



Intercultural & Racial Equality Policy

St Brendans BNS

Introductory Statement

The twenty-first century promises to be a new age of migration. Intensifying international migration pressures present many societies with major policy dilemmas; most countries of the world are becoming more multicultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual ... Let us build upon shared moral values and see in diversity, not a threat, but rather enrichment. Our daughters and sons deserve nothing less.

Brunson McKinley, Juan Somavia and Mary Robinson

Rationale

We continue to believe that the essential nature of St Brendan's B.N.S is that of a Christian community within the Catholic tradition. Within such a community the value and uniqueness of each individual are at the heart of all we do. We affirm that it is the entitlement of each of us to be accepted as we are.

By reflecting on and valuing the cultural diversity of its members and the wider society in which we live, the school aims to promote a secure and caring environment in which mutually supporting relationships flourish.

It is important that we take a proactive and sensitive approach to the promotion of race equality.

Aims

To instill a sense of pride in our own culture whilst simultaneously cultivating an understanding of the value of cultural diversity

To prepare children for life in a diverse society and world;

To develop childrens sense of personal and cultural identity which is confident and open to change and both receptive and respectful towards other identities;

To acknowledge the existence of racism and be proactive in tackling and eliminating racial discrimination;

To ensure that cultural issues relating to racism and racial equality are recognised and managed across all areas of school activity;

To ensure that racial equality is an integral part of all planning and decision making within the school.

Roles and responsibilities

The school is to be proactive in promoting racial equality through all areas of the curriculum, the collective act of worship, the playground and out of class activities. The school acknowledges the responsibilities of key personnel:

The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its legal responsibilities and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are fully implemented.

The Principal is responsible for implementing this policy, for ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities are given relevant training and support, and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination and dealing with reported incidents of racism and racial harassment.

The B-Post holder is responsible for co-ordinating racial equality work. All staff are expected to deal with racist incidents that may occur, to be aware how to identify and challenge racial and cultural bias and stereotyping; to support any children in their classes for whom English is an Additional language and to incorporate principles of equality and valuing diversity into all aspects of their work.

Longer-term visitors and contractors are responsible for knowing and following the school's intercultural and race equality policy.

Policy, planning and review

The school is to ensure that the principles and procedures outlined in the above sections feature in all policies and practices. In particular this will apply to:

- children's progress, attainment and assessment;
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions;
- student pastoral care and guidance;
- teaching and learning;
- admissions and attendance;
- the content of the curriculum;
- staff recruitment and professional development;
- working with parents and the community.

Implementing the policy

The school is to implement this policy through:

- undertaking a whole school audit;
- action planning for positive intercultural events, planning, training as a result of the audit
- focusing on areas for development and staff training;
- inclusion of core policy in school prospectus;
- developing centralised resources;
- the use of appropriate outside agencies;
- visits that promote cultural diversity awareness;
- the development of a directory of contacts;
- resource sharing at all levels.

Teachers demonstrate care not to:

- stereotype individuals or groups;
- use paternalistic approaches to other peoples or cultures;
- reduce all non-western societies to the exotic, picturesque and primitive;
- they show the achievements and attributes of different societies, both past and present, e.g. Ancient Greece and Zulu warriors;
- they show children of different ethnic groups involved in the activities;
- they positively and realistically portray children from a variety of ethnic and cultural groups and class backgrounds;
- they have illustrations that avoid caricature;
- they accurately reflect the population of Ireland
- Teachers draw attention to ways in which evidence can be misused to assert a point of view.
- Teachers use self-evaluation by discussion to assess the implementation of this policy.

- The teachers can, by careful use of language, also avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society.

Curriculum Areas

English

Intercultural considerations are essential in the study of English. In exploring texts and in discussions we gain a sense of other lives and other worlds. Empathy and sympathy are key elements in our teaching, and we are committed to eliminating prejudice and ignorance of other cultures. We celebrate, through literary and non-literary texts, what is unique and what is universal in the human condition. All literature is carefully checked in order to avoid overtly stereotypical images of individuals.

Geography

Geography contributes to Intercultural Education in a number of ways:

The Geography Programme tackles a range of topics with an intercultural perspective. These include the combating Eurocentric viewpoint on development, economically less developed countries and economically more developed countries, problems of immigrants in USA, development in Kenya and issues resulting from globalisation.

