**MIC**
BRIATHAR DÉ MO LÓCHRANN
MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE
COLÁISTE MHUIRE GAN SMÁL

**MMCN IRELAND**
*Midwest Migrant Community Network*

**EDII**
Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Interculturalism @ MIC
Comhionannas, Éagsúlacht, Ionchuimsitheacht agus Idirchultúrachas @ CMgS

# DIVERSITY AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION NETWORK

## *Launch Event*
# REPORT

**Mary Immaculate College, Limerick • Saturday, 25th March, 2023**

**Empowering Together: Sharing Best Practice in Supporting Diversity and Inclusion in our Schools**

**Authors: Narrell Byrne, Santhi Corcoran and Umezuruike Iroaganachi**

# Organisers' motivation for the development and launch of this Diversity and Intercultural Education Network

*Narrell Byrne and Santhi Corcoran, Co-founders and facilitators*

Education is the platform in which ignorance can be addressed, myths and rumours challenged and both factual and positive messages promoted. Promoting a more culturally sensitive pedagogy, concepts of human rights, and equity in the classroom, within learning spaces and teacher education programmes would contribute to a more culturally inclusive and welcoming school community. A reimagined space where children feel they belong, and the diversity of the school community strengthens the learning environment. To support this approach teachers/educators must be empowered with skills and knowledge that enables them to be confident practitioners who can deal with complexity and diversity in the classroom. Ethical intercultural education is key to developing respect, compassion, and integration in inclusive learning communities. To accomplish this, we as educators must plant seeds for a society of respectful, compassionate, and ethical citizens.

**The aim of this network** is to create a space for teachers with an interest in intercultural education and culturally sensitive pedagogy. It will provide opportunity to have access to peer support, learning, and sharing of best practices in a sustainable and ongoing professional development context. It is hoped that the network will meet 2x a year as a community of practice.

**The objective** is to create a constructive working and learning network that creates resources, tools and support for teachers, students, and principals to be shared with school communities. This would allow teachers to *'create cooperative spaces where teachers can plan together, share ideas and resources, and have opportunities to observe one another working,'* and *'connect and build on the expertise available within the school, making connections with existing knowledge,'* and building on as well as developing good practice that can benefit all (Messiou and Ainscow, 2015).

We launched this network on the 25th of March 2023 to create this sustainable space for educators to engage and continue dialogue and discussion on best practice that benefits all, schools, pupils, and teachers, and to further opportunities to support each other.

We the organisers of this launch gratefully acknowledge the support of several key agencies, organisations, and departments. Their support and help enabled the organisation, publicity, and management of the event.

- Mary Immaculate College (MIC) and the Department of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Interculturalism
- Midwest Migrant Community Network – MMCN
- Education Support Centres Ireland - ESCI

## The launch

This was an onsite live event at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. The launch began with a series of presentations from the 3 sectors – Early Years, Primary and Post-Primary - and was followed by questions and panel discussions. Attendance at the event included teachers, educators and practitioners; those involved in working with children, young people, and parents.

# Review of the launch event

## Irish Educators' New Network Opens More Doors to Diversity

*By Umezuruike Iroaganachi – Department of Media Studies, Mary Immaculate College*

*"Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other," – Paulo Freire.*

In a bid to promote diversity and intercultural education in schools, a group of Irish educators have come together at the Limerick campus of the Mary Immaculate College (MIC) to launch a new network known as the Diversity and Intercultural Education Network (DIEN). The network aims to provide resources and support for educators in Ireland who wish to promote interculturalism and diversity in their schools.

In collaboration with the Midwest Migrant Community Network (MMCN), the DIEN network was launched at a conference attended by teachers, administrators, and education experts from across Ireland. During the conference, attendees shared their experiences and discussed best practices for promoting diversity and intercultural education in schools.

Speaking at the conference, the keynote speaker, Director of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Interculturalism (EDII) at MIC, Professor Lorraine McIlrath, highlighted the importance of promoting diversity and inclusivity in education. According to her, educators are responsible for ensuring that all students feel included and valued. And judging by the increasingly multicultural and diverse makeup of Irish educational institutions, DIEN will support educators with strategies for promoting diversity and intercultural education in schools, which will contribute to creating and sustaining a more inclusive and accepting Irish society.

