



# St. George's National School

## Intercultural and Anti-Racism Policy

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This document is a statement of the aims, principles and procedures of intercultural and anti-racism education in St. George's National School.

### **Our school aims to:**

- Create a happy, positive, caring and orderly atmosphere in our school environments.
- Promote co-operation, consultation and mutual respect between staff, pupils, parents and our local community.
- Provide support for children and families of our school community.
- Develop in our pupils positive and responsible attitudes, towards others as well as themselves.

### **The following definitions are used throughout this policy:**

**Racism:** The belief that some people are inferior because they belong to a certain ethnic, racial or cultural group. The belief leads to attitudes of prejudice and discriminatory actions. It reinforces relationships of unequal power.

*"A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person."*

**Discrimination:** is where one person is treated less favorably than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation on any of the nine grounds which exists, existed, may exist in the future, or is imputed to the person concerned. Indirect discrimination and discrimination by association are also prohibited.

**Multicultural education** is education for all which recognises cultural diversity from both local and global perspectives and which permeates all areas of the curriculum.

**Anti-racism education** is education for all in preparation for a diverse society. The parameters of injustice and inequality, which are inherent in our society, can manifest themselves as racism and racial discrimination. Anti-Racism education acknowledges these aspects and seeks to actively address them.

## The Equal Status Act, 2000

The legal position regarding equality and non-discrimination for service provision is grounded primarily in the Equal Status Act 2000.

The Equal Status Act 2000 promotes equality; prohibits certain kinds of discrimination (with some exceptions); prohibits sexual harassment and harassment on the nine discriminatory grounds listed below.

- Race ground: a particular skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin.
- The Traveller Community ground
- Religion ground: different religious belief, background, outlook or none
- Gender ground: man, woman or transsexual
- Marital status ground: single, married, separated, divorced or widowed.
- Family Status ground: pregnant or the resident primary carer
- Sexual Orientation ground: gay, lesbian or bisexual
- Disability ground: this is broadly defined including people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions
- Age ground: (this does not cover people under 18 years of age)

Within the Equal Status Act, three specific forms of discrimination are named: Direct Discrimination; Indirect Discrimination; and Discrimination by Association.

1. Direct Discrimination: this happens where a person is treated less favourably specifically on one of the nine discriminatory grounds.
2. Indirect Discrimination: is more subtle and harder to prove and happens where there is less favourable treatment in effect. It happens where people are refused a service not explicitly on account of a discriminatory reason but because of a practice or requirement that they found hard to satisfy. If the practice or requirement is found to have the effect of excluding a large amount of the protected group from the service, then the service provider would have indirectly discriminated, if the practice or requirement is not reasonable.
3. Discrimination by Association: this happens where a person associated with another person (belonging to the specified groups) is treated less favourable because of that association.

## **Staff/student roles and responsibilities**

All staff has a responsibility to report any racial incident to the Principal. The Principal will have responsibility for recording details of any racial incidents, and dealing with them in conjunction with the other teachers. The Principal will make sure that this policy will be readily available to staff, pupils, parents and visitors to the school so that all are aware of its contents and their responsibilities. All staff will be aware of what constitutes a racial incident and will promote positive behaviour, equal opportunities and the celebration of diversity throughout the school.

Responsibility and communication flows from each level to the next - both upwards and downwards.

All staff has a responsibility to ensure:

- the Code of Behaviour is maintained
- that there is an Intercultural Education approach to their teaching & inclusion of intercultural materials as part of curriculum work
- the ethos (core values and principles) of the school is followed
- there is training on policies (e.g. anti-racism & intercultural & anti-bullying policy) for staff and volunteers

The diversity committee will frequently review the structures of the school and look at how they can support the implementation of the Anti-Racism & Intercultural Policy.

The structure of our school is as follows:

- School Patron - Church of Ireland
- BOM
- Principal: Dr. Elaine Browne

- Deputy Principal: Ms. Laura Broadhead
- Teaching Staff
- Teachers with Special Duties
- Yellow Flag Link Teachers -Ms Laura Caldwell, Ms Rebecca Storey, Ms Jenny Corrie
- Yellow Flag Diversity Committee
- Parents Association
- Welcoming/Buddy students

The ethos of our school indicates that we value all members of our community. We encourage respect and consideration for others. We foster tolerance and sensitivity for the feelings and beliefs of others. This is our implicit policy.

Our school aims to be proactive and has an explicit and positive part to play with regard to multicultural and anti-racist education and this will permeate throughout the curriculum. For example:

- **Religious and Moral Education** - pupils will be taught about the religions, festivals, traditions and customs of others and through this learn to respect differences.
- **Social, Personal & Health Education** - through discussions, assemblies and the use of resources such as the Walk Tall programme /Stay Safe programme, pupils will be encouraged to look at feelings, attitudes, values and responsibilities of all citizens.
- **Environmental Studies** - in this context pupils will learn more about themselves and their place in the world's past, present and future.
- **Expressive Arts** - exposure to the creative traditions and celebrations of their own and other cultures will enable pupils to build up greater awareness and tolerance of similarities and differences.
- **Other Curricular Areas** - Initiatives such as the Green Schools group and special events such as Culture Day should also be recognised for the positive values and attitudes that they transmit to the whole school.

