



SAINT EITHNE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Inclusion Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy

Date of Review: October 2028

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Mission Statement

Saint Eithne's Catholic Primary School is dedicated to providing a nurturing and stimulating environment where Gospel values guide every aspect of school life.

We are committed to academic excellence, spiritual growth, and the holistic development of each child. Through strong partnerships with families, parish, and the wider community, we aim to cultivate a love of learning, a deep sense of belonging, and a lifelong commitment to faith, service, and justice to allow each child to develop as a whole person,

in the image of Christ.

"Let all that you do be done in love" 1 Corinthians 14

Introduction:

In Saint Eithne's there are currently 53% of children eligible for Free School Meals. Of the 323 children on the role 2.6% (9) are EAL, with families from China, Syria, Philippines and Italy. In September 2022 Saint Eithne's was the proud recipient of the 'Schools of Sanctuary' Award. This award acknowledges and celebrates all that the school does to make it inclusive, diverse and welcoming to all.

Overarching Aim of Policy

To contribute to improving relations between communities;

- a. By educating children and young people to develop self-respect and as respect for others, to promote equality and to work to eliminate discrimination; and
- b. By providing opportunities for them to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and tradition through formal and non-formal education within the resources available

Our understanding of Inclusion Relations, Equality of Opportunity and Diversity:

Core Principles:

The principles which guide the IRED policy, and consequently those who receive funding through the policy, are to:

- Adopt an approach in which the needs of children and young people are paramount;
- Support the progressive development of the self-esteem of children and young people and their knowledge of the importance of equality and diversity
- Be responsive to the specific IRED needs of children and young people and their communities and set out clearly the agreed expected outcomes for meeting those needs effectively

- Involve children and young people in planning, for, and evaluating the effectiveness of, IRED interventions
- Provide equal access to opportunities for meeting and working with others to children and young people both within and outside mainstream formal and non-formal education
- Provide opportunities for meaningful interaction between different groups with a view to having a positive influence on the development of improved understanding and relationships in their community
- Demonstrate the relevance and connectedness of IRED activities to the formal and non-formal curricula, to improving outcomes for children and young people, and to linking to other education and wider Government policies, including strengthening the economy
- Encourage the concept of active learning which is underpinned by the formal and non-formal curricula
- Complement and support the work of formal and non-formal education settings in improving the achievements of children and young people
- Recognise and add to the existing collaboration and partnership between schools, youth groups, colleges and training organisations to meet better the needs of children and young people
- Take account of the different starting positions for each individual, group of children and young people, formal or non-formal education setting and the communities in which they live and work and
- Show case best practice and support and encourage the sharing of skills across and between the formal and non-formal sectors

Our school ethos is underpinned by Catholic Value. We consequently aim to create a school community where the life and dignity of the human person is sacrosanct. Equal Opportunities is about celebrating the uniqueness of all within the school and the wider community and believing that everyone is created in the image and likeness of God, thereby ensuring that everybody has the same chance to develop themselves to their full potential. Equal Opportunities are entrenched in everything we do and should be addressed and embraced by everyone.

Aims and Objectives:

As a result of this policy we will:

- Ensure that all members of the school community feel safe, secure and happy
- Ensure that equality of access to all aspects of school life exists for everyone
- Actively develop the self-respect of all members of the school community
- Ensure that educational provision is relevant and accessible to everybody
- Actively challenge all forms of bullying, harassment, prejudice and stereotyping
- Actively engage the support and the commitment of the whole school community in achieving the above aims
- Proactively promote equality and diversity in all aspects of school life

Relevant legislation and best practice advice:

Equality legislation underpins the duty of statutory authorities and employers to work towards the inclusion of the diverse range of people within our society and towards equality of access and provision. The commitments made to promoting reconciliation and mutual trust in The Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement, including Section 75 and Schedule 9 to the NI Act 1998, place a statutory obligation on public authorities in carrying out their various functions relating to the north of Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity.

- Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
- Between men and women generally
- Between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- Between persons with dependant and persons without

In drawing up this policy, consideration has been given to the following Acts of Parliament and Documents;

- Our Children and Young People – Our Pledge: A Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People
- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 which requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and the Human Rights Act 1998 which gives further legal effect to the fundamental rights and freedoms contained in the European Convention on Human Rights
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that grant all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a comprehensive set of rights. It came into force in January 1992.

