

Multiculturalism Policy Our Lady of Lourdes NS

Scope:

This Policy Statement has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management, staff and parents of Our lady of Lourdes NS. It applies to all pupils in the school, to their parents and to all members of the school staff and management.

Relationship with the school Mission Statement:

While we are a Catholic school, this Policy Statement is in line with the school's Mission Statement to recognise the variety of differences existing between children and the need to accommodate these differences where possible. *"Equality is a key value in our school. We are an inclusive school community and welcome pupils of different nationalities, religions, cultures, abilities and ethnicity"*. The school will endeavour to ensure that the individuality of each child is taken into account, in an environment where they are valued. The school encourages pupils to see themselves as part of a community where all are entitled to live peacefully irrespective of age, sex, ethnic background, intelligence or family background.

Rationale:

The change in the composition of the local community is reflected in Our Lady of Lourdes National School as it integrates students from a variety of ethnic groups. 57% of our children are non- Irish. The Education Act (1998) aims to ensure the educational system respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership between schools, patrons, students, parents, teachers and other school staff. This policy statement sets out the means by which Our Lady of Lourdes National School will meet its obligations in this regard while safeguarding the legitimate interests of all of its pupils. We welcome all that is positive in this new diversity, instil an attitude of respect for the good of others and welcome pupils of other faiths and none.

Objectives:

The objectives of this policy statement are to:

- Create an environment in Our Lady of Lourdes NS where cultural diversity is acknowledged, respected, understood and celebrated.
- Acknowledge and actively confront racism.
- Provide information to parents in a way which takes account of the existence of a diversity of literacy levels as well as cultural and linguistic diversity, for example parent-teacher meetings, a visual school handbook, inviting parents in to the school for special events, etc
- Identify opportunities where parents and other members of the community can support the school, e.g. translation.
- Recognise that intercultural education includes the school structures, administration and curriculum.
- To carry out an audit of current provision and practice in relation to inclusion, diversity and intercultural education in our school
- Support a curriculum that focuses on equality and human rights rather than just illustrating cultural differences.

These objectives are achieved by the following:

- Enrolment of pupils from ethnic minority groups in the school:
 - The Enrolment Policy is open to all pupils irrespective of sex, ethnic background, special educational needs or family background.
- Anti Racism Policy
 - As outlined in the Anti racism Policy, A racist incident is behaviour or language that makes a person 'feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their colour, culture, religion, or national origin' (Richardson, 2004).
 - All reports of racism to a member of staff will be noted, investigated and dealt with by the member of staff and the principal. In this way, all members of the school community will be encouraged to "tell" about racist incidents within school
- Promotion of cultural visibility within the school:
 - Displays around the school, for example, Welcome display in school hall with world map and pictures of children in our school, class cultural corner etc.

- Multilingual signs, e.g., door signs, welcome sign
- Intercultural day Term 3, 2021 (Biennial)
- Promotion of parental involvement in school life
 - Encouraging involvement in Parents council
 - Strong links with Home-school teacher
 - Assisting with translation
 - Hosting language classes and other beneficial classes for parents
 - Helping organise intercultural events like Intercultural Day
 - By means of targeted coffee mornings international parents are encouraged to visit our school, to participate in their child's education and in school activities
- Promotion of intercultural education:
 - Lessons to develop intercultural awareness (See Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School, p. 49, for suggestions)
 - Run awareness raising activities during Friendship Fortnight/ European Anti-Racism week (March) and on Human Rights Day (10 December) promoting openness, diversity and inter-culturalism.
 - The school promotes an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance through the Social Personal and Health Education Programme, Stay Safe Programme and Circle Time.
 - Teachers have access to 'The Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School' to guide them in creating a welcoming classroom for pupils for whom English is a second language, and in communicating with their parents.
 - Lessons outlining human rights
 - Lessons to highlight issues related to racism
 - Participation in Yellow Flag programme.
 - Use of the 'Up and Away' language toolkit when teaching children for whom English is a second language

Implementation and Review Procedures:

The Policy Statement has been made available to school personnel and the Parent Teacher Association and is readily available to parents on school website.

This policy will be reviewed regularly by the Board of Management.