The network plans to provide resources and support for educators, including workshops, training sessions, and access to educational materials. The network also aims to promote collaboration between educators, schools, and other organizations working to promote diversity and intercultural education.

Highlights of the event were the presentations by Florence Ajala, an Assistant Lecturer and a PhD Candidate in MIC, Limerick; Catherine Burke, a deputy principal and an experienced primary school educator with a focus on diversity and inclusion in the classroom; Dr Tayo Adenusi, an Assistant Professor in Education at MIC, Thurles, with local and international experience in primary, post-primary, undergraduate and postgraduate teaching; and Dr Hannagh McGinley, an education officer at the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), and specialist in Traveller and intercultural education. In the afternoon workshops participants discussed challenges and recommendations needed to improve diversity and intercultural relationships in all education sectors in Ireland.

The launch of the network has been welcomed by education experts and advocates for diversity in Irish learning institutions of early childhood, primary, post-primary, and Traveller education. DIEN is an initiative that will support educators to ensure that all pupils, learners, and students receive an inclusive education that represents the diversity of Irish society.

The network comes at a time when Ireland is becoming increasingly diverse, with a growing population of immigrants and people from different cultural backgrounds. The network's organizers hope that by promoting diversity and intercultural education in schools, they can help to create a more inclusive and accepting society for all.



*DIEN launch panel (L to R): Professor McIlrath, Florence Ajala, Catherine Burke, Dr Tayo Adenusi, Dr Hannagh McGinley.*

# Presentation 1 – Review

## Approach to Inclusive Early Childhood Education in Ireland

*Florence Ajala*

In today's Ireland, diversity has become an essential aspect of society. As Irish communities continue to become more diverse, it is crucial to ensure that early childhood education is inclusive and celebrates cultural differences. Early childhood educators play a vital role in creating a positive learning environment that promotes diversity and inclusion. An in-depth understanding of how educators can promote diversity in early childhood classrooms was explored at the Diversity and Intercultural Education Network event held at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, in collaboration with Midwest Migrant Community Network (MMCN).

In her presentation on the topic "Promoting Diversity in the Early Childhood Classroom," Florence Ajala, an Assistant Lecturer and a PhD Candidate in the Department of Reflective Pedagogy and Early Childhood Studies at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, is of the view that promoting diversity in the early childhood classroom begins with understanding and respecting cultural differences. Since "everything begins from early childhood," she said, it is essential to create a classroom environment that reflects and celebrates the diversity of the children in the educators' care. Florence believes that children should see themselves and their cultures reflected in the classroom, whether it be through books, toys, or pictures.

The presentation further emphasized the importance of having a diverse collection of books in the classroom and library. She believes that it is necessary for children to see characters who resemble them and those who do not. By doing so, they can comprehend that every individual is distinct, and this is something to appreciate.

Besides making available diverse resources, Florence encourages educators in Ireland to establish chances for children to familiarize themselves with diverse cultures. This can be achieved through utilizing art projects, music, and storytelling as avenues to creating activities that enable children to discover various cultures.

Florence placed importance on instilling in children the values of inclusivity. She further enumerated that "diversity is about welcoming and valuing the differences people bring." "Diversity must be valued in early childhood." Doing so will involve, constantly reminding the children about the significance of being kind and respectful to others, regardless of their physical appearance or cultural background. She emphasized that every child is unique, and it is essential to accept and celebrate these differences.

To promote inclusivity, Florence recommended building a classroom community that respects and appreciates diversity. She suggested that educators draft a classroom-inclusive curriculum from the perspective of the children. Florence emphasized the importance of discussing inclusivity with students and involving them in developing a mutually agreed-upon set of guidelines. Educators can do so by having an open conversation with the students about what it means to be inclusive. This way, the children can collaboratively devise a set of guidelines that everyone can adhere to.

