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1. Introduction:

The rationale behind our Integration Policy is to outline the aims and objectives of integration in accordance with the NICIE Statement of Principles and within Loughries Integrated Primary School and the wider community.

2. School History:

Loughries Integrated Primary School enjoys a pleasant rural setting just 3 miles from Newtownards, close to the shores of Strangford Lough. The school was established in 1842 and continues to be highly regarded as a provider of quality education. The school transformed to integrated status in September 2016. Since then, the school community has been working to develop and expand our integrated ethos and practice.

3. School Mission Statement:

Loughries Integrated Primary School fosters a nurturing environment which encourages, supports, develops and challenges each child to reach their full potential.

We endeavour to equip our pupils with the skills and qualities needed to work together for a shared future.

4. School Aims:

Learn, Integrate, Participate, Succeed

5. Values of Integration and Inclusion:

Equality:

- Equality is reflected in the admission criteria. We are working towards achieving a religious / community balance amongst our pupils, staff and governors.
- Equality is reflected in school policies and teaching and learning. PDMU is used to reinforce the integrated and inclusive ethos.
- Equality is reflected in the school curriculum e.g. Literacy / World Around Us - a wide range of texts will be carefully chosen to ensure a full range of viewpoints are explored.

- Equality is reflected in how our pupils are encouraged to feel secure in demonstrating aspects of their identity and forming understanding and acceptance of those whose identity is different from their own. Provision is made where possible to enable children to explore, experience and learn from a diverse range of events and occasions.
- A school uniform is worn to promote equality and give the children a common school identity.
- Loughries Integrated 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, support and care for all.

Faith and Values:

- Loughries Integrated Primary School provides Religious Education in accordance with the Department of Education and NICIE guidelines. 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.
- Loughries Integrated Primary School observes a range of different celebrations and seeks to acknowledge significant religious and cultural events, which are representative of other faiths and/or nationalities. We also invite selected religious / community leaders, who respect our ethos, to participate in our assemblies.
- Loughries Integrated Primary School uses school assemblies to explore religious and/or cultural events, as well as explore a variety of universal themes.
- Loughries Integrated Primary School will do whatever is within our power to facilitate those who wish to prepare for particular sacramental milestones or events. E.g. First Communion
- Loughries Integrated Primary School supports and facilitates those pupils whose parents do not want them to participate in any religious activity or classes, by providing appropriate agreed activities.

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.

- Loughries Integrated Primary School maintains 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 school through the Board of Governors, Parent, Teacher and Friends Association, the school website and social media and home-school communication.
- The integrated ethos of the school is communicated to, and shared with parents via our Open Mornings, start of year meetings and through our prospectus and other relevant written communications.
- Parents are invited to attend training / information events on integration.
- Efforts are made, when necessary, to provide information in a range of formats specific to the needs of our parents.

Social Responsibility:

- Loughries Integrated Primary School values, respects and celebrates the uniqueness of every individual child.
- We strive to develop the whole child - socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically and intellectually.
- We strive to deliver the curriculum in a manner so as to develop every child to their full potential, regardless of ability or background.
- We seek to create a caring atmosphere in which the pastoral needs of pupils are put first.
- The school operates a Positive Behaviour Policy - we endeavour to equip our pupils with the skills and qualities needed to work together for a shared future.
- LOUGHRIES INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL supports a variety of charities and causes, selected to reflect the integrated ethos of the school. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of, and where possible, to support / help those less fortunate than themselves.

6. Integration and Inclusion in Practice:

How Loughries Integrated Primary School practices the principles of Integration and Inclusion will evolve over time, and in response to new and emerging situations and scenarios. As a recently transformed integrated school we anticipate our school community to change and develop over time. The following list is neither definitive nor prescriptive, rather it is an indication of how Loughries Integrated Primary School addresses and approaches some of the issues that are pertinent to the school community.

