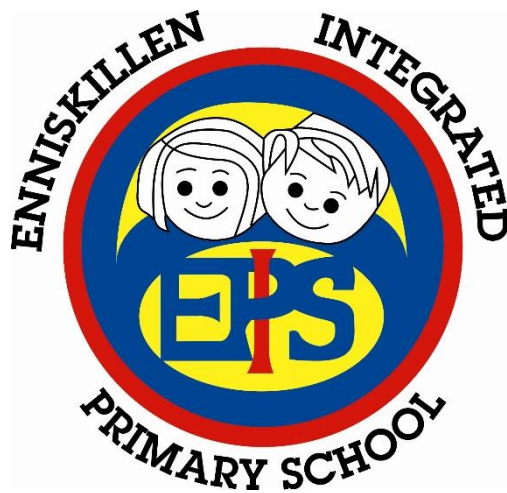




**Enniskillen Integrated Primary School
and
Nursery Unit**



**Integration & Inclusion in
Practice**

April 2016

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Appendix 1:

Provides information about links to the following:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998
- Statement of Principles for Integrated Education

1. Introduction

Of the 11 Aims specified in Enniskillen Integrated Primary School's and Nursery Unit (EIPS) School Development Plan (SDP), at least 4 relate directly to the schools Integrated¹ Ethos and Values, they are:

- To help children develop respect for religious and moral values and tolerance of other races, religions and ways of life
- To help children to know about and value both their own culture and traditions and those of others with different cultures and traditions
- To help children to learn the importance of resolving differences and conflict by peaceful and creative means
- To help children understand the world in which they live and the inter-dependence of individual groups and nations

In November 2009, as part of the schools Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion, EIPS held two 'twilight' training sessions, facilitated by David Gardiner (Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education – NICIE), to explore the theme of 'Integrated Education in Practice'. One session involved the entire staff team, whilst the other involved parents and governors.

Following on from these well-received sessions, parents and governors were invited to form a working group to further explore the issues raised. A small working group met on a number of occasions and agreed to audit the views of the entire parent population of the school. A short questionnaire, distributed in May/June 2010, was designed to give parents an opportunity to express their views and ideas, and raise any issues of concern, in relation to how the school approaches and addresses issues of diversity, difference, inclusion and what might be termed 'Integration in Practice'

67 responses (approx. 1/3rd of the entire parent/family population of the school) were received and analysed. The views of respondents and of school staff have been instrumental in the development of this paper.

The purpose of this paper is:

- To make the Integrated Principles and Practice of the school clear and explicit
- To ensure Integration and Inclusion remains high on the agenda of the school community and to encourage continuous development and improvement of the schools Integration and Inclusion practice
- To enable the school to provide clear information to existing and prospective parents/children, and the wider public, which serves to both clarify the school's Integrated approach and encourage engagement and dialogue around these constantly evolving matters

¹ **Integrated Education** brings together in one school, children, parents, teachers and governors from both main traditions in Northern Ireland (Catholic and Protestant), seeking to achieve a 40:40 ethnic/religious balance, with scope for 20% who designate themselves 'Other'. The Department of Education accepts a balance of 70:30 (with 30% coming from whichever is the smaller religious group in the area) as a minimum requirement for a new school to be recognised as Integrated. Integrated education creates an intentional learning environment, where children learn from and with each other, and develop understand for diverse cultural, religious and ethnic practices and perspectives. Parental involvement is a central value of Integrated Education, with a high level of parents on the Board of Governors.

2. School's History

Enniskillen Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit is situated on the outskirts of Enniskillen town and is within walking distance of Erne Integrated College.

The primary school opened in 1989, in mobile classrooms, with 64 children. EIPS is a co-educational and non-fee-paying school Grant Maintained Integrated (GMI) Primary School, which is open to all children irrespective of social, cultural or religious background.

The school was inspected in November 2000 and the excellent report concluded:

"A great strength of the school is its positive and harmonious ethos; relationships at all ^[11]_[SEP] levels are excellent. There is a strong sense of community within the school; the Principal, staff and governors have created a valuable corporate spirit"

In September 2007 the school moved into a new permanent building on the same site. Current accommodation, resources and outside play area/facilities are of the highest standard. The Nursery Unit is in a separate permanent building across the road from the primary school.