Finally, Florence believes that parents and families play a critical role in promoting diversity and inclusion. She encouraged educators to involve families in classroom activities and to provide resources that families can use at home to teach their children about different cultures. **"Educators have to value it and see it as significant." "It is not just telling them about the differences, they need to see them."**

In conclusion, promoting diversity in the early childhood classroom requires a conscious effort to create an inclusive environment that celebrates cultural differences. Educators can achieve this by providing diverse resources, creating opportunities for children to learn about different cultures, teaching children to be respectful and inclusive, and involving families in the process. By doing so, we can help children develop a positive attitude towards diversity and prepare them to become responsible global citizens.

# Presentation 2 – Review

## STEM-Based Learning for Improved Engagement of EAL Students in Primary Education

*Catherine Burke*

As primary education classrooms in Ireland become more diverse, educators are grappling with the challenge of engaging pupils from a range of cultural backgrounds. One group that requires special attention are English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners, who may struggle to communicate their ideas and grasp academic content due to language barriers. Fortunately, innovative methods such as STEM education have been shown to improve their participation and engagement in classroom activities.

Catherine Burke, a deputy principal and an experienced primary school educator with a focus on diversity and inclusion in the classroom presented her work on, "Engaging English as an Additional Language (EAL) Learners through STEM Primary Education". With over a decade of experience in teaching and teacher training, Catherine has worked with EAL learners at various primary educational levels, and has a keen interest in STEM education.

In Catherine's presentation, she shared insights and strategies for integrating STEM education in primary schools to engage EAL learners. She provided participants with practical ideas and resources on how to create a more inclusive and engaging classroom environment for EAL learners. Catherine recommended a 3-step approach of welcoming, assessment, and English language learning. These were incorporated in the following strategies for engaging EAL learners in STEM education:

**Use Visual Aids:** Incorporate visual aids such as pictures, diagrams, and videos to support EAL learners' comprehension. Visual aids help EAL learners connect new concepts with their prior knowledge, making it easier for them to understand the content.

**Simplify Language:** Use simple and concise language to explain concepts, avoid using idiomatic expressions, and provide definitions for technical terms. EAL learners are still in the process of acquiring English language skills, so simplifying language can help them understand the content better.

**Hands-On Activities:** Use hands-on activities to engage EAL learners in STEM education. Activities such as building a bridge, constructing a simple machine, or conducting a science experiment can be adapted to support language development while building content knowledge.

**Collaborative Learning:** Encourage EAL learners to work collaboratively with their peers to complete STEM activities. Collaborative learning provides an opportunity for EAL learners to practice their language skills in a supportive environment while building content knowledge.

**Real-World Connections:** Use real-world examples to connect STEM concepts to EAL learners' experiences. In practical terms, teachers can embrace elements of children's home language like 'hello, etc.' as it helps bring pride in sharing their language, and builds their confidence. Making connections to their personal experiences can help EAL learners engage in the content and understand the relevance of what they are learning.

Adopting STEM concepts for EAL learners according to Catherine, provides for an approach that is engaging children in something that is not language by focusing first on **"developing and finding out what the children are good at."** By using these strategies, educators can engage EAL learners in STEM primary education while building their language skills. STEM education provides an excellent opportunity to engage EAL learners in learning and support of their language development while building content knowledge.

# Presentation 3 – Review

## Navigating Cultural Differences in Irish Education and Community

*Dr Tayo Paul Adenusi*

Ireland is known for its rich cultural heritage, including literature, music, dance, and art. However, with globalization and increased migration, Ireland has become more diverse than ever before. As a result, the country has been challenged to embrace cultural diversity and intercultural education. Dr Tayo Adenusi, explored the concept of liminal space and its relevance to cultural diversity and intercultural education in Ireland.

A liminal space is a transitional space, a place where old boundaries are crossed, and new understandings are formed. In Dr Tayo's view, "the focus is on the new thing that emerged. What emerged in between is neither here nor there." It is a space where cultures can meet, interact, and learn from each other. Liminal spaces offer an opportunity to challenge traditional ways of thinking and encourage new perspectives.