Children are sympathetic at this age and understand why some people are poor to a certain extent.

Books, videos and slides give a positive view which helps to improve their awareness of this issue.

All texts depict other societies but illustrate examples of Ireland as a cosmopolitan society. In this way the Geography curriculum aims to contribute to greater understanding of different peoples and cultures.

History

History contributes to intercultural education in a number of important ways:

1. In the development of the quality of open-mindedness which questions assumptions and demands evidence to justify points of view. It allows children to examine issues critically from a variety of perspectives and reach reasoned conclusions of their own.
2. In that the historical skills that children acquire, such as advancing reasoned arguments, and taking account of a range of views, should assist in identifying, and thus combating racial and other forms of prejudice and stereotypical thinking.
3. In imparting knowledge and understanding of the diversity of world cultures and traditions within Ireland and the contributions of these cultures and traditions to modern Irish society.
4. In considering a European and world perspective to Historical Studies in particular the interaction and relationships between nation states and cultures.
5. In the study of non-western civilisations from the childrens own perspective and from the perspective of the civilisations studied.
6. To draw links with other Humanities subjects to show the many and diverse avenues of multi-cultural study within the curriculum.

Religious Education

As teachers we are committed to developing a critical respect for all cultures while, at the same time, recognising those values which inform and contribute to the development of our own culture.

As a Catholic school we are committed to inculcating an awareness of, and profound respect for, Christian values and beliefs, particularly as these are interpreted within the Roman Catholic tradition.

We are also committed to developing an awareness of, and a deep respect for, the beliefs and values of other religions, particularly those which continue to exert a developmental influence on our society and culture.

Visual Arts

Within the study of Visual Arts subjects children are constantly encouraged to appreciate and understand the cultural diversity, lifestyles and traditions of many countries in our World. The arts help to form a positive picture and are an effective vehicle for the development of a tolerant and understanding multicultural society. It is recognised that cultural and religious traditions influence the development of artistic styles and artefacts.

The teaching of art, drama and music introduces a broad range of aesthetic skills from a range of cultures and traditions within the curriculum. Children are taught to appreciate the social, historical and cultural context of artistic works and how different traditions may communicate meaning through a variety of ways. It is hoped that the children will develop an acceptance of people from different ethnic groups through learning about their artistic and social traditions.

In terms of resources, the creative arts subjects hold no gender or racial bias, while the specific use of information promotes cultural awareness. The visual material used does not usually contain stereotypical images and all resources are selected to promote a positive image of other lifestyles and cultures. Projects are set which attempt to introduce children to work from a number of continents, religious and minority groups such as Aboriginal painting, African drumming, Islamic geometric patterns and Indian ragas. It is emphasised through this study that European art, drama and music, although most familiar to us, is just part of the many artistic traditions that make up the rich fabric of a multicultural society and therefore is no more or less important than any other.

The continuing aim is to ensure that differences are respected and not seen as strange or odd. The Arts hold a wealth of information from which children can obtain a fascinating insight of the value of different artistic traditions, and in so doing, gain a wider perspective, understanding and tolerance of the World through the study of the various elements in Visual Arts.

ICT

Text-books reflect a variety of ethnic participants and we are encouraging links around the world via the Internet. We assist children to be able to discern bias and demonstrate how to choose reliable sources of information when researching on the Internet as we are aware that misinformation abounds. Websites have been filtered to restrict access to unsuitable materials.

We are very much aware of the potential for all forms of bullying and abuse, including racial, across a network in the internet and via mobile phones. Staff are encouraged to monitor carefully all contacts children make and to teach safe surfing and a respect for others feelings. Staff monitor the content published on the Internet by the children.

Learning Support

Equality and inclusion underpin the values of the Learning Support Department.

Intercultural awareness and considerations are always part of any intervention or support provided by staff.

It is expected that staff reflect and encourage the approaches and attitudes of the curriculum areas in which they work.

Mathematics

We aim to show that Mathematics is a multicultural language which has developed universally with contributions from many ethnic origins, including our own, related to the outside world. International race relations and the development field is replete with opportunities to use and represent data on such issues as migration, equality of opportunity, income and wealth, world population and trade.