The school has recently achieved the Investors in People Award, with part of the report stating:

"Enniskillen Integrated Primary School is an exceptional school, classed as unique by Governors, parents, staff and pupils. Throughout the review it was evident that this is due to the wonderful atmosphere that has been created throughout the school by the management team, led by an inspirational Principal. The new building that has been designed to provide an environment that is conducive to learning also plays a vital part in the success of the school. Other contributory factors in the success are:

- *The highly competent and dedicated staff*
- *The extensive learning and development programmes provided on an on-going basis and clearly linked to the schools objectives*
- *The team working ethos created by the Principal's open and supportive management style*
- *All staff strive to achieve the school's objectives*
- *The involvement of all staff in the decision-making process, in particular the preparation of the School Development Plan"*

The Primary School has a current enrolment of 219 pupils and the Nursery Unit 26.

The school and Nursery Unit were inspected in March 2011 – the quality of the overall provision was 'OUTSTANDING.'

19% of pupils are entitled to Free School Meals.

The majority of children live in the surrounding area, although the school has pupils from across County Fermanagh. Five buses are required to serve the school

3. School Vision & Mission Statement

School Vision

EIPS's Vision is presented using the school's own acronym:

Enjoying Education

Including All

People

Striving to Succeed

School Mission Statement

The school's Mission Statement is presented in the following commitments.

We are committed to:

- ← The aims of Integrated Education.
- ← Child Centred Education.
- ← Working closely with parents in the education of their children.
- ← High academic standards.
- ← Developing positive and effective pastoral care systems in our school
- ← This achieved through the commitment of our staff and the realisation of the creativity and the learning potential of all our employees.

4. Values of Integrated Education

The Integration and Inclusion practice of EIPS is informed from a number of important sources and key values. Primary among these are the four core principles of Integrated Education - **equality, faith and values, parental involvement** and **social responsibility** – representing the cornerstones of the integrated ethos.

The principles of **Equity, Diversity and Interdependence² (EDI)** are also regarded as important, and both the practice and the supporting policy of EIPS has been further influenced and informed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Northern Ireland Equality Legislation (See Appendix 1)

EIPS seeks to demonstrate its distinctiveness, vision and Integrated Ethos through a commitment to these values and principles, which are further elaborated and related to EIPS below.

Core principles of Integrated Education

Equality

EIPS promotes equality, sharing and learning between and within the diverse groups that comprise the school community.

- Equality is reflected in the school admissions criteria. Work to achieve religious / community balance is related not only to pupils but also to staff and governors

² See: The Equity, Diversity and Interdependence Framework - A Framework for Organisational Learning and Change. Developed by Karin Eyben, Duncan Morrow, Derick Wilson (UU – Future Ways) and Billy Robinson (Counteract)

- Equality is reflected in school policies and teaching and learning. The Integrated and Inclusive ethos is reinforced through PDMU (Personal Development & Mutual Understanding) in the primary curriculum
- Equality is reflected in the School Curriculum:
 E.g. PE – there is and will continue to be provision for a wide range of sports, such as Gaelic games / rugby / hockey, etc, to reflect the diversity within the school community and enable children to try-out and participate in activities they might otherwise feel excluded from
 E.g. English or History – texts will be carefully chosen to ensure that a wide / full range of viewpoints are explored
- Equality is reflected in how the school approaches and manages sensitive social, cultural, religious or political events. Provision will be made, where possible, to enable children at key stages and / or the entire school community to explore, experience and learn from a diverse range of such events and occasions, E.g. sporting events (such as All Ireland county GAA victory, European / World Cup soccer games, wearing particular and historically contentious team shirts), State funerals, Remembrance Day, commemoration of the Easter Rising, Ash Wednesday arrangements, Harvest etc
- Equality is reflected in how every individual is encouraged and supported to feel secure in demonstrating aspects of their identity regardless of social or cultural background, ability, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation, E.g. Non uniform days that explore and express diversity, celebration of events of personal, cultural or religious significance, explicit permission given and support for those who wish to wear the poppy or shamrock or other non-offensive symbols of religious and/or cultural affiliation, etc
- Equality is reflected in how the schools Uniform Policy which regulates and facilitates individuality, diversity and mutual responsibility (e.g. Health and Safety) in regard to matters such as the wearing of religious accessories, jewellery etc
- EIPS strive for equality across the entire school community as it aspires to optimum academic achievement for all, within an all-ability, co-educational and Integrated framework that provides equal access and support / care for all

Faith and Values

- EIPS provides Religious Education in accordance with the Department of Education and NICIE guidelines. While essentially Christian in ethos, we seek to create an environment where those of all faiths and none are respected, acknowledged and accepted as equally valued members of the school community
- EIPS observes a range of different celebrations and seeks to acknowledge significant religious and cultural events, which are representative of other faiths. We also encourage selected religious / community leaders, who respect our ethos, to visit to share their own views and experiences and / or participate in worship.
- EIPS uses school assemblies to explore and reflect on different religious and / or cultural events
- EIPS supports and facilitates those who wish to prepare for particular sacramental milestones or events, E.g. First Communion
- EIPS supports and facilitates those pupils whose parents do not wish them to participate in any religious activities and classes, by providing appropriate and agreed alternatives

Parental Involvement

The support and commitment of parents has been a fundamentally important element for the development of Integrated Education, and remains so.