In Ireland, the concept of liminal space is highly relevant to cultural diversity and intercultural education. **"There has to be dialogue. The more we embrace that thing in the middle, the better we become. The better we understand it the easier the job of educators becomes,"** says Dr Tayo. As Ireland becomes more diverse, traditional boundaries between cultures are being crossed, and new understandings are being formed. Intercultural education provides a framework for promoting cultural diversity in Irish schools, encouraging dialogue between cultures, and creating a liminal space for learning.

To understand the role of intercultural education in promoting cultural diversity in Ireland, Dr Adenusi provides a framework for promoting cultural diversity in Irish schools and communities. He believes that intercultural education can help create a liminal space for learning, where different cultures can meet and interact. In his view, liminal space as it relates to diversity and inclusion is about dialogue, communication, and compromise.

Dr Adenusi's recommendations for promoting cultural diversity through intercultural education are not about recreating one's culture in its entirety, rather it is "to let go of something and take in a little" from the new culture. In practical terms, it involves the following:

**Embrace Diversity:** Embrace diversity in all its forms, including cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity. Celebrate the unique cultural contributions of all students and encourage dialogue between cultures.

**Provide Multicultural Education:** Provide multicultural education that includes diverse perspectives and cultural knowledge. Multicultural education can help students develop a deeper understanding of other cultures and encourage respect for cultural differences.

**Promote Intercultural Competence:** Promote intercultural competence by providing opportunities for students to interact with people from different cultures. Intercultural competence can help students navigate cultural differences and develop the skills needed to thrive in a globalized world.

**Foster Inclusive Learning Environments:** Foster inclusive learning environments where all students feel valued and respected. Inclusive learning environments can help create a liminal space for learning, where different cultures can meet and interact.

The effort of achieving a liminal space is a two-way action that requires effort from host communities and migrant communities. Achieving this in Dr Tayo's view "requires constant negotiation of meaning," to move from the point of "inclusion to co-creating." In other words, to avoid the emergence of conflict, there must be "the willingness from both sides to let go a little."

By using these strategies, educators can promote cultural diversity and intercultural education in Ireland. Intercultural education provides a framework for promoting cultural diversity, encouraging dialogue between cultures, and creating a liminal space for learning. As Ireland becomes more diverse, embracing cultural diversity and intercultural education has become more critical than ever.

# Presentation 4 – Review

## Reimagining Traveller Education in Ireland: The NCCA's Call for Change

*Dr Hannagh McGinley*



Travellers are a unique ethnic minority group in Ireland with a distinct cultural identity, language, and history. In recent years, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has been working to develop a more inclusive curriculum that meets the needs of Traveller students. Dr Hannagh McGinley, an education officer at the NCCA, and also a specialist in Traveller education and intercultural approaches to education, explored the work of the NCCA on Traveller education in Ireland.

The NCCA is responsible for developing the Irish curriculum, which includes guidelines for teaching and learning across all subjects in primary and post-primary schools. The NCCA recognizes the importance of Traveller education and has developed guidelines for teaching Traveller students.

To understand the NCCA's work on Traveller education, in her presentation, Dr Hannagh, a curriculum specialist with the NCCA on Traveller Culture and History, is of the view that the NCCA is committed to developing an inclusive curriculum that meets the needs of all learners, including Traveller students. She believes that an inclusive curriculum can help Traveller students achieve their full potential and provide a sense of cultural belonging.

The NCCA's guidelines for teaching Traveller students are designed to promote Traveller culture, language, and history, while also addressing the challenges faced by Traveller students in education. The guidelines encourage teachers to:

**Provide a Culturally Responsive Learning Environment:** Creating a culturally responsive learning environment that respects Traveller culture, language, and history. A culturally responsive learning environment can help Traveller students feel valued and respected in the classroom.

**Incorporate Traveller Culture into the Curriculum:** Incorporate Traveller culture, language, and history into the curriculum. By incorporating Traveller culture into the curriculum, teachers can promote cultural understanding and respect among all students.

**Use a Multimodal Approach to Learning:** Use a multimodal approach to learning that includes visual aids, hands-on activities, and collaborative learning. A multimodal approach to learning can help Traveller students engage in learning and build their language skills.

**Address Barriers to Learning:** Address the barriers to learning faced by Traveller students, including language barriers, low attendance, and discrimination. By addressing these barriers, teachers can help Traveller students achieve their full potential in education.

