



SACRED HEART EDUCATION

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RESPECT FOR INTELLECTUAL VALUES

INTELLECT

Respect for Intellectual Values

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The Goal of Intellect is about the whole process of learning. It has, as its main focus, the forming of the minds and hearts of our pupils through the provision and pursuit of educational excellence. It highlights the need for a pupil-centred approach and for the recognition that there are many different types of intellect and ways of learning. Referring to our pupils in the Foreword to this edition of Heritage and Horizon, Aileen Kinlen, Provincial of the Irish-Scottish Province reminds us that:

'They want a better world and many of them have the idealism to do something about it. It can be a long, hard road. The Sacred Heart educator aims to walk with them, helping them to begin to acquire not only the knowledge and skills but also the staying power and unselfishness that over a lifetime turns dreams into reality, however great, however modest.'

'It is all to bind you together in love and to stir your minds, so that your understanding may come to full development, until you really know God's secret in which all the jewels of wisdom and knowledge are hidden.'

'Is é ata uaim, go mbeadh misneach ar bhur gcroíthe, go mbeadh sibh nasctha dá chéile le grá agus go dtiocfaidh sibh chun barr cinnteachta agus tuisceana ionas go gcuirfidh sibh eolas ar rundiamhair Dé, is é sin, ar Chríost a bhfuil stóir uile na heagna agus an eolais i bhfolach ann.'

'Dan nagħmliu biex inqawwilkom qalbkom u biex tingħhaqdu lkoll flimkien fl-imħabba, ħalli ssaħħu t-twemmin tagħkom u l-għarfien tal-misteru ta' Alla li hu Kristu. Fih hemm moħbija t-teżori kollha tal-għerf u d-dehen.'

Col. 2: 2-3

THE CHALLENGE

Therefore our challenge in working on this goal is to aim that:

Our schools create a stimulating learning environment where academic study and intellectual pursuits are cherished and valued.

Our work on the goal of intellect has recognised and developed the potential of each individual pupil. It has enabled them to become questioning, reflective young people who can appropriately use their knowledge to understand, interpret and interact with today's world.

How can we achieve these objectives?

HERITAGE AND HORIZON RECOMMENDS:

1. Creating an atmosphere of respect for learning in the school environment through the provision of:

- Physical thinking space
- Visuals that challenge the intellect
- Access to new technologies
- New ways of teaching/learning

2. Providing opportunities for staff development/In-Service Training on:

- How pupils learn (understanding of the brain functions)
- Thinking skills

3. Ensuring, through a culture of caring and a well-structured pastoral system, that:

- Individual needs are catered for
- Achievements are recognised and rewarded
- Scholarships and bursaries are provided
- Learning is enjoyable

4. Developing school policies and practices which reflect the needs of each individual learner and in particular address the needs of:

- Pupils with special educational needs
- Gifted and talented pupils
- Pupils with English as a second language

Some Key Words

- **Ability Mix**
- **Academic Results**
- **Attainment**
- **Extra Curricular**
- **Curiosity**
- **Creativity**
- **Enquiry**
- **Multi Discipline**
- **Multiple Intelligence**
- **Peer Learning**
- **Problem Solving**

SUGGESTED EXERCISES:

- Periodically designate a space as the 'thinking space'. Display a list of thinking topics from which pupils choose. Allocate a specific time period. Ask each student to share thoughts with the group.
- Ensure that pupils source certain information by using ICT technology.
- Introduce different approaches to classroom, e.g. Co-operative Learning, Problem Based Learning or Inquiry Based Learning/Circle Time.
- Carry out the Key Word Exercise.
- Ask pupils to nominate the best performer in particular instances, e.g. who had the best idea?
- Periodically celebrate an individual or group achievement. Even verbal rewards carry great value.
- Nominate and rotate 'minders' for those pupils who do not have a good command of English.
- Put measures in place to identify those with special needs or special intellectual talents.
- Tell stories of famous high achievers in literature, science, art etc.
- Become familiar with the theory of Multiple Intelligence and inform pupils of this. (This can help to alter the common mindset that intelligence applies only to numeracy-based or scientific topics.)
- Introduce a short Thinking Skills programme to familiarise pupils with the concepts of 'lateral thinking' and 'thinking outside the box.'

How Can We Evaluate Outcomes?

- Monitor results of formal class tests for below par and above par performances.
- Carry out an end of class survey, asking questions such as 'What are the main things we learned in that session?', 'What did you find most interesting?'
- Ask for personal opinions about historical or social events that were the topic of a particular class session. Observe the language used by pupils when they do this in order to assess descriptive, interpretational, analytical or rational thinking skills.
- Ask pupils if they feel they are being adequately challenged or stretched or even overloaded.
- Consult with parents on this issue.
- Observe verbal and non-verbal behaviour for signs of stress.



