



# Dominican College.Fortwilliam.

## CRED Policy Document.

### Introduction

The CRED Policy was launched by the Department of Education in 2011 and it is now a statutory element of the NI Curriculum. The policy has evolved out of the Community Relations Policy which has existed since the 1980's. Since then community relations has continued to develop in line with the changing political, economic and social environment. This has also coincided with changes in the curriculum that now offer more opportunities for young people to learn about differences within the wider community.

The main aim of the Community Relations, Equality & Diversity in Education Policy therefore, is to contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others and provide children and young people, in formal and non formal education settings, with opportunities to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions within the resources available.

### School Context:

Dominican College, Fortwilliam is a post primary voluntary grammar school for girls situated on Fortwilliam Park in North Belfast. An estimated 101,197 people are living in North Belfast representing 5.7% of the Northern Ireland population.

The school currently has a population of 1033 pupils, 95.9% of which are of white origin with English as their first language. The remaining 4.1% of pupils are of other ethnic backgrounds-.Indian,Sri-Lankan, Malaysian, Chinese, Polish or Lithuanian background and English is their second language. The pupils attending Dominican College come from a very wide area geographical area including the greater North Belfast area, Crumlin, Glenavy and Carrickfergus, Whiteabbey and Whitehead.

Dominican College was founded by the Dominican Sisters in 1930 and although fundamentally a denominational school, welcomes pupils from a variety of religious and cultural backgrounds. Inspired by the Dominican ethos, it provides a model of Christian living for all.

It acknowledges the fundamental dignity of each person and aims to promote respect for self, for others, the school and the wider community and the environment.

The majority of immigrants to Northern Ireland are young adults, many with children who form an increasing proportion of the school population in Northern Ireland (NI).

In promoting dignity and equality for all, our school has an important contribution to make in helping to integrate these new-comers into the local community and society as a whole.

Dominican College also wishes to promote positive relationships between the two main traditional communities in NI and to promote a culture of respect for difference in whatever form it is manifest.

**The overall aim of the CRED Policy is to:**

- Enable children and young people to understand and deal with difference in whatever form-religious, cultural, gender, sexual orientation, disability or political affiliation. *(This is premised on equality, human rights and the United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child (UNCRC))*
- Contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and a respect for others.
- Promote equality and work towards eliminating discrimination.
- Provide opportunities to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions.

This document seeks to outline how Dominican College is planning to implement the CRED Policy in our particular context.

**School Aims**

**The aim of the policy within our school is to:**

- Acknowledge the fundamental dignity of each person and aim to promote respect for self, for others and the wider community. In doing so we continue to build a welcoming and respectful environment for pupils of all cultural backgrounds including new comers to Northern Ireland. We value the unique attributes of all members of our school community and value the contribution that all pupils make to the life of the school.

**The objectives of the Policy within our school are to:**

- Educate our pupils to live and participate in a changing world, so that they value and respect difference and engage positively with it.
- Ensure that all pupils at each stage of their development have an understanding of and respect for the rights, equality and diversity of all without discrimination.
- Strive to ensure that all pupils have equitable access to the services and facilities provided by the school.
- Equip our young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviour needed to develop mutual understanding and the recognition of and respect for difference.
- Work in partnership with other organisations to benefit the integration and development of individual pupils.
- Encourage the pupils to actively engage with other schools and communities of different backgrounds and traditions.
- Involve all staff, governors and pupils in learning about CRED.
- Ensure that members of staff have access to appropriate training opportunities in relation to CRED.

## **Strategies to be used to enable achievement of the objectives**

- To hold a series of awareness sessions for teaching and non-teaching staff as to how every member of the school community can make a contribution to the implementation of the policy.
- Provide a forum for pupils to share their views on CRED through the School Council.
- Provide opportunity for participation in projects which facilitate learning about CRED principles.
- Promote the principles of CRED through the Pastoral System by raising awareness at assemblies and in tutor-led form classes.
- Provide members of staff with opportunities for professional development in relation to CRED.

## **Core principles underpinning the Policy**

The following core principles underpin the policy:

### **Pupil-centred approach:**

The needs of all our pupils and young people in general are paramount in successfully implementing the CRED Policy. They will be consulted in planning CRED activities so that programmes meet their needs and those of the wider school community.

### **Progression:**

Implementation of the CRED Policy will promote the importance of equality and diversity and so enrich and further develop pupils' understanding of the underlying principles.

### **Equality of access:**

Opportunities will be sought and embraced for meeting and working with others who are different.

### **Provision of opportunities for meaningful interaction:**

The meeting of different groups to foster improved understanding and building of relationships will be provided.

### **Improving the achievements and educational outcomes:**

Implementation of the policy will contribute to improving the achievements and educational outcomes of our pupils and young people as envisaged in **Every School a Good School**.  
(Ref: *Every School a Good School-A Policy for School Improvement*.(ESaGS April 2009)  
Department of Education for NI)

## **Collaboration**

Where appropriate Dominican College will aim to collaborate with other **institutions and agencies** to meet the needs of all our pupils.

## **Resources:**

Curriculum resources already in school: PDMU, Citizenship, Religious Education.

CREDNI website;

CRED Enhancement Scheme

Advisory Support from BELB

## **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

## **Proposed time-line**

- The policy will be implemented in September 2013.
- Awareness raising activities will take place throughout the school year 2013-2014
- The implementation of the policy will be monitored throughout the school years September 2013-June 2015.
- Further evaluation and a review of the policy will take place during the school year 2015-2016, in response to the monitoring and evaluation process.