

# **“Intercultural Education Strategy, 2010- 2015”**



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**Newsletter regarding the implementation of the “Intercultural Education Strategy, 2010- 2015”**

**Background:**

In September 2010, the Department of Education and Skills and the Office of the Minister for Integration launched Ireland’s first Intercultural Education Strategy (“IES”/ “Strategy”). The Strategy covers the period 2010- 2015 and contains the ten key components and five high level goals of intercultural education.

<b>Table 1: Framework for intercultural education</b>		
	<b>Key Component</b>	<b>Goal</b>
<b>1.</b>	Leadership	Enable the adoption of a whole institution approach to creating an intercultural learning environment
<b>2.</b>	Mainstreaming of education provision	
<b>3.</b>	Rights and responsibilities	
<b>4.</b>	High aspirations and expectations	
<b>5.</b>	Enhance the quality of teaching	Build the capacity of education providers to develop an intercultural learning environment
<b>6.</b>	Knowledge of the language(s) of instruction	Support students to become proficient in the language of instruction
<b>7.</b>	Partnership and engagement	Encourage and promote active partnership, engagement and effective communication between education providers, students, parents and communities
<b>8.</b>	Effective communication	
<b>9.</b>	Data collection and research	Promote and evaluate data gathering and monitoring so that policy and decision making is evidence based
<b>10.</b>	Actions, monitoring and evaluation	

The Strategy was developed based on an extensive national and international research process, which included stakeholder consultations and submissions. Based on the commonalities of the findings to emerge, the Strategy is designed to be of relevance to all sectors of education.

The aims of the IES are to ensure that:

1. **all students** experience an education that “*respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership*” (*Education Act, 1998*).
2. **all education providers** are assisted with ensuring that inclusion and integration within an intercultural learning environment become the norm.

The Strategy is available on the website of the Department of Education and Skills [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).

### **Castleknock Community College (CCC):**

CCC, under the expert leadership of Pauline Kelly, (Regional Director of the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) ) and Mary Ryan (Language Support co-ordinator at CCC and Public Relations Officer and International Liaison Officer of the English Language Support Teachers' Association), has looked to the Department of Education and Skills and the Office of the Minister for Integration's *Intercultural Education Strategy 2010 – 2015* (IES) for inspiration.

CCC is using the Strategy's 10 Key Components of intercultural education as its scaffold in order to provide each student and her/his parents/guardians — whatever her/his religion, race, sexual orientation or class — with a *real* space within the school community.

A team of teachers in CCC is working its way through the 10 components (Table 1).

The English Language Support Teachers' Association (ELSTA) has also taken the IES as the framework for its teacher training for the foreseeable future.

In time, the results will be on [www.castleknockcc.ie](http://www.castleknockcc.ie) and [www.elsta.ie](http://www.elsta.ie) so that other schools can benefit from the work done.

### **Request for submissions:**

In line with the implementation mechanisms for the Strategy, the Department of Education and Skills is now contacting key stakeholders to request submissions regarding the Strategy's implementation. The submissions received will be considered in advance of a stakeholder's meeting to be convened by the Department in October this year.

Submissions should, in particular, provide information on:

1. The impact of the Strategy on the work of organisations/ groups
2. Actions taken by organisations/ groups to implement the Strategy
3. Outcomes of these actions
4. Opportunities and problems encountered whilst undertaking these actions
5. Provide information on what the Department might do to further assist in the implementation of the Strategy

Please forward submissions

- via post- Sarah Miley, Integration Unit, Department of Education and Skills, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1
- via email- [integration@education.gov.ie](mailto:integration@education.gov.ie)

To facilitate preparations for the October meeting, submissions should reach the Department **no later than 23rd September 2011.**

Please note that your submission is public information. Submissions may be the subject of requests for information under the Freedom of Information Acts.

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### **Other activities:**

#### ***AIM***

Following a commitment given during the consultation process for the IES, the Department developed “AIM- Accessing Intercultural Materials”. This is a web-based information repository, which contains links to a variety of resources relevant to migrants and education. It is designed for use by pupils, parents, educators, researchers and policy-makers and is hosted on the Department’s website:

[www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

AIM is continually updated, as the Department is informed on new resources. If you are aware of something which you think should be included, please email us: [integration@education.gov.ie](mailto:integration@education.gov.ie)

#### ***UNCERD***

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD) conducted a review of Ireland in February 2011. Government officials were examined by Committee members on a range of policy areas, including education. The Committee was interested in the IES and in particular, its relationship with the “Report and Recommendations for the Traveller Education Strategy”. The Committee’s report on its examination was published in March 2011 and is available at:

[http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cerd/docs/co/Ireland\\_AUV.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cerd/docs/co/Ireland_AUV.pdf)