Through these guidelines, teachers in Ireland can promote Traveller culture, language, and history while also addressing the challenges faced by Traveller students in education. She used the opportunity to call on educators in the country who desire practical assistance in implementing the NCCA strategy to reach out. The NCCA's work on Traveller education is an essential step towards creating an inclusive curriculum that meets the needs of all learners in Ireland. Dr McGinley's report on Traveller culture and history is available in the Padlet designed for the DIEN event. The link is provided at the end of this document.
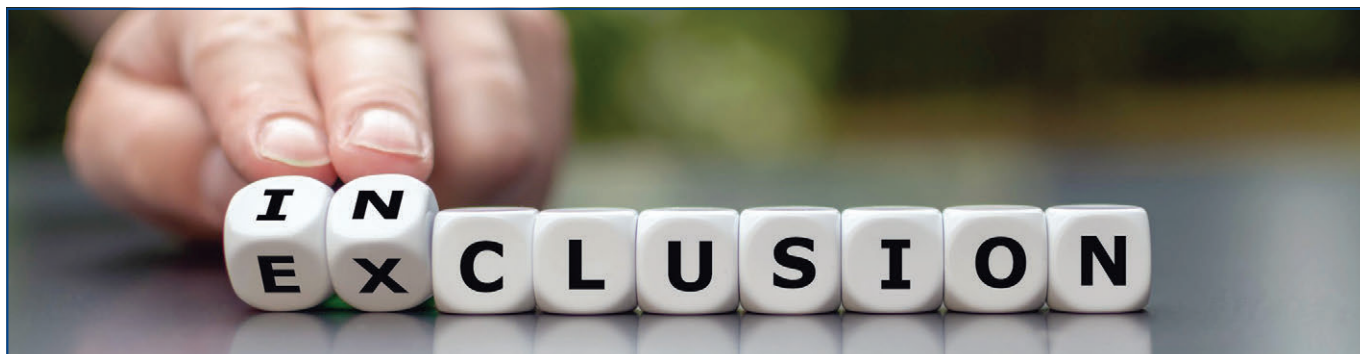
## Afternoon Workshops – post presentation discourse

The afternoon workshops consisted of discussions conducted by the three sectors in separate breakout rooms. The focus was on their experiences in managing diversity in their schools, classrooms, and education environments.

Three questions were posed to all groups as both discussion points but also as an opportunity to share experiences and good practices. The questions were:

1.  *What are the key challenges in developing culturally relevant practices in your sector?*

2.  *What examples of good practices have you developed to mitigate this?*

3.  *What resources or help would enable you to improve or enhance the work you do in your sector?*

Two facilitators supported each of the sectors, Early years, Primary and Post-Primary education, and the discussions that took place. In the following pages we share the discussion notes as addressed, discussed and written by the 3 groups.



*Participants in attendance for the launching of the Diversity and Intercultural Education Network (DIEN) at MIC, Limerick.*

# Group 1 – Early Years

**Facilitators: Florence Ajala and Ann Piercy**

*Question 1: What are the key challenges in developing culturally relevant practices in your sector?*

The participants responded:

- Gaps in culture. Potty training and thumb sucking were cited as a case study.
- Barrier to learning about other cultures.
- Choosing not to engage (post covid).
- Afraid of saying something - not to offend.
- How to partner with parents.
- Vacuum in media re diversity.

*Question 2: What examples of good practices have you developed to mitigate this?*

The participants stated the following:

- Valuing other cultures/beliefs/partnerships.
- Training/Courses.
- Having mutual respect for what others want to share or not.
- Communicating with parents.
- Training is not everything. Learning through socialising can be vital.
- Creating awareness.
- Diversity/Cultural Day celebrations.
- Online fun classes, e.g., cooking.
- Two ways of learning, i.e., parents and teachers learning from one another.
- Examining our own biases.
- Having the confidence to challenge biases.
- Clusters - children from the same cultural origin spending time together sharing their culture.

