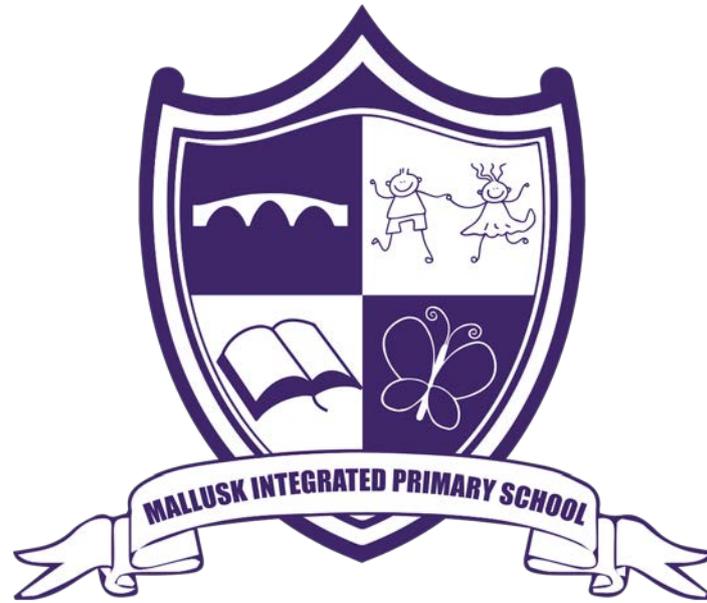


Mallusk Integrated Primary School



Integration Policy

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1. **Introduction:**

We have developed this policy-

- To ensure equality and mutual respect in our school community, including pupils, staff and Governors
- To ensure a provision of a learning environment where children from all faith backgrounds or none can learn together, respecting the diversity within our school and the wider community
- To ensure the promotion of equality and good relations in the school and the wider community
- To ensure development of relationships with religious and community leaders
- To encourage effective parental involvement in the life and work of the school
- To provide a holistic approach which develops our children's potential

2. **School's History**

There has been a school at Mallusk since 1936. In recent years, there had been a significant change in the demographics in the area. According to the 2011 Census there had been an increase in the Roman Catholic population. Mallusk now had a population of 45% Roman Catholic and 47% Protestant/ other. There was no school in this location to address this change.

A group of parents began working with NICIE in October 2013. The IEF provided a grant to help explore transformation. They worked to gauge interest in the idea and the results were extremely positive. They worked with Governors to initiate a parent ballot in April of 2014 and this revealed enough support within the school community to initiate the transformation process.

The Governors worked with NICIE to develop and implement an Action Plan and then published their Development Proposal in September 2014. On June 16th 2015, the Education Minister gave approval for the school to transform to Integrated Status from September 2015.

3. **School Mission Statement**

We nurture our children in a secure, friendly, caring community where everyone is valued for their important contribution. We are staff, parents and children working in positive partnership.

We believe if children are happy they will achieve.

We encourage busy minds and busy hands, aiming to engage, inspire, challenge and support our children. We show respect for ourselves and each other and value all our cultures and beliefs equally.

With open hearts and open minds, we enjoy learning and achieving together.

4. Ethos

At Mallusk Integrated Primary School we maintain that learning should be active, rewarding, meaningful, exciting and accessible. We believe in child-centred teaching and learning and believe in working closely with parents and pupils to ensure all our children reach their potential regardless of gender, religious, social, ethnic, linguistic and educational background.

We are committed to providing a stimulating, caring and safe environment for our children alongside a range of exciting, supportive and challenging teaching and learning experiences. Our activities reflect the diversity in the school community. We maintain that these will help our children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

We believe in encouraging our children to try their best, take a pride in their work, to recognise the importance of high standards of presentation and behaviour and to respect and accept everyone in our school community.

We believe in the centrality of good relationships within the school community and believe everyone has a valuable contribution to make. We encourage good self-esteem, mutual understanding, respect and acceptance. We maintain that our delivery of a broad, well balanced and flexible curriculum will ensure that these qualities are developed and that the children's knowledge, skills and capabilities will be enhanced.

We believe that our school community can be a model for society, where acceptance and diversity go hand in hand, so we aim for balance and equality in our school community, in keeping with the Core Principles of Integration.