Comenius project and Modern Language Teaching

We have been involved in the Comenius programme and have had links with a variety of European countries. The teaching of any foreign language encourages the acceptance of differences and presents cultural diversity as enriching. This enrichment is further enhanced by exchanges and visits to a foreign country as it affords the opportunity to reflect upon and share personal experience of language development, as well as the chance to become temporarily, part of another culture.

The use of a wide range of authentic materials such as newspapers and videos also encourages a greater awareness and understanding of other nations and their way of life, developing in the children a sense of respect for other cultures and an ability to relate to other peoples. The presence and use in the classroom of native speaking parents and children further develops this.

P.E.

The growing number of contemporary sportsmen and women from different ethnic groups achieving success in a variety of sports, helps to present a positive image of the different cultures. The camaraderie and equality of sport at all levels is also used to further enhance the sense of equality of different races, ethnic groups and cultures.

Teachers use all appropriate opportunities to challenge prejudice as it arises and a consistent approach to dealing with racist incidents.

Teachers help pupils to acquire the knowledge, and to develop the skills and attitudes that are necessary to engender an understanding of, and a respect and support for, cultural differences, and thereby, helping to further cultural and racial harmony and social cohesion in a multicultural community.

Teachers will accordingly, whenever appropriate and feasible:

- refer, and help their pupils to respond, to examples from a diverse range of cultures, and in particular, to those that are represented in the community/pupil group. Dance is a good vehicle by which one can explore anti-racist topics and various forms of discrimination;
- draw upon the relevant 'first-hand' knowledge, understanding and experiences of the pupils in a group who, typically, are of diverse cultural origins.
- ensure that they are using factually accurate and use up-to-date text and illustrations

Science

New courses have been introduced to satisfy National Curriculum requirements and have provided an excellent opportunity to incorporate topics that highlight intercultural issues. In particular this department acknowledges the importance of the intercultural dimension of certain lessons. The need to highlight the diverse origins of all aspects of Science and the important contributions from different cultures to scientific progress past and present is presented to children.

Broad balance science has promoted a thematic approach which in itself facilitates a wider intercultural perspective. Topics such as world energy resources, conservation of the environment and the balance between energy needs and care of the planet highlight the responsibility on each nation to respond.

Awareness of other cultures is also enhanced through the teaching of specific topics such as diet, illness and disease, housing and climate.

Reviewing the policy

In line with school policy this policy is to be reviewed biennially by the Senior Management Team and put forward to the Board of Management for approval.

Ratified by Board of Management on _____
Date

Signed _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

References

Organisations

Access Ireland Dominick Court 40-41 Dominick Street Lower, Dublin 1 01 878 0589
www.accessireland.ie
Equality Authority Clonmel Street, Dublin 2 01 417 3333 info@equality.ie
Integrating Ireland 10 Upper Camden Street, Dublin 2 01 478 3490 www.integratingireland.ie
NCCRI (National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism) 20, Harcourt Street,
Dublin 2 01 478 5777 www.nccri.com
Pavee Point 46 North Great Charles Street, Dublin 1 01 878 0255 www.paveepoint.ie
Resource Centre for Development Education NCDE (The Development and Education Unit of Ireland
Aid) Bishop's Square Redmond's Hill, Dublin 2 01 478 9456 www.ncde.ie
Trocaire Resource Centre 12, Cathedral St. Dublin 1 01 874 3875 www.trocaire.org
YARD (Youth Action against Racism and Discrimination) NCYI (National Youth Council of Ireland)
3 Montague Street, Dublin 2 01 478 4122 www.yard.ie

Resource Packs

Carly. UNHCR (United Nations High Commission Refugees) 1999. 27, Upper Fitzwilliam Street,
Dublin 2 Tel 01 632 86 80 Video pack that contains an animated film, teachers' notes and children'
activities on the themes of cultural differences and exile. Age 8-12. Free of charge.

Celebrating Difference: An Intercultural Programme for Senior Primary Classes. Crosscare &
Blackrock Teachers' Centre 1996. Available from Trocaire. Programme to explore cultural difference
through the themes of difference, homes and belonging. Age 8-12 years.

Early Years Pack. Pavee Point. Set of colour posters and picture sequence cards that represent
children from a variety of backgrounds, cultures and ethnic groups and are for use in creches, pre-
schools and early primary education settings.