Balance of Pupils:

Principles: Intentionally diverse; valuing diverse experiences and perspectives; actively seeking learning and personal and group development opportunities that recognize 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 in NICIE and DE.

Current Approach:

The school's Admission Criteria reflects its integrated nature. Loughries Integrated Primary School is committed to educating Protestant, Catholic and 'Other' children together, and strives to achieve a balanced enrollment of 40% of pupils in the Protestant community, 40% from the Catholic community and 20% from other communities (in accordance with the Statement of Principles of NICIE). Our current enrollment in 2018/19 is 11% Catholic, 59% Protestant and 30% other.

Balance of Staff and Governors:

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 achieve community/religious balances as described by NICIE and DE.

Current approach: Loughries Integrated Primary School ensures (at recruitment and through ongoing 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 the 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: Loughries Integrated Primary School is a transformed 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 Loughries Integrated Primary School is both explicit (deliberately explored and expressed through the curriculum and other planned activities) and implicit (found in the relationship and the ways of relating to each other that have developed and continue to evolve within the integrated ethos of the school). P3/4 explore 'Celebrating Differences Programme', P5/6 explore 'Knowing Me, Knowing You Programme' and 'Flags and Symbols' are explored in P7. PDMU / Circle Time resources have been purchased which improve teachers' ability to develop each child's personal, emotional, social and physical wellbeing. Each teacher builds each pupil's self-esteem, develops confidence and develops the skill of working together and consideration of others' feelings and valuing other people. During Circle Time teachers develop respect for all people no matter their culture, disability, intelligence or race. Issues of Integration are discussed during Circle Time. The Music Co-ordinator has explored the two main traditions of music and incorporated this into future purchases for assemblies, shows and instruments. P7 have a training day each year on Leadership and Games for younger children. The P7 Buddy system is implemented each year. A link has been developed with Strangford Integrated College, with our P7 class visiting each year. The Principal and the Year 8 teachers from Strangford work together on a project to help with transferring from P7 to Year 8. Key Stage 2 children have been involved with the Carson Art Project. All staff have participated in training provided by NICIE on the integrated ethos and the majority of staff have received training in the Anti-Bias curriculum. Teachers have reviewed their class library materials to reflect the integrated ethos. The school participates in Integrated Education Month each March, exploring the theme and fundraising for the IEF.

Christian Ethos

Principle: In line with the NICIE statement of principles, Loughries Integrated Primary School 'is essentially Christian in character...and shall provide a Christian rather than secular approach and context'.

Current approach: Loughries Integrated Primary School teaches the prescribed DE Christian curriculum, with a particular focus on exploring other world religions, including Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Buddhism. Provision will be made for children whose parents wish for them to be prepared for the Christian Sacraments. Local clergy/ministers, from all denominations are invited to participate in whole-school activities. Provision is also made for any child whose parents request that they do not participate in any religious lessons or events.

Sports

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

Current: Loughries Integrated Primary School provide sport and physical education in line with the prescribed (DE) curriculum.

Symbols:

Principle: Whilst Loughries Integrated Primary School 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/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 to be controversial, are encouraged to do so, mindful of the potential impact of what they wear and be prepared to engage constructively with their colleagues, pupils and peers.

Current Approach: Pupils are permitted to express their individuality through the wearing of their own clothes / Sport's Tops at specified times or on specified days linked to curriculum activities. Remembrance Day Poppies are sold in school and pupils are permitted to wear these. Religious and cultural symbols are explored in class through the curriculum.

Events:

Principle: Loughries Integrated Primary School is committed to providing its pupils with a diverse range of opportunities to explore and learn from and about events that have social, cultural and/or religious significance within the local community and, if appropriate, more widely in society.

Current: Loughries Integrated Primary School provides its pupils with opportunities to explore and learn from and about events that have some social, cultural and/or religious significance within the local and, if appropriate more widely in society. These include, Remembrance Day, St Patrick's Day, Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Royal Weddings. Chinese New Year is explored in detail in P3/4.