisations that are promoting social cohesion in MK

The **MK Futures 2050** Commission was set up 2015 as a way of thinking about the future of the city and helping to create a long-term vision for the way MK should grow and prosper. The project sees education and mobility being fundamental to the future prosperity of the city. As part of how to deliver their vision for MK in 2050, the Commission recommended 'Six Big Projects'.

Milton Keynes Islamic Arts and Culture (MKIAC) has been operating in Milton Keynes (prompted by the 9/11 attacks) to connect communities and bring people together through high quality shared arts experiences. They work in a diverse range of locations across the city including, community centres, schools, galleries, libraries and museums. MKIAC deliver arts workshops, seminars and events inspired by Islamic arts and heritage.

Milton Keynes Community Foundation is an independent charity working to connect people and resources to projects and ideas to create positive impacts and enduring solutions for different communities.

Vital Signs MK is an annual publication designed to round up the most current research on the communities of Milton Keynes and present it in an easy-to-read format. This report asks how we can all work together to support, inspire and lead our local communities. The 2020 research focus is on disadvantage and poverty, education, diversity, and the economy.

Milton Keynes International Festival (IF) was honoured with the prestigious EFFE Label 2017-2018 (Europe's quality stamp for remarkable arts festivals). Every two years the festival provides an artistic programme to embrace its local infrastructure, landscape and communities. This festival brings about a series of events that are relevant to international issues and embraces innovative artistic talent and engagement that brings all members of the community together.

The **Community & Social Wellbeing Committee** (CSW) is responsible to the council for overseeing the delivery of all matters pertaining to community development and environmental protection and enhancement.

The **Parks Trust** hosts various events that celebrates music, dance and cultures of the world, such as the Arts in the Park event organised by the MK Islamic Arts, Culture and Heritage (MKIAC) organisation.

Glossary

African Asian

People of the Asian Diaspora, whose families migrated to work in Africa (mostly Eastern) during British colonialism. Have since migrated to Britain and may still have family links with Africa.

African Caribbean

This is used to refer to the people whose origins are from Africa and who have migrated to Britain from the Caribbean islands. This group of people should not be called Afro-Caribbean. Some of the older generations refer to themselves as West Indian, as they have migrated from the Caribbean West Indies.

Asian

Mainly used in this document to refer to people from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

Black

Used to refer to people of African, African Caribbean and Asian origin, who have a unity of experience as minority ethnic groups.

Black British

Some minority ethnic people who were born and live in Britain prefer to be identified as Black British. They are Black, but identify with their British heritage.

Coloured

This is no longer an acceptable term. By definition all people have colour, but if used to describe minority ethnic people it is offensive and insulting.

Culture

Refers to the system of beliefs, assumptions, sentiments, language, history, art, clothing, food, architecture, kinship and perspectives which members of a group have in common. Culture is learnt and not biologically inherited.

Diaspora

People scattered from their original homeland. This can refer to any group. Examples of significant Diaspora: African, Indian and Jewish.

Equality

Concept that all people are of equal value and should receive equality of opportunity, equal access and equal treatment.

EAL

English as an additional language

Ethnic Group

This has a legal definition, which refers to a distinct group of people who share a history and a cultural tradition. This may include religion or language. People who are classed by the same ethnic origin may speak different languages. Outside of the legal definition they may consider themselves to be of different ethnic background.

Ethnicity
Refers to ethnic origin. This is very personal. It may refer to country of origin or genetic features. For the purpose of monitoring, to overview equality issues, a limited range of ethnic origins are used. These are devised in consultation with the communities. On a personal level, individuals may have a wider definition of ethnic origin.

Family name
The name shared by all or some family members. It should not be termed the "Christian" name, or the "Surname", as the family name may not be at the end of the name.

Language
Terms such as first language, home language, community language or heritage language are commonly used to mean the language spoken at home.

Minority Ethnic
This refers to minority groups in UK society. All groups, including the White majority population, are from an ethnic group. Therefore, it is offensive to describe people from a minority group as "ethnic".

MASH
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub

Personal Name
The special name by which a person is usually called. The personal name may not be written at the beginning of the full name. Hence, it should not be termed the "first name".

Prejudice
To pre-judge. A prejudiced person is one who holds views about an individual or group, which are not based on knowledge.

Racism
Discrimination against a group or individual on account of their cultural or ethnic background.

Racist Incident
Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Institutional racism
The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.

SACRE
Standing Advisory Council on Religious education

Supplementary school
A community, faith and language schools operating outside of mainstream school hours.
Sometimes referred to as complementary schools
South East Asian
Generally used to describe people whose origin is from the "Far East",
such as China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and Vietnam.
White
Used to refer to people of West European origin, including migrants to
North and South America, Australia and parts of Africa.

Milton Keynes City Council

Produced by the Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) Network