- EIPS maintains significant levels of parental representation on the Board of Governors (in accordance with legislative requirements and structures).
- EIPS works to sustain and further develop effective parental involvement in the life of the school, at all levels, E.g. Board of Governors, Parent Council and regular audits of parent's views on key school policy or practice issues
- EIPS ensures that parents (and prospective parents) are made fully aware of the Integrated Ethos, through invitation to Integration focused training and awareness raising events, as well as clear and specific reference to the Integration in all written information provided for parents
- EIPS is cognisant of the need to provide school related information in a range of formats and languages, E.g. Braille and 'mother-tongue' languages, to meet the needs of the parent population of the school, and will take all reasonable measures to do so

Social Responsibility

- EIPS delivers the curriculum on an all - ability and inclusive basis to all of its pupils. It respects the uniqueness of every pupil and acknowledges their entitlement to personal, social, intellectual and spiritual development in the attainment of their individual potential, and places a particular emphasis on creating a 'safe' learning environment and nurturing self confidence and self-respect (See Pastoral Care Policy)
- EIPS uses and promotes non violent methods of conflict resolution (eg. peer mediation, buddy system restorative justice)
- EIPS supports and promotes a wide range of charities and causes, selected in order to reflect the Integrated Ethos of the school. Pupils are therefore encouraged to be aware of and seek, where possible, to support / help those less fortunate than themselves
- EIPS is open to being used for appropriate community events, organised by groups supporting the integrated ethos. In this way the school is keen to be considered and used as a shared civic space. Furthermore, EIPS is an active member of the wider community, E.g. through engagement in the Fermanagh Trust Shared Education Programme, etc, and will seek to play a meaningful and responsible role in the wider community development and capacity building
- EIPS actively engages with other Integrated schools through APTIS and the Integrated Schools Teachers Committee, etc.

Equity, Diversity and Interdependence - EDI

It is further proposed that the principles of 'Equity, Diversity and Interdependence' underpin a just and inclusive society.

- Equity is about ensuring that all sections of society have equal opportunities to participate in economic, political and social life through the addressing and redressing of inequalities

- Diversity is about acknowledging how our differences as individual human beings and as members of groups can improve the quality of our lives
- Interdependence is about recognising that we are shaped by our relationships, and that our potential as human beings and as a society is dependent on the quality of our relationships with one another

At EIPS we believe this means we should seek to:

- Actively include those from marginalised backgrounds and minority perspectives (**Equity**)
- Value the diversity of local communities and give space, expression and respect to the unique contributions of all our children (**Diversity**)
- Develop a relational understanding of our place and purpose in the community (**Interdependence**)

5. Integration and Inclusion in Practice

How Enniskillen Integrated Primary School practices the principles of Integration and Inclusion will, necessarily, evolve over time and in response to new and emerging situation's/senario's. By its very nature, a school community is dynamic and to some extent unpredictable. Unexpected issues, unusual areas of enquiry/activity and new twists on old issues are constantly emerging. Therefore, the following themes and areas of activity, are provided as examples of either the school's existing approach or proposed new approaches, based on a combination of past practice, recent work, including feedback from the parent audit (May/June 2010), and up-to-date advice and learning about good or best educational practice. The following list is neither definitive, nor prescriptive, rather it is an indication and example of how EIPS addresses and approaches some of the issues that are pertinent to the school community.

It is expected that this list and these matters will be amended and added to in an on-going, continuous and progressive manner to reflect the school's learning and the changing environment. As such, this paper should be viewed as an organic document, which both describes and informs the day-to-day Integration and Inclusion practice at the school and is subject to on-going revision. The date and copy number indicates the date of last revision.

Balance of Pupils (diversity in community/religious/ethnic/class background)

Principles: Intentionally diverse; valuing diverse experiences and perspectives; actively seeking learning and personal & group development opportunities that recognise the diversity within the school, the community and beyond; committed to the active recruitment of pupils in order to work towards and achieve community/religious balances as described by NICIE and DE.

