

Four in five teachers have never attended intercultural or anti-racism training (<https://www.activelink.ie/node/115002>)

More than four in five (81%) of teachers say they have never attended intercultural or anti-racism training – according to a survey released by the Yellow Flag Programme.

A quarter of post primary students felt their ethnic or cultural identity was not reflected in their classroom and learning materials, while at primary level just over a third (34%) of pupils said that they could see their culture and ethnic background celebrated around the school building.

The Yellow Flag Programme (YFP) supports schools to challenge racism and discrimination – and today awarded seven schools for their work to build inclusivity and anti-racist school communities, at its annual awards ceremony at Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin.

Yellow Flag Programme National Coordinator Sian Mooney said the surveys drew from a large sample of 1,921 pupils (422 primary and 1,499 post primary), 1,145 parents / guardians and 426 teachers – and shows the need to train and upskill teachers.

“Government investment is needed to support teachers in responding to racism and to equip them with specific knowledge and skills in intercultural education.”

The Programme works with primary and post primary schools to embed inclusivity, diversity and anti-racism in practice and policy across the whole environment of teachers, pupils, parents and community.

Since 2009, it has supported 136 schools nationwide, reaching approximately 50,000 students and 5,000 teachers. Today seven schools (three primary and four post-primary including six first time Awardees and one renewal Awardee) achieved a Yellow Flag. These include:

1. North Monastery Co-educational Secondary School, Cork City, Cork (post-primary, renewal school)
2. Scoil Mhuire, Navan, Co Meath (primary, new school)
3. Powerstown Educate Together National School, Tyrrelstown, Dublin (primary, new school)
4. St Stephen's De La Salle Boys National School, Waterford City, Co Waterford (primary, new school)
5. Presentation Secondary School, Waterford City, Co Waterford (post-primary, new school)
6. Inver College, Carrickmacross, Co Monaghan (post-primary, new school)
7. Coláiste Chiaráin, Leixlip, Co Kildare (post-primary, new school).

The Awards ceremony was opened by the Ombudsman for Children Dr. Niall Muldoon who highlighted the critical role it plays.

“It crucial that we invest in programmes like the Yellow Flag because it is an investment into a more stable and positive future – socially, educationally, economically and democratically. It is very positive to see that so much of the work to create this programme is led by the students themselves.

“Having children and young people driving inclusion and anti-racism is the secret to changing society over the long term. By giving them an opportunity to lead on such an important subject they learn, very quickly, that they do have a voice and that voice can make a significant contribution to the wellbeing of their school and community.

Asked how the Programme helped build teachers' capacity to approach lesson planning Teacher Izabela Kozuch at Presentation Secondary School Waterford (one of the new Awardee schools) said: *“It has helped boost teachers' confidence by raising awareness of the importance of incorporating multiculturalism into classroom activities. The resources provided by Yellow Flag, along with encouragement to participate in events like Black History Month, Anti-Racism Month, and Culture Week, have been instrumental. The impact is clearly reflected in student testimonies, where students feel empowered to openly discuss diversity.”*

Asked about their School Diversity Committee and how everyone worked together to challenge racism, Presentation Secondary School Waterford students Nadirah, Lily, Ida and Seanna together shared the following response.

“The Diversity Committee was involved delivering anti-racism workshops, organising the inclusion section in the library,

organising culture week events, translating announcements, welcoming poster in different languages, educating primary school students about Yellow Flag during Open Night, organising Wear Red Day, Black History Month resources for teachers, creating the Inclusion Policy, raising awareness about the Policy, organising the English-language club and introducing the language buddy system."

Sian Mooney concluded by highlighting the importance of the Programme in Ireland today: "With a marked increase in incidents of racism, the Yellow Flag Programme's role is more essential than ever, fostering inclusive education and equipping young people, their families, teachers and the wider community with the skills to counteract racism and promote unity within communities."

Details of the Intercultural Review surveys carried out by the Yellow Flag Programme during the 2023-2025 programme cycle.

Survey of School Staff

- *Have you ever attended intercultural or anti-racism training in an education context*– 81% said no.

Survey of Post Primary Students

- *I see my ethnic and/or cultural identity reflected in the classroom and learning materials*– 26% said either not really or not at all.

Survey of Primary Students

- *I see my culture and ethnic background celebrated around the school building* – 34% said yes.

For more information see <https://yellowflag.ie/> (<https://yellowflag.ie/>)

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Region

Nationwide

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