St. Ita’s and St. Joseph’s Primary and Post-Primary School

Intercultural Policy
2020
Introduction

This policy was formulated by staff in our school, as our school values the inclusion of all pupils from all backgrounds, countries and faiths. We understand the importance of celebrating and supporting diversity in our school.

Rationale

Some of our pupils are from other countries and have other ethnicities and faiths. We welcome all nationalities in our school.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

The Catholic ethos requires us to provide an education which respects, celebrates and recognises the normality of diversity. As a school we wish to promote equality and human rights as well as challenge unfair discrimination.

Aims

St. Ita’s and St. Joseph’s ideally hopes to achieve a number of aims with the implementation of this policy. These aims are:

- to create an inclusive culture and environment
- to make the curriculum as accessible as possible for children from minority ethnic groups
- to raise awareness of issues that arise from increasing linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity
- to involve parents and pupils in identifying and managing learning strengths or difficulties
- To assist teachers’ professional development.
The Inclusive School supports:

- the enrolment of newcomer pupils
- a positive vision statement/school ethos
- induction of new children/welcoming environment
- home-school links/parental involvement
- staff development
- other related policies: Code of Behaviour/Anti-bullying, Attendance, Assessment, Special Needs
- curriculum: classroom environment, intercultural dimension to curriculum
- resources.

Enrolment of newcomer pupils:

Our enrolment policy supports inclusion:

- where parents are unable to read or write, we will assist them with the process. If necessary, an interpreter will be sought.
- our application form seeks information that will help us assist pupils from all backgrounds and countries.
- all our school policies and plans and available on our website. Where parents/guardians wish to speak to us in person, they can make an appointment so our policies and subject plans can be explained to them with an interpreter if necessary.
Vision Statement/School Ethos

Our vision and mission statement advocates that all our pupils will become active members of their communities and thus reach their full potential. Our school has an Equality Policy which was developed as a result of, an invitation given to the Equality Authority, to complete an inspection of our school. This is in line with our endeavours to be a transparent and open school where all nationalities are respected and welcomed in line with our Catholic ethos.

Induction of new children/providing a welcoming environment

Induction:

- each pupil completes a transition when commencing in our school. They are welcomed into the class on a gradual basis as recommended by the parents and the class teacher in line with our Enrolment Policy
- each pupil visits the school on their first day where they meet other pupils and are given a tour of the school
- individual tuition is provided for some pupils in the initial enrolment stages if deemed necessary, to support integration
- the class teacher and parents/guardians decide together on the rate and pace of transition that is suitable for each individual pupil
- meetings between the teacher, parents/guardians and the principal can be arranged, at the request of all concerned, to discuss the transition process.

Home-School Links/Parental Involvement

In relation to parents:

- all parents are made equally welcome in our school
- where parents have informed us that they are unable to read or write in English, the school will seek to provide an interpreter if necessary
- parents can also relay messages verbally via the bus escort each morning and evening
- all parents are invited to our Annual Christmas Mass
- all pupils are expected to wear the school uniform which has been designed by the pupils in our school.
where parents cannot afford the once off payment for the school uniform, they may pay it incrementally on request and it can be provided for them

pupils are given homework in line with our Homework Policy. Where parents are having difficulties, they are requested to inform the class teacher and assistance can be provided from them

parent-teacher meetings take place annually and all parents/guardians are invited to be part of developing their child’s Individual Education/ Pupil Profile Plan

opportunity for parental involvement in developing policies and plans is encouraged via our website and during the annual teacher meeting

multi-lingual notices are sometimes displayed in our school

world festivals are celebrated, in relation to our student population, through the Arts

our school supports the work of local initiatives, such as Kerry Travellers, and works closely with them, to support pupils in our school.

**Staff Development**

In relation to staff:

- staff are aware of the philosophy and principles underlying intercultural education and the methodologies and practices advocated for its success
- all our policies are reviewed and evaluated as part of our School Implementation Plan
- teachers are always welcome to access in-career development in intercultural education provided online or in our local education centre
- resources, which support intercultural activities, are provided for teachers on request
- staff are aware that guidelines are available from the NCCA. Please see links below [https://www.ncca.ie/media/1976/intercultural_education_in_the_post-primary_school.pdf](https://www.ncca.ie/media/1976/intercultural_education_in_the_post-primary_school.pdf)
  [https://www.ncca.ie/media/1903/intercultural_education_in_the_primary_school_guidelines_for_schools.pdf](https://www.ncca.ie/media/1903/intercultural_education_in_the_primary_school_guidelines_for_schools.pdf)
Code of Behaviour/Anti-Bullying Policy

In relation to school policies:

- our Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies promote respect for diversity and the development of a school ethos that respects the culture, beliefs and way of life of all pupils
- our Dignity in the Workplace Policy and Charter supports respect for all in our school

Attendance

Attendance is supported:

- parents are aware of attendance protocols as addressed in the Education Welfare Act
- our school has an Attendance Policy published on our website
- parents receive communication in relation to attendance in line with best practice
- we are involved in many programmes, such as Erasmus, to support attendance
- our school’s strategies to encourage attendance are outlined in our policy.

Assessment and cultural diversity

Supporting assessment includes:

- our school’s assessment tools enable teachers to reach balanced and informed judgements, as all our pupils have special needs
- our school supports pupils learning English, as an additional language, through individual tuition where necessary
- parents are informed of results through our bi-annual reports, annual teacher meeting and through the state examination results (when applicable), when they are published by the Department of Education and Skills.
Special Needs
Supporting all needs in our school:

- our school caters for pupils with a Mild General Learning Disability or adaptive skills in the mild range. However, we cater for pupils of all other disabilities who are within these ranges, as per our Admissions Policy.
- we use a variety of agencies to support us working with our pupils which include the Kerry Intervention and Disability Services, National Council for Special Education and the National Association for Boards of Management in Special Education.

Curriculum
Intercultural education is not confined to a single curriculum area, nor indeed to areas within the ‘formal curriculum’. It is embedded in the practices and dispositions that inform both the school and classroom climate and ‘hidden curriculum’.

Intercultural Education in the Primary School, Guidelines for Teachers suggest an approach to the integrated planning of curriculum content which is described in detail in the Social Personal and Health Education Teacher Guidelines. Such an approach will facilitate the inclusion of intercultural content as a normal and everyday part of the child’s learning as opposed to devoting discrete time to intercultural education on the timetable. The curriculum provides:

- integrated thematic planning of lesson content re themes of Identity and Belonging, Similarity and Difference, Human Rights and Responsibilities, Discrimination and Equality, Conflict and conflict resolution: Exemplars 1 - 12 pp. 53 -79
- intercultural education across the curriculum areas: Language; Gaeilge, French, English, Mathematics; SESE; History, Geography, Science, Arts Education; Visual Arts, Music, Drama, PE; SPHE; Religion pp. 80-86
- identifying intercultural education opportunities across the curriculum pp. 87-131
Success Criteria

The success of this policy will be reviewed in accordance with our school implementation plan and with feedback from parents and staff.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to be involved in the implementation and review of this policy.

Timetable for Review

All our policies are reviewed in line with our School Implementation Plan.

Ratification and Communication

The BoM ratified this policy in May 2020. All our policies and plans are available on our website.

Reference Section

- Circular 15/2009 Meeting the needs of pupils learning English as an Additional Language, DES Intercultural Education in the Primary School, Guidelines for schools, NCCA, 2005
- Primary School Assessment Kit, DES, 2007
- Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School, 2007
- Up and Away, IILT, 2006
- Intercultural Guidelines for Schools, INTO.