



Integration Policy

Schedule for Developing, Monitoring and Review Policy

Approval by the Board of Governors:

November 2017

**The implementation of this
Policy will be monitored by:**

SLT

Monitoring and Reviewing:

Triennially, and as required following
any change to provision.

Rationale

This policy has been created to inform all members of the Glengormley Integrated Primary School and wider community of our integrated ethos and practice.

The school owes its re-birth to the hopes and dedication of parents, governors and staff. People, who differed greatly in background, shared a common desire to see children from different cultural and religious backgrounds educated together in an environment in which the traditions of all are valued equally. Our school transformed in 2003, catering for approximately one hundred children in Primary 1 - 7. By 2022 the school enrolment had grown to 300 children.

Aims/Objectives

This policy has been influenced by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Northern Ireland Equality Legislation.

The four core principles of integrated education - **equality, faith and values, parental involvement** and **social responsibility** - represent the cornerstones of the integrated ethos. Our school demonstrates its distinctiveness and vision through a commitment to these principles.

Equality

Our school promotes equality and sharing between and within the diverse groups that compose the school community.

- Equality is reflected in the school admissions criteria. Striving for religious/community balance is applicable not only to children but also to staff and governors.
- All school policies and teaching and learning aim to reflect the integrated ethos eg PDMU, Circle Time and the range of sports.
- The school community feels secure in demonstrating aspects of their identity regardless of social or cultural background, ability, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.
- We aim to provide equal access to the curriculum for all.

Faith and Values

- We provide Religious Education in accordance with the Department of Education and NICIE guidelines. While Christian in ethos, we aspire to create an environment where those of all faiths and none are respected, acknowledged and accepted as valued members of the school community.

- We endeavour to observe a range of different celebrations and seek to acknowledge significant religious and cultural events which are representative of other faiths. We also encourage religious/community leaders who respect our ethos to visit and participate in worship.
- We have regular assemblies to reflect different religious and/or cultural events.
- Roman Catholic children in Primary 3, 4 and 7 are prepared for the sacraments and close links have been developed with local clergy and schools.

Parental Involvement

The support and commitment of parents is a fundamental element of integrated education and historically parents have been central to the development of integrated schools.

- We maintain significant levels of parental representation on the Board of Governors (in accordance with legislative requirements and structures).
- We sustain effective parental involvement in the life of the school through the Board of Governors, PTA, curriculum experiences, trips and Integrated Education Month activities.
- We ensure parents are made fully aware of the integrated ethos through events such as those held during Integrated Education Month and throughout the year.

Social Responsibility

- We strive to deliver the curriculum on an all-ability and inclusive basis to all of its children. It respects the uniqueness of every child and acknowledges his/her entitlement to personal, social, intellectual and spiritual development in the attainment of individual potential.
- An emphasis is placed on nurturing self-confidence and self-respect.
- The school uses and promotes non-violent methods of conflict resolution eg through PDMU, peer mediation, buddy system.
- A range of charities and causes are selected/supported in order to reflect the integrated ethos of the school. In this way, children are encouraged to recognise those less fortunate than themselves, the oppressed and victims of injustice.

- The school is open to being used for appropriate community events organised by groups which support the integrated ethos.
- We actively engage with other integrated schools and other schools in the community. We have a strong relationship with Hazelwood IPS, Hazelwood IC and IC Glengormley as well as other integrated schools in the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council area to share and enhance our integrated ethos.

Integration and Inclusion in Practice

How we practice the principles of integration and inclusion will continue to evolve in response to new and emerging situations. Therefore, the following list is neither a definitive nor prescriptive indication of how we address and approach issues that are pertinent to the school community.

Balance

The School's Admission Policy reflects its integrated nature. Our school is committed to educating Protestant, Catholic and children from other faiths or those of none together. We strive to maintain a balanced enrolment with 40% of children from the Protestant tradition, 40% from its Catholic tradition and 20% from other traditions (in accordance with the NICIE Statement of Principles). In GIPS we are also committed to the active recruitment of staff and Governors in order to establish a balance in line with the 40/40/20 recommendations of NICIE. We deem it appropriate to maintain (where possible) a healthy gender balance and representation of skills and experience

Christian Ethos

In line with the NICIE Statement of Principles, our school is essentially Christian in character and teaches the prescribed Christian curriculum, with a focus on exploring other world religions. Teachers who are qualified in Roman Catholic instruction prepare children for the sacraments. Representatives of the Christian denominations and other World Faiths are invited to take part in school assemblies.

Sport

The school delivers the Northern Ireland Curriculum for Sport and Physical Education. This offers children a range of experiences in a variety of sporting activities. Children engage in sporting activities which cross the cultural and traditional divide in Northern Ireland.

Symbols

We are aware that some symbols and/or emblems may be perceived as controversial, however, we strive to promote an environment within the school where individuals feel comfortable wearing/displaying symbols or emblems of religious or cultural significance without fear. In doing so the school community should seek an understanding of such symbols/emblems and those wearing/displaying them should explain their significance whilst being sensitive to the views of others. Therefore, members of the school community are permitted to wear/display symbols and/or emblems that represent their affiliations or beliefs and may have particular religious or cultural significance for them. For example;

- Children and staff are permitted to express their individuality through the wearing of sports tops on non-uniform or specific days.
- Children and staff are permitted to wear poppies. Poppies are also distributed within the school.

Symbols or emblems that are deemed by the Board of Governors to be inappropriate or sectarian are not allowed to be worn or displayed.

Events

Our school is committed to providing its children with a diverse range of opportunities to explore or attend events that have social, cultural and/or religious significance. Such events may include: St Patrick's Day; 12 July; Christmas; Lent; Easter; Remembrance Day; Royal Family Events e.g. Wedding, Jubilee; Irish Presidential Events; All Ireland GAA Final; World Cup; Commonwealth Games; Chinese New Year; etc. As a school we feel it is important that children develop an understanding of these events and how they impact on people's lives and cultural identities.

Community Links

The school will endeavour to create opportunities for children to participate in activities with children from other controlled and maintained schools in the locality.

Links with Other Policies

Safeguarding & Child Protection

Pastoral Care

Religious Education

RSE