*Question 3: What resources or help would enable you to improve or enhance the work you do in your sector?*

The participants responded:

- Media/Advocacy for diversity.
- Resources, e.g., diverse books, materials etc.
- Platform to share information.
- Learning platforms for both parents and teachers.
- Commitment at the policy level.
- Policies to achieve a diverse community.
- Sharing/Networking/Collaboration/Partnership.
- Coffee mornings/Parent groups/Outdoor activity.
- Connection/Transition from early childhood to primary (not only when something goes wrong).
- Learning about diversity in the early childhood education sector should be encouraged.

## Group 2 – Primary

**Facilitators: Catherine Burke and David Chisanga Smith**

*Question 1: What are the key challenges in developing culturally relevant practices in your sector?*

The participants responded:

- Teaching staff at primary level is 100% white, making it difficult for promoting diversity.
- Attitude of "other" is still present in Ireland.
- Language barrier between teachers and migrant students.
- Narrow EAL support in primary schools.
- Lack of age-appropriate classes for migrants.
- Lack of understanding of the children's background.

*Question 2: What examples of good practices have you developed to mitigate this?*

The participants stated the following:

- Knowing the child and parents - to understand their backstory.
  "You can't help someone you don't know intimately."
- Holding Cultural Days in school to expose students to different cultures.
- Intentional engagement of all students by teachers during classes.
- Making children feel valuable in class despite their differences.
- Having different words of the day from different languages.
- Teaching pupils how to think, not just what to think about.
- Teaching pupils how to be "human" (just a good person) by embracing others.

*Question 3: What resources or help would enable you to improve or enhance the work you do in your sector?*

The participants responded:

- New Curriculum which encourages diversity.
- Pupil journals that reflect diversity.
- Activities that encourage pupils to become friends with each other.
- Cultural performers from different parts of the world.
- Networks such as DIEN.
- Open book leaving CERT.
- Technology e.g., Google Translate.
- Time – teachers need extra time for preparation and coordination of class activities.