#### ***2009 National Assessments of Mathematics and English Reading***

The results of these assessments of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class primary pupils were published by the Educational Research Centre in November 2010. The following are the main findings:

- Pupils with a significant maths advantage were more likely to be boys who speak a language other than English or Irish at home
- On the other hand, lower pupil achievement in Maths and English was linked for some pupils to those who speak another language at home
- The difference between Irish born and pupils born outside Ireland was small in maths but more significant in reading and widened between 2nd and 6th class
- English was the usual home language for most pupils born outside Ireland – 55% in 2nd class and 64% in 6<sup>th</sup> class
- Withdrawal from class for EAL support was the most common method used. DES Circulars 24/03 and 02/05 both encouraged a mix with more in-class support

- Principals noted challenges in teaching English to pupils from non-English speaking families but fewer challenges with teaching maths.
- Immigrant parents, irrespective of language, may encounter some cultural and curricular differences, but may adapt relatively quickly to the language demands of the curriculum

### ***A Draft National Plan to Improve Literacy and Numeracy in Schools***

A key commitment of the Programme for Government is the development and implementation of a national literacy strategy which includes the production of literacy action plans by schools, with school level targets linked to national targets.

The Department is currently undertaking a public consultation process on a draft national strategy on literacy and numeracy covering the period up to 2020. In excess of 460 written submissions were received and these are being examined in detail. In parallel, focussed consultation meetings are being held with groups of key stakeholders, until May 2011. Implementation will require a sustained commitment from schools and other stakeholders. Their input, from the submissions and consultation meetings, will be considered in finalising the strategy.

Targets and timescales for the implementation of various aspects of the literacy strategy will be set out in the finalised strategy.

In the context of EAL, the Draft Plan sets out actions to improve levels of achievement for EAL students. These include:

- Improve the targeting of EAL resources
- Improve guidance on best practice in teaching EAL
- Enable schools to analyse achievement data for EAL students
- Ensure that literacy and numeracy needs of EAL students are addressed in initial teacher education and in teachers' CPD

Further information is available at:

[http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/pr\\_literacy\\_numeracy\\_national\\_plan\\_2010.pdf?language=EN](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/pr_literacy_numeracy_national_plan_2010.pdf?language=EN)

### ***PISA Results***

Below is a summary of the results from the latest round of PISA where EAL students fared less well than previously (2010).

It's no surprise that students whose first language is not English don't achieve as well as native students on a test of English reading. The pattern of achievement for immigrants whose first language is not the language of the test is the same throughout the world: they don't score as highly as native students. On a positive note, the OECD's 2009 PISA results found that, in general:

“students with an immigrant background tend to face the double challenge of coming from a disadvantaged background themselves and going to a school with a more disadvantaged profile - both of which [are] negatively related to student performance. These differences in the composition of schools attended by students with and without an immigrant background are particularly pronounced in the Netherlands, Denmark and Greece, where the difference is higher than two-thirds of a student-level standard deviation in the OECD area. In contrast, in the OECD countries the United Kingdom, Norway, Estonia, Ireland, Portugal, the Czech Republic, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and Finland, students with and without an immigrant background attend schools with a similar socio-economic composition”.

- Both Irish born (native) students and non-Irish born migrants who speak English at home had significantly higher mean reading scores than migrant students who spoke other languages at home.
- Both native and second generation had higher mean reading scores than first generation migrants.
- Students speaking another language at home obtained a mean score significantly below the means of students who spoke English or Irish
- Scores fell in reading (highest fall of any country) and maths (second highest), whilst science remained the same when compared to previous PISA results.
- The proportion of students who speak a language other than English has risen from 0.9% in 2000 to 3.6% in 2009.
- In 2000, EAL students obtained a higher mean score than those who spoke English/ Irish but this was significantly reversed in 2009 – possibly reflecting the size and composition of migrant students between 2000 and 2009.

