

## North Bay Educate Together National School

### Philosophy and Ethos

North Bay National School Project is an a Multi-denominational /Intercultural school. It is a school which celebrates diversity and where the promotion of equality amongst people irrespective of class, gender, race, religion, lifestyle etc. is the underlying philosophy guiding the day to day work of the school. This philosophy permeates the life of the school and is reflected in organisational, curricular and pedagogical strategies.

North Bay was founded in 1990 by a group of parents committed to the principles of the Educate Together movement. These Principles are:

**The Multi -denominational principle:** All children have equal access to the school and children of all social and cultural groups, and of all religions and non-religious backgrounds are equally respected.

**Co-Education principle:** All children are encouraged to fulfil their potential irrespective of gender in a school setting that is committed to equal opportunities for girls and boys.

**Child Centred principle :** The school offers a child centred curriculum in which the teacher guides and facilitates the child's learning through both formal and informal methods while encouraging the child to be an active participant in his/her learning. Each child is encouraged to learn at his/her pace and individual learning needs are met in so far as class size allows. Parents are actively encouraged to participate and contribute to the development of the curriculum.

**Democratically Run:** The School is run by two committees the Board of Management and the Executive Committee. These are democratic in character Parents play an active part in these committees.

The Executive Committee (the patron body) set out the ethos of the school through a written statement of aims.

**AIMS:**

- ~To give the children a basic sense of personal, social, ethical and moral standards.
- ~To implement the multi-denominational principle of the school through a critical appreciation of all cultures and religious beliefs, in a spirit of enquiry and mutual respect.
- ~To promote equality amongst people regardless of gender, class, ethnicity, ability or lifestyle.
- ~To encourage the development of the individual through the promotion of a healthy sense of self and an ability to express emotions.
- ~To create an understanding of the human mind and body. This includes appropriate sex education.
- ~To encourage initiative, independence, critical thinking and creativity.
- ~To help children face up to adversity in life.
- ~To provide the children with peaceful strategies for conflict resolution.
- ~To foster an awareness of each person's responsibilities, with due regard for the rights and needs of others, within small groups, such as the family, the school, the local community and within the wider Irish, European and global contexts.
- ~To provide a critical understanding of social and political structures and group influences.
- ~To promote a critical awareness of the mass media through explorations of images, bias and consumerism. Particular attention should be focused on stereotypical images of gender, race and class and of developing countries.
- ~To instil a sense of respect for, and appreciation of, the environment which we all share, and to take an active role in conservation.

These aims are delivered through both the formal and informal curricula of the school through an inclusive approach to curriculum which embraces, what we teach, how we teach and teaching materials and resources we use.

### **School Ethos**

- **School Environment:** The intercultural ethos and atmosphere of the school is reflected in the physical environment of the school, for example in a -welcome sign in the different languages of the children in the school and in displays in the corridors, in the class rooms and in the library books available to the children of positive Intercultural Images.
- **The spirit of the school** is expressed in a celebratory environment where special days, religious festivals and other special events pertaining to the children's cultural backgrounds are celebrated. School assemblies reflect this ethos and are held around themes such as "Friendship", "Rich and Poor -Harvest Festival" etc.
- **The school code of behaviour and discipline** is built around the positive principles of respect for oneself, respect for others, respect for the school, the outside world and for the code of behaviour. It aims to promote "a telling culture" where children feel able to report bullying episodes, racist incidents and name calling and know that the perpetrators of such incidents will be challenged. Children are also provided with strategies for negotiation and the peaceful resolution of conflict.
- **Language:** It is the policy of North Bay to affirm and acknowledge each child's mother tongue and to encourage the bi-lingual children to contribute to the curriculum.
- **Parent Partnership:** Parents are encouraged to get involved in the everyday life of the school. Their contributions can greatly enrich the learning of the children. Their involvement is at many levels from serving on committees to helping to cover the library books, to organising extra-curricular activities based on their skills, to contributions in the classroom and fundraising

- **Code of practise for ancillary staff:** The caretaker, secretary, class room assistant, work experience students, etc are made aware of the intercultural nature of the school, the code of behaviour and the strategies used to resolve conflict.
- **Staff development** Awareness of intercultural issues are promoted through staff development seminars, discussions, courses, etc.

### **Formal Curriculum:**

#### **Ethical Core Curriculum.**

This is a curriculum that encompasses personal , social and moral development by covering a wide range of social, religious, moral and ethical issues. The cultural background of the children including their religious, or non-religious philosophies and beliefs are drawn on in this area and are used as a significant resource to illuminate the principles of the school and to affirm and build up the self esteem of all our children. This part of the curriculum encompasses a programme of self esteem, health and sexuality education, anti-racist modules, gender modules, the major religions etc.

#### **National Curriculum Revised**

An Intercultural dimension is also central to the National Curriculum as it is delivered in North Bay and the ethical programme and ethos are linked and integrated as far as possible into the delivery of the Revised Curriculum.

Creating a school where no child is an outsider is the continuing task and challenge before us.

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