

Friends' School Lisburn



Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy

The Friends' School Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy is set within the context of the School's values. The aim of Friends' School is 'excellence within a caring, supportive community'. The values of Friends' School are based on a belief in the worth of each individual and on the importance of tolerance and understanding. The School welcomes pupils of all faiths and none.

Department of Education policy and guidance¹ provide the framework for the School's CRED Policy, which also links with the Friends' School Pastoral Care, Anti-Bullying, Child Protection and Relationships and Sexuality Education Policies.

Context for CRED Policy

It is recognised, and welcomed, that Northern Ireland is becoming an increasingly diverse society and that young people are interacting with others from many different religious, cultural and social backgrounds. Within School, both curricular and extra curricular activities give the opportunity for pupils to learn about others and to understand and respect difference, addressing the different aspects of Community Relations, Equality and Diversity.

The different aspects of CRED are defined by the Department of Education as follows:

Community Relations: to encourage greater cross-community contact and co-operation; to support, encourage and develop mutual understanding; and to promote recognition of and respect for cultural diversity.

Equality: the creation of an equal society, where everyone can participate and all have the opportunity to fulfil their potential

Diversity: the recognition of individual as well as group differences, treating people as individuals and placing positive value on diversity in the community.

Responsibilities

Members of the Board of Governors have an important role in promoting and encouraging the practical implementation of the CRED policy on a whole school basis.

All members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, have the responsibility to promote good community relations, equality of opportunity and a respect for diversity. The promotion of CRED involves Year Teachers and Collect teams, Heads of Departments and subject teachers and the Leadership Team.

Within the Friends' School Development Plan 2014-2017, CRED principles are intrinsic to the priority The School in the Community.

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The Department of Education has set down an overarching Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy and its aims and Core Principles are set down in Appendix 1.

Implementation of CRED

The School seeks to implement a whole school approach whereby all staff and pupils are involved and aims to promote CRED through the following ways:

- i. Providing opportunities for learning about CRED through different areas of the curriculum, including the Learning for Life and Work programme and other subjects. As part of the Key Stage 3 curriculum, Local and Global Citizenship is a contributory element of the Learning for Life and Work area of learning that includes a specific focus on exploring the range and extent of diversity in both local and global societies. It includes the four strands of: diversity and inclusion; human rights and social responsibility; equality and social justice; and democracy and active participation;
- ii. Whole school Assemblies and other planned events;
- iii. Involving pupils in activities through which they have the opportunity to link with pupils from other schools across different backgrounds and traditions;
- iv. Encouraging global awareness through initiatives such as the International Schools Award (2012-2015);
- v. Promoting service to others, in keeping with the Quaker ethos of the School;
- vi. Providing a broad range of extra curricular activities, visits and tours through which pupils have the opportunity to work with others and learn about different cultures and traditions;
- vii. The School's active participation in the Lisburn Area Learning Community and collaboration with schools across the community in meeting the requirements of the Entitlement Framework;
- viii. Encouraging pupils to be active members of the school community through bodies such as the School Council;
- ix. Working with staff from external agencies;
- x. Promoting staff development through staff training and support to enable members of staff to teach all aspects of CRED and to use different strategies in order to do so.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of the CRED Policy will be evaluated annually through the evaluation of the School Development Plan. Use will also be made of the Quality Indicators set down by the Department of Education and evidence will be gathered from a range of sources, including staff and pupil evaluations and questionnaires and examples of pupils' work.

Consultation with staff, pupils and parents will inform planning.

The CRED Policy will be kept under regular review.

ANNEX 1 Department of Education Guidance

Overarching Aim of CRED Policy:

To contribute to improving relations between communities:

- a) by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and a respect for others, to promote equality and to work to eliminate discrimination; and
- b) by providing opportunities for them to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions through formal and non-formal education within the resources available.

Core Principles

The principles which guide the CRED policy, and consequently those who receive funding through the policy, are to:

- Adopt an approach in which the needs of children and young people are paramount;
- Support the progressive development of the self-esteem of children and young people and their knowledge of the importance of equality and diversity;
- Be responsive to the specific CRED needs of children and young people and their communities and set out clearly the agreed expected outcomes for meeting those needs effectively;
- Involve children and young people in planning, for, and evaluating the effectiveness of, CRED interventions;
- Provide equal access to opportunities for meeting and working with others to children and young people both within and outside mainstream formal and non-formal education;
- Provide opportunities for meaningful interaction between different groups with a view to having a positive influence on the development of improved understanding and relationships in their community;
- Demonstrate the relevance and connectedness of CRED activities to the formal and non-formal curricula, to improving outcomes for children and young people, and to linking to other education and wider Government policies, including strengthening the economy;
- Encourage the concept of active learning which is underpinned by the formal and non-formal curricula;
- Complement and support the work of formal and non-formal education settings in improving the achievements of children and young people;
- Recognise and add to the existing collaboration and partnership between schools, youth groups, colleges and training organisations to meet better the needs of children and young people;
- Take account of the different starting positions for each individual, group of children and young people, formal or non-formal education setting and the communities in which they live and work; and
- Show case best practice and support and encourage the sharing of skills across and between the formal and non-formal sectors.