



St Catherine's National School
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Equality Policy

Introductory Statement

This Equality Policy was formulated by members of the Board of Management and reviewed by staff members and parents of St. Catherine's N.S.

Rationale

- To enable all pupils to access and participate in education.
- To promote the principles of justice and equality for all.
- To encourage critical reflection on school norms and practices.
- To comply with current Equality Legislation - Education Act 1998, Employment Equality Act 1998, Equal Status Act 2000 & Equality Act 2004.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the school

- St Catherine's NS is committed to the preparation of pupils for life in a multi-cultural society and to promoting the values of respect for all, tolerance and valuing of differences.
- St Catherine's NS is committed to enabling each person to participate in school related activities at a level appropriate to their abilities and aptitudes.
- The principles of equality of access, opportunity and participation are promoted through the vision and mission statements of the school.

Aims

- To instil a sense of pride in our own culture whilst simultaneously cultivating an understanding of the value of cultural diversity.
- To create and/or maintain an environment where diversity is valued and celebrated.
- To prevent discrimination against the pupils and staff of St. Catherine's NS on the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious belief and membership of the Traveller community.
- That each person in our school community feels valued and respected.
- To ensure that the school complies with legislative requirements and principles of good practice.
- To take appropriate measures to promote inclusivity and participation in all school activities.
- To promote equal opportunities for all persons in the school.

Organisational Procedures

Admissions

- The Admission Policy respects the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and customs in society.
- The Admission Policy advises parents of the school's ethos and its reflection in curricular and organisational areas.
- As a general rule pupils are placed in age appropriate classes.
- The Admission Form provides relevant personal details/information that is pertinent to the child's integration in to the school.
- The Admission Policy is available for viewing through the School Office. The Admission Period is also communicated to parents by means of email and the school website.

Staff

- The Board of Management is an equal opportunities employer as per the Equal Status Act 2000 and the Employment Act 1998. Appointment procedures comply with the Constitution of Boards and Rules of Procedure for National Schools, DES, 2007. No discriminatory questions on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, family status etc will be asked during the interview process.
- Correct procedures for promotional posts will be strictly adhered to as per relevant DES circulars.
- The school has a fair and equitable procedure in relation to job sharing, secondment, staff development, Career Break, Study Leave, Carer's Leave, Maternity and Paternity Leave applications. All DES Circulars on such areas are followed strictly.
- Classes are assigned to teachers in a fair and transparent manner.
- The school is in the process of drafting a Dignity at Work policy

Home School Communication

- Communication with all parents is made through emails, newsletters, notices, Aladdin, verbal contact, the school website, and Text-a-parent.
- The school has a policy of communicating with both parents on pupil progress where divorce or separation is an issue, unless a court ruling prescribes differently. Parents in this situation should communicate the separate details to the school.

Parental Involvement

- Parental involvement in the development, review and implementation of school policies and procedures is encouraged and facilitated by the BOM, PA and the school staff.
- The PA make a significant and valuable contribution to various school activities throughout the year.

Uniform

- As agreed with the Board of Management and parents there is no uniform in St. Catherine's NS, however parents are asked to ensure that all children are dressed appropriately for active learning, outdoor learning and for health and safety.
 - Jewellery: Stud earrings only allowed on the basis of health and safety concerns.
 - Flat shoes must be worn at all times
 - Long hair should be tied back at all times.
 - Suitable clothing for PE should be worn.

Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy

- Our Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy ensures that all who work and learn in our school community do so in a positive, inclusive, safe and happy environment.
- The Code of Behaviour addresses procedures for dealing with comments/incidents of a discriminatory nature.
- Incidents of racism are dealt with under the school's code of behaviour and are kept to a minimum by the total integration of all pupils no matter what their cultural background and through work done in SPHE, English, Geography, History and Religion

Homework

- St. Catherine's NS's Homework Policy is designed to give teachers and parents guidelines in relation to homework.
- When setting homework, teachers take the following into account:
 - pupils with special needs
 - pupils whose first language is not English

Resources

- Posters/projects on display support the principle and practice of equality.
- Positive images of other cultures displayed in the school environment/classroom.
- The principles of equality and respect for diversity are reflected in the pupils' textbooks.
- There are books in the library that explore different cultures, different family structures, and achievements of both male and female role models.
- Boys and girls have equal access to a range of toys in junior classes.
- A wide range of resources are available to support pupils with a learning disability

Playground

- St. Catherine's Ns provides a wide variety of playtime experiences and activities that are available to all pupils e.g. Playground Friends, yard games.

Tours and Outings

- All pupils have an opportunity to participate in school tours or other outings organised by the school. Financial assistance is made available where necessary.

Extra-Curricular Activities

- Extra-curricular activities are promoted by the school and are open to all pupils.

Transition to Post Primary

- Class/SEN teachers may liaise with post primary schools to facilitate the smooth transition of pupils from primary to second level.

Curriculum

- Pupils have equal opportunities to experience all aspects of the curriculum, to participate in activities, to use resources etc.
- Teaching methodologies such as circle time, co-operative learning and group work are employed to support integration and promote equality of participation.
- Special consideration is given to some pupils when standardised tests are administered. *Circular 0138/2006, Intercultural Education in the Primary School – Guidelines for Schools, NCCA, 2005*

- Teachers model language in the classroom to reflect equality and avoid stereotypes.
- The curriculum provides all pupils with opportunities to:
 - celebrate difference
 - promote cultural awareness and tolerance
 - to explore the other language/s of the classroom
 - focus on the work and achievements of scientists, historians, geographers of both genders
- The SPHE curriculum explores equality, diversity, and multiculturalism.
- Sports coaches or other specialist teachers are made aware of the obligation to include pupils with special educational needs at a level appropriate to their abilities.

Success Criteria

- Pupils participating in all areas of school life at a level appropriate to their abilities
- Awareness of the concepts of equality and justice
- Reduction in incidents of bullying/racist incidents
- Pupils using appropriate language
- Parental satisfaction with the values being promoted in the school

Roles and Responsibilities:

All Staff members, members of the Parents’ Association and members to support the implementation of this Policy.

Evaluation:

This Policy is monitored on an ongoing basis and amendments added as new concerns/issues arise.

Ratification and Communication

A draft of this Policy was reviewed by the Teaching Staff in February 2019.

The Draft Policy was subsequently reviewed and revised by the Board of Management at a meeting on 25th February 2019.

The Policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management at its Meeting 8th April 2019

A copy of this Policy was made available to all members of Staff. Parents were made aware of the existence and availability of the policy by means of email and this Policy is also included on the St Catherine’s Ns website at www.stcatherinesns.net

Implementation Date:

Implementation of this Policy commenced with effect from June 2019.

Signed:

Chairperson, Board of Management.

Dated: 8th April 2019