Current approach: The school's admissions policy reflects it's Integrated nature. EIPS is committed to educating Protestant, Catholic and 'Other' children together, and strives to maintain a balanced enrolment, with a minimum of 40% of pupils from the Protestant tradition, 40% from the Catholic tradition and up to 20% from Other traditions (in accordance with the Statement of Principles of NICIE).

As both Nursery and Primary School are both oversubscribed each year, the current enrolment balance is as follows: Nursery (26) – 10 RC; 10 P; 6 Other, Primary School (30) – 12 RC; 12 P; 6 Other.

Balance of Staff and Governors (diversity in community/religious/ethnic/class background)

Principles: Intentionally diverse; valuing diverse experiences and perspectives; actively seeking to include the views, interests and needs of minority perspectives in the staff and governance structures of the school

community; committed to the active recruitment of staff and Governors in order to work towards and achieve community/religious balances as described by NICIE and DE.

Current approach: EIPS ensures (at recruitment and through on-going in-service training and support) that all staff embrace and support the principles and practice of Integrated Education. The school aspires to a balance of staff across the whole school, in-line with the 40/40/20 recommendations of NICIE. The same is true of Governors, with appropriate attention being paid in both instances to a necessary and healthy gender balance, and representation of skills and experience.

Integrated Education

Principles: Deliberate provision of an ethnically/religiously diverse and balanced school community; Provision of creative and supportive learning for children around issues of cultural, political and religious diversity (i.e. *learning with and from each other*); Clear and explicit communication about the school's Integrated and Inclusive values and approaches to both parents and the wider community.

Current approach: EIPS is an intentional and planned Integrated school, which encourages and supports pupils and staff to explore, value and seek to learn from ethnic, cultural and religious diversity. The Integrated nature of EIPS is both explicit (*deliberately explored and expressed through the curriculum other and planned activities*) and implicit (*found in the relationships and ways of relating to each other that have developed and continue to evolve within the Integrated Ethos of the school*). EIPS ensures that the whole school has opportunity to review and refresh its Integrated Ethos through the provision of training (e.g. via NICIE) and inter-school activities (e.g. Audits)

Christian Ethos

Principle: In-line with the NICIE Statement of Principles, EIPS *"is essentially Christian in character...and shall provide a Christian rather than a secular approach and context"*.

Current approach: As such EIPS teaches the prescribed (DE) Christian curriculum, with a particular focus on exploring other world religions. Provision is made for any children who wish to prepare for the Christian sacraments. Local clergy/ministers from all denominations are invited to contribute to whole school assemblies.

Provision is also made for any child whose parents request that their children not participate in any of the religious events or activities of the school community.

Sport

Principle: Deliberate provision of a diverse range of sporting opportunities to reflect the diversity of the local community and beyond

Current approach: EIPS provides sport and PE in-line with the prescribed (DE) curriculum. Additionally, EIPS provides extra-curricular PE and sports related opportunities designed to enable the pupils to engage in PE and sports related activities that are new to them and representative of communities other than their own.

Symbols (of cultural, religious or ethnic significance/affiliation)

Principle: Whilst EIPS is conscious that some symbols and/or emblems may be perceived as controversial, it is also keen to create and nurture an environment within the school where individuals feel able to wear/display symbols or emblems of religious or cultural significance, that are important to them, without fear. As such, the whole school community is encouraged to be curious and seek understanding, and those who wish to wear any symbols or emblems, which might be perceived as controversial, are encouraged to do so mindful of the potential impact of what they wear and prepared to engage constructively with their colleagues and pupils.

Current approach: Explicit permission exists within the schools community for individual pupils and/or staff to wear/display symbols and/or emblems that represent their affiliations or beliefs and may have particular religious or cultural significance for them.

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

Pupils are permitted to express their individuality through the wearing of Sport's Tops at specified times or on specific days.

Events (of cultural, religious or ethnic significance)

Principle: EIPS is committed to providing it's pupils with a diverse range of opportunities to explore and learn from and about events that have some social, cultural and/or religious significance within the local community and, if appropriate, more widely in society.

Current approach: EIPS provides it's pupils with a diverse range of opportunities to explore and learn from and about events that have some social, cultural and/or religious significance within the local community and, if appropriate, more widely in society. These may include: St Patrick's Day; 12th July; Christmas; Easter; British Royal events (e.g. wedding); Irish Presidential events (e.g. visit); All-Ireland GAA Final; Commonwealth Games; etc.

The Board of Governors reserves the right to amend this policy as it sees fit.

APPENDIX 1:

- The United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child: <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>
- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998:
<http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/GuidetoStatutoryDuties0205.pdf>
- NICIE Statement of Principles for Integrated Education:
<http://www.nicie.org/aboutus/default.asp?id=27>