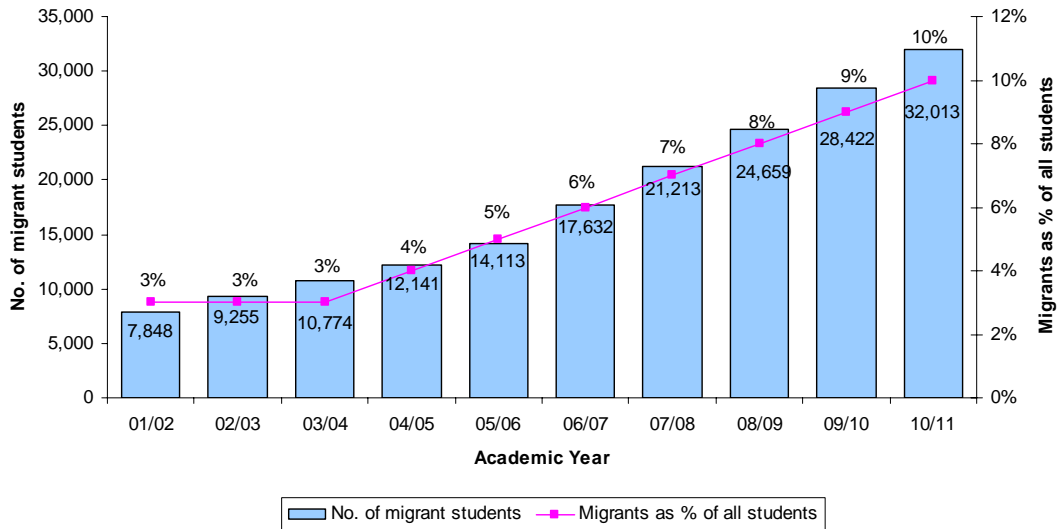
### ***Monitoring - 2011 for example***

- UN Convention on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (Feb/ March 2011)
- Irish Human Rights Commission- consultation on role of Religion in Education
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (June 2011)
- Council of Europe Framework for Protection of National Minorities (Sept. 2011)
- UNHCR – Universal Periodic Review (Oct. 2011)
- DES forum for stakeholders on IES (Oct. 2011)

### ***Immigrants in schools***

In the 2010/11 academic year, there are a total of 32,013 immigrant students (based on self- declared nationalities) in mainstream post- primary education. This represented 10% of the total student cohort at this level, and is an increase from the previous year’s figure of 28,422, which was 9% of the student population.

**Figure 1 Immigrant students in mainstream post-primary**



### *Professional Development Service for Teachers*

The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) is a cross-sectoral multi-disciplinary support service. The overarching aim of the PDST is to support the development of schools as professional learning communities, in which teachers' professional development is closely linked to school development and improvement and pupil progress.

In relation to English as an Additional Language (EAL), an innovative programme of support is provided by a team of nine Advisors and three regional Associates. Pivotal to this approach is the enabling dimension of the support provided, which aims to empower schools towards a whole-school approach to intercultural education, language provision and inclusion. School-focused continuous professional development (CPD) is based on careful needs analysis linked to evidence of existing practice. Targeted, relevant and meaningful support is then provided to primary and post primary schools and teachers. In an effort to support professional autonomy and transformative practice, EAL CPD opportunities are structured and organised in a number of different ways. The PDST EAL team has deemed it necessary to adopt a multi-dimensional approach to address a number of overarching goals:

- School-based support for language support teachers in areas such as speaking and listening, reading and writing, instructional strategies, language acquisition and development, language scaffolding, administration of School Assessment Kit and language planning
- Facilitation of staff meetings and planning days in relation to intercultural education, team-teaching and language support policies

- In-school support for principals and school management regarding best practice, application process for language support, record-keeping and review, planning, design and implementation guidelines
- After school workshops/elective courses for part-time language support teachers
- After school workshops for mainstream class teachers, other support teachers and principals on the topics of effective methodologies for EAL and team-teaching
- Education Centre-based induction modules for teachers new to EAL at primary and post primary
- In-school support and guidance in relation to the implementation of the Intercultural Education Strategy
- Blended learning opportunities for learning, networking and engagement in professional dialogue
- In-class modelling and mentoring so as to enable teachers to integrate and embed new knowledge, understanding and language pedagogy into practice.
- Provision of tools, language teaching and learning resources, exemplars and specialist interventions to support an evidence-based approach to effective language teaching and learning.
- Provision of quality and responsive advice, support and guidance to all teachers through classroom modelling, mentoring, phone and email support.

As the EAL landscape is constantly changing, it is imperative that all teachers are supported to create and maintain a learning environment which facilitates inclusive, high quality education for all students.

***Value for Money Review of Expenditure on Language Support for Migrant Students at Primary and Post-primary Schools who do not speak English (or Irish) as a First Language***

In March 2011, the Department recently published a review of EAL expenditure for the period 2001/02 - 2008/09. During this time, EAL expenditure increased from ca. €10 million to approximately €140 million. Most of this expenditure is on teachers' salaries, with only 0.6% of the total being spent on CPD in 2008/09.

The report, including its recommendations for the Department, schools and teachers, is available at:

[http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/new\\_language\\_support\\_migrants\\_2011.pdf?language=EN](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/new_language_support_migrants_2011.pdf?language=EN)

***Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Sector***

Funding is being made available from the Dormant Account Fund to support pre-school services in providing an inclusive setting for all children at risk of educational disadvantage. The scheme will provide funding for clusters of services to undertake equality and diversity training in a coordinated manner through the City and County Childcare Committee network. This training will lead to a FETAC Level 5 minor award



for successful participants and part of the supports available will include on-site mentoring. The scheme will be implemented over the next 12- 15 months.