

# Community Cohesion

### Suggested Duration: 60 minutes

#### Learning Objectives

- ▶ To understand that Britain is made up of diverse religious, ethnic and cultural communities
- ▶ To learn that diversity should be seen as a unifying, and not a divisive force
- ▶ To understand that different communities have valuable contributions to make towards the betterment of society
- ▶ To understand what the term 'community cohesion' means

#### Key Words

- ▶ Community, cohesion, unity, differences, cultural, divisive, ethnic groups, companions of Prophet Mohammed ﷺ (sahabah)

#### Islamic Values

Islam teaches us to accept that the differences between people are part of God's design for His creation. Islam also teaches us that we should treat others the way we want to be treated.

#### Citizenship Values

Citizenship emphasises that all members of society are different and have a responsibility to get along with each other despite their differences.



## Resources

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1201:  
Lesson Objectives

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1202:  
Photographs of a Multi-ethnic  
High Street

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1203:  
My Street

## Activities

Ask some quick questions to recap the last lesson.

Share the lesson objectives.

### A Starter Activity

Hand out Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1202, showing a mix of different ethnicities. If you cannot print colour photos, then ask pupils to imagine the last time they visited their nearest city centre.

Get the class to identify the different ethnic and religious groups shown in the photographs or that they might have seen in the city centre.

Take feedback and stress that all these people are part of our big community. Ask them: Do all these groups get along? If not, why not?

**Suggested answer:** Some people do not get along because of differences in opinions and beliefs. Islam teaches us to respect everyone's right to have an opinion and belief.

### B Development

#### Activity 1: Defining Community Cohesion

Introduce the term 'community cohesion' using the following definition (you may wish to choose a different definition).

'Community cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together.'  
(Institute of Community Cohesion, Coventry)

#### Activity 2: Different People

This activity has been provided courtesy of the IHNA Education Programme, developed by Building Bridges Pendle.

Using Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1203, ask the class to describe in writing the different people living in their street. (Encourage them to think in terms of ethnicity, colour, religion, nationality, gender, age, and so on.)

Take feedback and ask pupils to give themselves marks out of ten for the level of friendship they have with these families/ individuals.

Stress that it is important for us to know our community.



### Activity 3: Islamic Guidance

Ask a pupil to recite the following verses. Explain the meaning.

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ

*'And indeed We have honoured the children of Adam...'*  
(Surat al-Isra` 17:70)

**Question:** Why does the Qur`an use the term 'children of Adam'?

**Suggested answer:** God has created all human beings from one – Adam– and everyone is equal before him, and only those are better who are more righteous.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى  
جَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ  
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

*'O mankind! We created you from a male and a female and we made you into nations and tribes so that you may know each other; the most noble of you in the sight of God is the one who is the most righteous. Indeed God is All-knowing, All-aware.'* (Surat al-Hujurat 49:13)

**Question:** Why has God created us into various nations and tribes?

**Suggested answer:** It is God's design for his creation that we are all different. He has created us with differences to test us and to see how we behave with each other, and with those who are different.

**Question:** What does 'We created you from a male and a female' mean?

**Suggested answer:** Adam and Hawwa' (Eve)

*'Bring to your heart kindness and mercy for others and do not behave towards others like a wild beast; this is because they are either: your brother (and sister) in religion or the same as you in creation.'* (Nahj al-Balagh)

*'A person from whose mischief the neighbours are not safe will not enter Jannah.'* (Muslim)

*'One who is not given kindness and gentleness is, in fact, not given any good.'* (Muslim)

### Resources

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1204:  
Islamic Guidance

## Resources

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1205:  
Feedback

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1206:  
Follow-up Worksheet

### A Story from the Sirah

This activity is based on the concept used in Lesson 3 of the IHNA Education Programme, developed by Building Bridges Pendle. Tell pupils:

'Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ circle of sahabah (companions) included the Roman Suhayb, the Ethiopian Bilal and the Persian Salman. The Prophet ﷺ referred to the sahabah by their country of origin in order to show his acceptance of other nations and nationalities. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gave respect and equal opportunity to all of the sahabah, regardless of their colour, language or country of origin.'

Explain that Islam recognises cultural differences and allows people to identify themselves as belonging to a particular country or nation, so long as this does not make them feel superior to others.

**Question:** How do you think this diverse group of people managed to live together as a cohesive community?

**Suggested answer:** Because people respected each other's opinions and they had a common goal – to please God.

**Question:** What lessons can Muslims in Britain learn from the practices of the sahabah?

**Suggested answer:** We should give everyone an equal opportunity, regardless of the colour of their skin, belief, background or nationality.

### C Plenary

Reinforce Islam's message of equality of mankind and the importance of community cohesion in Britain today.

Take pupils' feedback using Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1205.

### Suggested Follow-up Work

Give instructions for follow-up work:

Speak to at least three people who are different from you (who you know from your street or school).

Learn three new things about each of them.

Report your learning using Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1206.