Ireland-All Different All Equal. An Anti-Racism and Equality Education Pack. NYCI/DEFY, 1995
Age +14 Games and activities for dealing with prejudice and intolerance within schools, youth clubs
and community groups.

New Europeans. Video study pack to promote discussion on anti-racism in the new Europe. IBT,
1999. Age 13-15. Available from NCDE. Four videos made by young directors from different
European countries with different views about multiculturalism, which stimulate discussion on
stereotyping, racism and xenophobia.

Schools and Clubs against Racism Education Pack. NCYI and the Coordinating Committee for
European Year against Racism. Activities addressed to young people of all ages on racism and
difference.

Toolkit for tackling racism in schools. Trentham Books, 2000. Available from NCDE.

Terminology, legal obligations and approaches to tackling racism, practical classroom activities, staff training activities and good practice checklists.

What? Me a racist? Age 13-15. European Commission (Ireland), 1998. 18, Dawson St. Dublin 2. 01 662 5113. Cartoon book for young people to explore racism and prejudice. Free of charge.

Cultural Information

Customs clearance European Cultural Foundation. 32, Nassau St. Dublin 2 Document designed to identify some of the main cultural differences between Irish nationals and foreign nationals in relation to language, daily living habits, religion, social interaction, medical issues, birth, law and the role of intercultural education. Listings of organisations. Free of charge.

Intercultural Resource File. 2002, Access Ireland. Includes information on five of the cultural groups from which people seeking refuge in Ireland come: Angola, Congo, Nigeria, Roma and Romania, and guidelines on culturally sensitive and inclusive practice.

Roma in Ireland - an initial needs analysis. A research report about the Roma community in Ireland including an overview of the Roma community, racism and discrimination, exclusion, legal status and asylum seeking process, education, accommodation and recommendations for implementing community development strategies. 2002. Pavee Point Publications

General

Changing faces-Changing places. A guide to multicultural books for children. IBBY Ireland. 20, Victoria Road Rathgar Dublin 6

Development Education Resources Guide. NCDE Resources in the area of development education, anti-racism and interculturalism.

Eist: Respecting diversity in early childhood care, education and training. Pavee Point Publication, 2001. An intercultural approach in creches, Montessori and early primary education.

Equality in Community Development. Anti-Racist Code of Practice. The National Community Development Programme. The Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs.

Guidelines for developing a whole organisation approach to addressing racism and supporting cultural diversity. 2003, NCCRI Free of charge.

Promoting an intercultural workplace: examples of good practice. Equality Authority. Clonmel Street, Dublin 2 01 417 3333 Free of charge.

Websites

www.tolerance.org: US site with information and resources for children, children and teachers. Links.

www.unitedagainstracism.org: list of 550 organisations from 49 countries working on refugees, racism, discrimination, nationalism and intercultural issues.

www.un.org/cyberschoobus: UN website. Racism and anti-racism resources for children and teachers, list of organisations.

<http://artsednet.getty.edu>: lesson plans and curriculum ideas to work in interculturalism and diversity through arts.

Training Providers

NCCRI

Access Ireland

Checklist

Practical steps to promote interculturalism:

- Visual materials display posters, a sign saying This organisation does not tolerate racism
- Cultural events celebrate different religious events, intercultural events, food, music, etc.
- Share positive stories about people from different ethnic backgrounds who use this service
- Attend conferences relating to anti-racism access information and publications
- Develop an anti-racism policy
- Have a committee / nominate a person responsible and accountable for the implementation of the policy
- Introduce a complaints procedures
- Provide training
- Access funding and resources to develop intercultural practices
- Comply with equality legislation be informed of equality legislation and implement it in your organisation
- Cater for diverse needs i.e. prayer room, allocation of annual leave, childcare, educational materials and tools (schools and childcare should reflect a multicultural society)
- Provide induction or orientation for people from new communities to learn about your organisation
- Offer access to interpreters and translation services translate literature
- Develop links with immigrant communities to inform them about our school, to seek advice on how our school can be more open to them, etc.
- Introduce systems to monitor, evaluate and assess how many people from ethnic minorities attend our school through ethnic data collection
- Advertise different events you are holding