5. ***Aims / Objectives***

At Mallusk Integrated Primary, we recognise the key role of our school in addressing the issues of sectarianism, racism, homophobia and intolerance in all its forms in our society. Mallusk Integrated Primary School demonstrates its distinctiveness and vision through a commitment to the four core principles of integrated education - **equality, faith and values, parental involvement** and **social responsibility**. The implementation of this policy will support the our school's planning and ethos so that all our pupils benefit from this explicit work at some point in their time at Mallusk Integrated Primary. We believe that this is intrinsically linked to achieving the DE vision of 'every learner fulfilling his or her full potential'.

Equality

Mallusk Integrated Primary School promotes equality and sharing between and within the diverse groups that compose the school community.

- Equality is reflected in the school admissions criteria. The aim is for religious / community balance and is related not only to pupils but also to staff and governors.
- All school policies and teaching and learning aim to reflect the integrated ethos. Carefully planned Thematic learning ensures children are given opportunities to explore issues related to equality. The integrated ethos is reinforced through these themes, which are carefully chosen to ensure that a range of viewpoints are explored, through P.E. (provision for a range of sports, such as Gaelic games / rugby, to reflect the diversity within the school community), Music, The Arts and Literacy, where texts are chosen to reflect the need to consider equality and justice.
- Provision is made for managing social, cultural, religious or political events e.g. sporting events (such as All Ireland county victory, European / World Cup games, wearing team shirts), state funerals, civil disturbance, Remembrance Day, commemoration of the Easter Rising, Ash Wednesday arrangements, Harvest etc.
- The school community feel secure in demonstrating aspects of their identity regardless of social or cultural background, opinions or beliefs, ability, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation. (e.g. non uniform day, celebration of First Communion, membership of a band, family event celebrations such as weddings and civil partnerships, celebrations of festivals from other faiths and cultures, personal memorabilia)
- Consideration is given to the display and/or promotion of symbols and emblems within the Themes taught, books shared with children, assemblies and Circle Time(e.g. poppies and lilies, flags, football teams).
- Striving for equality, Mallusk Integrated Primary School aspires to high academic standards within an all-ability framework that provides equal access to the curriculum for all.

Faith and Values

- Mallusk Integrated Primary School provides Religious Education in accordance with the Department of Education and NICIE guidelines. Christian in ethos, we aspire to create an environment where those of all faiths and none are respected, acknowledged and accepted as valued members of the school community.
- Mallusk Integrated Primary School endeavours to observe a range of different celebrations and seeks to acknowledge significant religious and cultural events which are representative of other faiths. We also invite religious / community leaders who respect our ethos to visit and participate in worship.
- Carefully planned Thematic learning ensures children are given opportunities to explore diversity and inclusion.
- We hold regular assemblies and deliver Thematic learning which reflects different religious and / or cultural events
- There is provision for sacramental preparation and attendance at Church services e.g. Mass
- Alternative provision will be made for those pupils whose parents do not wish them to participate in any religious activities and classes.

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.

- Mallusk 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 the school- there are parent representatives on the board of governors, Eco school committee and an active PTA .
- We ensure parents are made fully aware of the integrated ethos (through invitation to integration focused training and awareness raising events) as well as specific reference to the integrated ethos in all written information provided for parents.
- Attempt is made to provide school related information in a range of formats (mother-tongue languages, Braille etc) to meet the needs of the parent population of the school.

Social Responsibility

- Mallusk Integrated Primary School delivers the curriculum on an all - ability and inclusive basis to all of its pupils. It respects the uniqueness of every pupil and acknowledges his/her entitlement to personal, social, intellectual and spiritual development in the attainment of individual potential.
- Carefully planned Thematic learning ensures children are given opportunities to explore human rights and ideas of fairness and justice, exploring the range and extent of diversity in both local and global societies. Children are encouraged to investigate how identity, stereotyping, sectarianism and racism can contribute to conflict but also to enable young people to develop the skills necessary to manage and resolve conflict peacefully.
- An emphasis is placed on nurturing self confidence and self-respect (see pastoral care policy)
- The school uses and promotes non violent methods of conflict resolution (eg. buddy system, Circle Time)
- A range of charities and causes are selected / supported in order to reflect the integrated ethos of the school. In this way, pupils are encouraged to recognise those less fortunate than themselves, the oppressed and victims of injustice.
- The school is open to being used for appropriate community events organised by groups which support the integrated ethos. In this way the school is promoted as a shared civic space.
- Mallusk Integrated Primary School actively engages with other integrated schools (eg. through APTIS, the Integrated Schools Teachers Committee etc).
- Mallusk Integrated Primary School is an active member of the community (e.g. through engagement with community groups and church leaders).

Date: April 2017