Guidelines, Disability:

Children with disabilities/learning difficulties/special needs will:

- Have the opportunity to access all the facilities and the resources available within the school
- Have a fully integrated education alongside other children
- Be given, if necessary, additional support to ensure that they fulfil their potential
- Be provided with an education appropriate to their age, aptitude and ability
- Have access to the same broad, balanced and relevant curriculum as other children

As a school, we will ensure that;

- Detailed records are kept of the academic progress being made by children with disabilities/special needs/learning difficulties
- Staff work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that children with disabilities/special needs/learning difficulties benefit fully from their time spent in school
- Resources are targeted and utilised to ensure pupils with disabilities/special needs/learning difficulties is routine practice
- Appropriate use is made of Local Authority support services to ensure that pupils with disabilities/special needs/learning difficulties fulfil their potential
- The early identification of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties takes place

Moreover, we will take appropriate action to try to ensure such difficulties do not lead to underachievement, dissatisfaction and/or exclusion

Please also refer to our SEN Policy

Guidelines, Gender;

Registers will not separate boys from girls - children will be listed alphabetically. All children will have equal access to all curricular opportunities and activities. We expect boys and girls to perform equally well in all subject and activities, and we will monitor pupil achievement and participation to ensure that there are no significant gaps between boys and girls.

All children will be expected to work together in a constructive and positive manner. Staff will ensure that boys/girls do not dominate such things as the playground, toys and equipment inside and outside of the school building. New resources will be vetted to ensure that they show girls, boys, women and men involved in a diverse range of non-stereotypical roles and activities, thereby challenging stereotyped ideas about what females and males can and should do.

When appropriate, stories and poems which challenge gender stereotypes will be read in class and during acts of collective worship. Children will be discouraged from using sexist language and commended when they challenge such language. We expect the same standards of respect and politeness from everyone in our school community.

Guidelines, Race;

When appropriate, the curriculum will celebrate cultural diversity and promote racial harmony. When appropriate, children will have opportunities to discuss bullying and prejudice and things that people share in common as well as things that make us different and special. Every year, lessons and activities will be arranged linked to other faiths, reflective of our diverse society (R.E. scheme).

Resources will portray members of different cultural and ethnic groups in ways which are positive and non-stereotypical. Accurate information will be kept about ethnic origin, first

language and religion of all children. The dietary needs of all children will be met. Members of all cultural and ethnic groups will be welcomed and valued. Racist incidents will be dealt with in an effective and consistent manner and in accordance with L.A Procedures. Staff will be encouraged to take part in training to broaden their understanding of issues to do with race equality. Please also refer to our R.E and Addressing Bullying Policies.

Guidelines, Age, Belief, Religion and Sexuality;

All children will be expected to work together in a constructive and positive manner. Children will be discouraged from using ageist and homophobic language, and language that makes fun of people because of their religion or beliefs. Children will be commended when they challenge such language and will be reminded of the negative effects of stereotyping based on age, belief, religion or sexuality. Appropriate use will be made of local authority support services to ensure that all children fulfil their potential. Lessons will be used to value and celebrate diversity.

Children will have the opportunity to learn about the harmful effects of prejudice in all its forms. New resources will portray people of all ages, beliefs and religions in ways which are positive and non-stereotypical. All children will be able to dress and to worship in ways which do not conflict with the religious conventions of the home. People will be welcomed and valued no matter their age, belief, religion or sexuality. All incidents of bullying and harassment, including bullying and harassment based on age, belief, religion or sexuality, will be dealt with in an effective and consistent manner.

All children, irrespective of age, belief, religion or sexuality:

- Will have access to the same broad, balanced and relevant curriculum
- Will have access to all the facilities and the resources available within the school
- Will be involved in decisions made about their care and education
- Will have opportunities to learn how people have challenged, or can challenge, discrimination and stereotyping based on age, beliefs, religion or sexuality

Please also refer to our R.E. and Addressing-Bullying Policies

Guidelines, Civil Partnership and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity:

Parents, carers, visitors, members of staff and all others associated with the school can be rest assured that discrimination will not occur and that people's rights, as defined in legislation will be respected. All people will be welcomed and valued no matter what their personal circumstances, their marital status, whether pregnant or on maternity leave. Please also refer to the CCMS/EA Guidelines on appointment of senior staff.

Guidelines, Socio-Economic Background:

The school already engaged in various practices designed to ensure that children from disadvantaged financial circumstances do not miss out on activities, events, trips or visits

undertaken by children from more secure financial backgrounds, and such practices will be persisted with in the interest of equality, diversity and community cohesion.

More specifically:

- The school will raise the aspirations of all children, including those from the most disadvantaged financial circumstances
- The school will do all it possibly can to help children from disadvantaged financial circumstances fulfil their potential

Incident Log:

We have a transparent approach to recording incidents in school. If parents are not happy that incidents have been adequately dealt with, they may take their concerns further through the Complaints Policy. This is available on the school website.

Monitoring and Evaluations;

Staff and Governors will monitor and review the Equality and Diversity Policy on a regular basis.

Person/s responsible for Equality and Diversity:

Mr T Mc Dowell (Principal)

Mr D Gill (Chair of Governors)

Equality and Diversity Objectives 2025-2028

- Close the gap in attainment for those identified with SEN
- Incorporate understanding of other cultures in the curriculum.