## Group 3 – Post-Primary

### Facilitators: Carol Gardiner, Narrell Byrne and Tayo Adenusi

*1. Examples of sharing good practice*

| EXAMPLE | KEY MESSAGE |
|---|---|
| Intercultural day | Example of the student who said, "Today is the first day, I am happy to be different."<br>Classroom activity.<br>The importance of the first time that a child feels excited about their difference. The contributors underlined the importance of waiting for the child to decide when they are ready for this. "I can be me."<br>If we organise special days; is it coming from students?<br>Displace our bias. What do the students want and need?<br>Sometimes it was felt that this can be a tokenistic once-off event, members underlined the importance of not doing something just to tick boxes. |
| Childs' Question - are you the only black person in your work dad? | Parents have a duty to reinforce how much they (children) enjoy being different.<br>As we build that, do we allow for that moment within the child? We were reminded that culturally other children may decide before the child is ready. |
| Diversity Club | The suggestion of a diversity club worked well in one context. There was an acknowledgement within the club of key days in the calendar of all faiths and none. Every school context is different- it is important to be cognizant of the learners you have in your classrooms. |
| Student Voice is key | The importance of addressing and listening to the student's voice is vital. Use every school event to raise awareness- non-uniform days, food, and every graduation service. Embed it in the school and move beyond tokenism. |
| Pot-Luck Day | Each student/ parent/family makes a pot of something, and they share. |
| Parents involvement | Allow them to feel a sense of ownership and not that they are constantly the ones who need help. Call on parents with good linguistic skills to support new arrivals with few links to the community; call on the religious community to support, if possible. |
| Justice League | Allows for mixed representation on a Student Council. (Including but not exclusive to representation from LGBTQAI+ groups, AEN, EAL etc). Organise for such groups to engage in activities such as Narrative four, short story exchanges where everyone has a story to tell and a platform to do so. Activity-based approach. |
| Student Council | Key Questions - Who is represented? One school suggested doing a whole school survey bi-annually which asks one good thing the students like about school and one thing they would like to change about the school. It underlined the importance of creating structures and spaces which enhance the power of the student's voice. Students may not have the tools to equip them to be part of the student's voice but the school's participation in the yellow flag for example (dependent on funding) may support this. |
| Community | The importance of community involvement was highlighted.<br>If you engage with the community; parents will feel welcome.<br>Examples given included non-gender bathrooms (for LGBTQAI+ students), Black-Irish speakers, Traveller/Pavee speakers. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Inter-cultural Guidelines | The problem is one of fitting in, the school needs to do more to meet the needs of the parents. |
| Wellbeing guidelines | NB highlighted the importance of intercultural guidelines to schools. Q: What supports are there in schools for students who are experiencing trauma? Where can teachers access the support the students and they need? NB: the importance of the language fear - students are not going to open up to a teacher in another language because they are terrified; they have learned to be afraid of those in authority. This is difficult and different depending on what type of population there is and what cultural norms. |
| Supports (This all comes back to representation) | Participants spoke about the following supports: • EAL, PDST Support • Training and skills for teachers from organisations such as Belonging and ASIAM • Youth services are often called into schools to support and help. • Youth work seems to bridge important gaps which cannot always be filled by schools. • INTO Training • Primary Therapeutic Project |
| Staff representation | It is considered very important to allow students to see teachers who share the same culture as them. It was noted that teaching in Ireland at the moment is largely middle-class, white and female. It was noted that a systemic culture change which allows for career opportunities for staff will allow schools to become diverse. The Teaching Council registration process needs to change, Dr Tayo Adenusi and Dr Anne Looney are separately conducting research in this area. |
| Extra-curricular supports | It was noted that some students do not see anything they are interested in on offer from the school. Equally, they feel like they are viewed with suspicion because of who they are and where they come from. An example of badminton as an alternative to Gaelic football was suggested. Some school communities invite the imam to come into the school. |
| Diversity | When we are diversifying communities, we need to diversify the books available for the population. The most common thing that we need is to diversify ideas. You cannot be what you cannot see. Tobar Project, Migrant Groups and Visiting Traveller teachers were all given here as examples of good practice. |
| School Policy | Every school needs to have an anti-racism policy. They need guidelines for these policies. National Action Plan for Racism has five key recommendations for schools which require the attention of schools (including a template for an action plan and resources to support the teaching of this sensitive area). |
| Systemic change | We need to call for systemic change, however, now, we need to be mindful of working with what we have got and using opportunities within the system to effect change. Ask ourselves how we can be change-makers within the system. Begin by changing the vision for your own community. |

| Inclusion vs integration | Key point - most people want their children to be included rather than integrated. Give them more tools to become part of the community. Please let them integrate rather than separating them and seeing what they don't have (language) as a deficit.<br>Be aware of the struggles of some new arrivals who may not want to be here and may be struggling in this context. The problem can sometimes be that we measure everything by our own system even if our system is broken.<br>Allow for information sessions- it is critical that schools monitor attendance carefully and explain the system to parents. Create a system that allows parents to understand the system. (this may not always be through email) |
|---|---|
| Behaviour Management in PP Schools | Talk to the children and find out what is going on for them. |
| Belonging is key | Praise the student. |
| Resources | PPLI resources are very useful.<br>Book Grant is available. |
| NCCA subject review | Review of 43 subjects over the Senior Cycle Curriculum.<br>It will be important to engage with the consultation process and to add to the prism of what we see as important.<br>Need experts not only teachers to engage with this work.<br>There is a need for positive representation and to make resources accessible by putting them on *scoil* net. |

All materials shared during this conference including research papers and reports are available in a Padlet that can be accessed via the link below:

**Diversity and Intercultural Education Network Padlet: Spring 2023**

www.padlet.com/narrellbyrne/diversityandinterculturaleducationnetwork

**The next DIEN meeting will take place in St. Patrick's Campus, Mary Immaculate College, Thurles, in the autumn of 2023.**

The meeting date and time will be posted to all on our current mailing list, and via Twitter, and the Education Centres. We look forward to meeting you again and deepening our conversations and actions on schools, diversity, and inclusivity. We thank all participants at the DIEN launch and for the wealth of learning you provided. Your discussions and ideas provided food for thought.



*Narrell Byrne and Santhi Corcoran,*
*Co-Founders – DIEN (Diversity and Intercultural Education Network).*