- **Resources** - the school will endeavour to ensure that our resources are free from stereotypical ideas and negative views of cultural and racial differences. We will provide resources that take account of the history, traditions and values of various community groups in our society. If teaching materials or texts with negative images of culture or race are found, they should be brought to the attention of the Principal

### **Implementation plan**

St. George's National School and the Yellow Flag Diversity Committee are committed to having:

- an equal say for everyone
- rules that don't discriminate
- a safe and fun and educational environment
- inclusion of all minority groups (students of all religions (and none), all cultures including members of the Traveller Community & Roma Community, LGBT students, students of all abilities and disabilities, diverse family status
- good child protection practice
- activities that promote inclusion and equality
- promotion of honesty, clarity and openness
- promotion of anti-bullying policy & anti-racist policy (including homophobic, racist, ageist or sexist language)
- defined disciplinary procedures

Ms. Browne and the Yellow Flag Diversity Committee have decided that St. George's will carry out the following additional actions in order to implement and support our Intercultural and Anti-Racist Policy:

- Maintain a Yellow Flag Diversity Committee Meeting (10 pupils in total, one pupil from each class from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>)

- Elect students every year to act as a buddy to new students
- Ask students new to the school how they wish to be introduced
- Refer to students by their name not by their ethnicity/nationality
- Avoid both positive and negative stereotyping of students who come from particular cultural backgrounds or nationalities.
- Avoid generalisations such as 'All African/Traveller etc.
- Display an intercultural interfaith calendar on the Yellow Flag noticeboard. Support students from the Diversity Committee to play a role in highlighting on the Notice Board the particular days of interest in each month. Use the calendar to plan events that celebrate National Days, Religious & cultural Festivals, Traveller Focus week etc.
- Make efforts to learn how to pronounce a child's full name including surname. To support teachers to learn students names that are new or unfamiliar to them, we will look at including in addition to the correct spelling of the name - the phonetic spelling/pronunciation of the name in the role book
- Have rules that don't discriminate
- Promote an open attitude
- Ensure a code of behaviour that doesn't tolerate bullying, racism, homophobia, sexism etc.
- Review school practices and procedures to check for possible barriers
- Provide an accessible school building - e.g. wheelchair accessible, welcoming

- Ensure that public spaces (i.e. school hall, lobby) demonstrate a welcome to people of all faiths and none
- Check visual material (e.g. posters etc.) in our school building to ensure it is not negative toward any one group
- Provide visual material in our school that promotes/supports inclusion & reflects the diversity represented in our school (posters, welcome signs etc.). Involve parents and pupils in developing welcome signs etc. in different languages including the Traveller language 'cant'.
- Ensure that school activities are appropriate (physically, culturally, etc.)
- Hold an annual Intercultural Week/Mother Tongue week & event. Support work for this to be carried out through the curriculum. Parents are invited into the school to teach some words of their native language to the students. Parents/pupils are also asked to prepare some traditional dishes from their country/culture and bring them in to school for the pupils to taste.
- Hold an Anti-Bullying/Anti-Racism week in September of every year.
- Hold a Friendship week in term 2 of every year. This will be organized in association with Amnesty International.
- Celebrate Seachtain na Gaeilge/Irish culture week in March of every year. During this week, Traveller and Roma culture will be celebrated.
- Maintain links & consult with the Fingal Traveller Development Group; Organise one visit per year for students to the Traveller site (in May or June).



- Build links & consult with other minority groups in the wider community, including Women of Multicultural Balbriggan (WOMB), Polish groups in the area.
- Equality proof our library to ensure that children from different national & cultural backgrounds including Traveller children can see themselves represented in books/curriculum work in the school. Work with parents to build up the intercultural resources in the school.
- Invite parents from different national, cultural & religious backgrounds including members of the Travelling Community in to do talks with the students & provide positive role modelling in the school.
- Ensure open and honest communication.
- Promote/provide anti-racism & intercultural training for staff, support staff to participate in training for trainers programme etc.
- Review its enrolment policy to ensure it doesn't unintentionally create any barriers to groups/students enrolment.

### **Procedure for Logging Racial Incidents at St. George's School**

All racist incidents are recorded and reported to the Principal. The school contacts parents of those pupils involved in racist incidents.

- 1 The incident must be reported to the Principal.
- 2 Action will be taken within the context of the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies.
- 3 The perpetrator(s) will be made aware of the effect the incident has on the victim.
- 4 The parents of the perpetrator(s) will be informed of the incident.
- 5 The Principal will record the incident.

- 6 If deemed necessary, a Multi-Agency Response may be required to provide a satisfactory outcome for all parties concerned.
- 7 All staff must be aware of the definition of a racist incident:  
*"A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person."*  
Incidents with a racial dimension could include the following (in no particular order of priority):
  - Physical assault
  - Racist graffiti
  - Derogatory name calling, insults and racist jokes
  - Racially offensive comments during a discussion
  - Bringing provocative and offensive racist materials to school, such as leaflets, comics or magazines
  - Wearing provocative and offensive badges and insignia
  - Verbal abuse and threats
  - Incitement of others to behave in a racist manner
  - Theft, damage to personal property
  - Ridicule
  - Name calling
  - Taunting
  - Threats and intimidation
  - Extortion

At St. George's School, the whole school should strive to ensure that everyone is valued as an individual regardless of race, religion, gender, disability, social class, nationality or any other real or perceived differences. Each person in school, whether pupil, staff, parent, or visitor should feel that he or she is treated with respect.

### **Review and Ratification**

This policy was reviewed and ratified in May 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2021 by staff and the Board of Management. It will be reviewed again in 2023.

B.O.M: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_