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- ▶ To understand what the term 'community cohesion' means



## Photographs of a Multi-ethnic High Street



Published in *The Guardian*, 30 August 2006

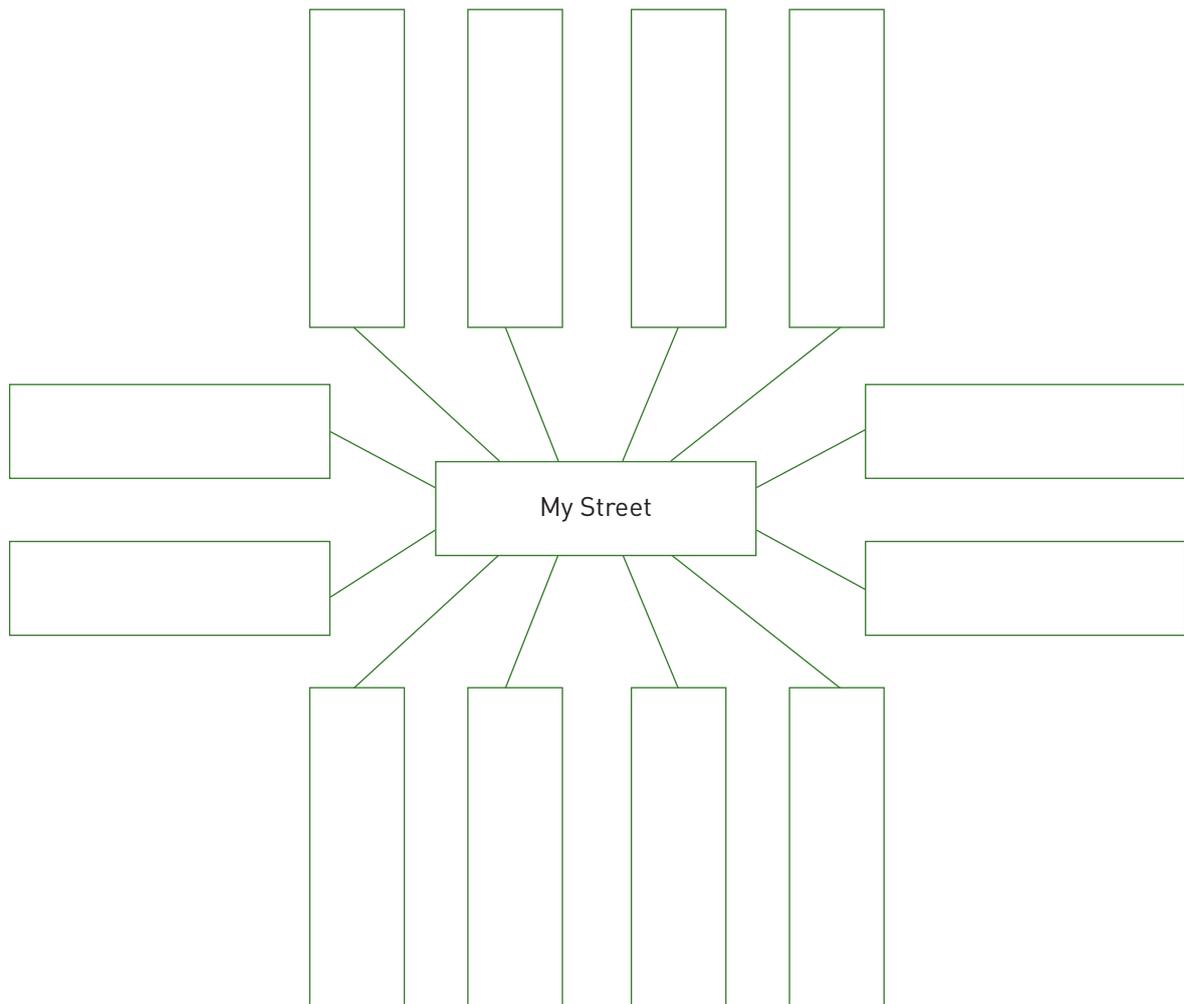


Published in *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 April 2008

### My Street

Describe in writing the different people living in your street. Think in terms of ethnicity, colour, religion, nationality, and so on.

This activity has been provided courtesy of the IHNA Education Programme, developed by Building Bridges Pendle.



### Islamic Guidance

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ

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#### Story from the Sirah:

Note: This activity is based on the concept used in Lesson 3 of IHNA Education Programme developed by Building Bridges Pendle.

Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ circle of sahaba (companions) included the Roman Suhayb, the Ethiopian Bilal and the Persian Salman. The Prophet ﷺ referred to sahabah by their country of origin in order to show his acceptance of other nations and nationalities. The Prophet ﷺ gave respect and equal opportunity to all of the sahabah regardless of their of colour, language or country of origin.

### Feedback

Lesson Title: Community Cohesion

Name: .....

Madrasah/Organisation: .....

Today I have learnt about:

As a result of this lesson I have learnt that a good Muslim should:

I am going to follow up this topic in my home/school/community by:

### Follow-up Worksheet

Lesson Title: Community Cohesion		
Name: .....		
Madrasah/Organisation: .....		
Task: Speak to at least three people who are different from you (who you know from your street or school). Learn three new things about each of them. Use the following three columns to report your learning.		
Person 1	Person 2	Person 3