Cultural competency checklist

The following checklist is intended to help school staff to think about how they support the development of cultural competency among the teaching and non-teaching staff.

Please select a, b, or c for each item listed below.

a. Things I do frequently
b. Things I do occasionally
c. Things I do rarely or never

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical environment, materials and resources</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• In the classroom and other public areas we/I display pictures, posters and other materials that reflect the</td>
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<tr>
<td>cultures and ethnic backgrounds of children and families attending our school</td>
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<tr>
<td>• When using books, printed materials, videos, films, media or other resources, wherever possible and</td>
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<td>appropriate I ensure that they reflect the cultures of children and families attending our school</td>
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<td>• Food offered for sale at our school and for other events and used as part of the curriculum program (not</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOTE) includes foods from the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of children or young people and families</td>
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<td>attending our school, wherever possible and appropriate</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communications</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• For children who speak languages other than English, I attempt to learn and use basic and key words in</td>
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<td>their language so that I am better able to communicate with them and their families</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I am aware of and use the interpreter service available for interactions with families with limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>English proficiency</td>
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<tr>
<td>• When interacting with families who have limited English proficiency I always keep in mind that:</td>
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<td>o a limitation in English proficiency is in no way a reflection of their level of intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>o their limited ability to speak the language of the dominant culture has no bearing on their ability to</td>
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<td>communicate effectively in their language of origin</td>
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<tr>
<td>o they may or may not be literate in their language of origin or English</td>
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<tr>
<td>• When possible, I ensure that all notices and communiqués to families are written in their first language,</td>
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<td>where this is required</td>
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<td>• I understand that it may be necessary to use alternatives to written communication for some families</td>
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<td>and verbal communication may be a preferred method of receiving information</td>
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### Values and Attitudes

- I avoid imposing values that may conflict or be inconsistent with those of cultures or ethnic groups other than my own (except where human rights are compromised)
  - A
  - B
  - C

- I have a zero tolerance attitude to children (or anyone else) using racial and ethnic slurs
  - A
  - B
  - C

- I intervene in an appropriate manner when I observe other staff or families engaging in behaviours that show cultural insensitivity, bias or prejudice
  - A
  - B
  - C

- I understand and accept that family is defined differently by different cultures (e.g. extended family members, non blood-related kin, godparents)
  - A
  - B
  - C

- I accept and respect that male-female roles in families may vary significantly among different cultures (e.g. who makes major decisions for the family and play and social interactions expected of male and female children)
  - A
  - B
  - C

- I understand that age and life cycle factors must be considered in interactions with individuals and families (e.g. high value placed on the decisions of elders or the role of the eldest male in families)
  - A
  - B
  - C

- Before visiting a family in the home setting, I seek information on acceptable behaviours, courtesies, customs and expectations that are unique to families of specific cultures and ethnic groups attending our school
  - A
  - B
  - C

- I seek information from family members or other key community culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups and organisations that will assist helping me to respond to the needs and preferences of CALD children and families served by my school
  - A
  - B
  - C

### School competency

- Do staff know how to (and feel competent) in allowing for a range of views to be expressed safely, (including views from other cultures) with the exception of views which are violent, discriminatory or promote intolerance of others, particularly in relation to sex, race and ethnicity, class, sexuality and (dis)ability?
  - yes
  - no

- Are staff expected to uphold the highest standards regarding respect for the diversity of views expressed by students and other staff?
  - yes
  - no

- Does the school make an effort to embrace all cultures at the school?
  - yes
  - no

- Does the school celebrate the cultural and other festivals of the communities present at the school?
  - yes
  - no

- Do teaching and other staff make sure that they can accurately pronounce all children’s names (including surnames)?
  - yes
  - no

- Has the school sought professional development and any other assistance from qualified professionals to help them to develop their cultural competency?
  - yes
  - no

- Are children from CALD groups ever singled out in a way that labels, isolates or makes them feel unwelcomed?
  - yes
  - no

- Do all school staff make an effort to know basic words in the most commonly spoken community languages (e.g. please, thank you, hello, and goodbye)
  - yes
  - no

- Does the school offer opportunities for families from different cultures to actively participate in all aspects of the school’s life?
  - yes
  - no

- Does the school make an effort in its hiring and other practices to recruit staff with an awareness of, or who are representative of, the culturally and linguistically diverse communities attending the school?
  - yes
  - no

- Does the school make efforts to involve external cultural organisations in the school?
  - yes
  - no

- Does the school make interpreters and other services readily available to families with languages other than English as their primary language, who need this service?
  - yes
  - no
**Checklist results**

This checklist is intended to heighten the awareness and sensitivity of school personnel to the importance of cultural diversity and cultural competence in school settings. It provides concrete examples of the kinds of values and practices that foster such an environment.

There is no answer key with correct responses. However, if you frequently responded ‘c’, you may not necessarily demonstrate values and engage in practices that promote a culturally diverse and culturally competent and supportive schooling environment for children from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities.

**Sources**

With thanks to Tawara D. Goode - Georgetown University Centre for Child & Human Development University Centre for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research & Service Adapted from – “Promoting Cultural Competence and Cultural Diversity in Early Intervention and Early Childhood Settings” - June 1989. Revised 2004

and

Scottish Executive Education Department, 2006, Parents as Partners in their Children’s Learning toolkit, Edinburgh

**Further Resources**

