

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

FOR

SAINT COLUMBAN'S P.S.

BELCOO



Signed:

Gerry McAloon

12-04-2022

Chair of Board of Governors

Date

Liam Magee

12-04-2022

Principal

Date

St Columban's Primary School is committed to valuing diversity by providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children, staff and families. We value our staff and are committed to good employment practice.

At St Columban's Primary School we seek to ensure that no member of the school community, or any person through their contact with the school, will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of a protected characteristic. These include: race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependents, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political activities, socio-economic background, living situation, or spent convictions.

In this we include all members of the extended school community – pupils, staff, Governors, Parents / Carers and others from our local community. Partners, contractors and other visitors to the school are also expected to adhere to this policy.

Inclusion and Diversity

Inclusion and diversity are key principles in our school as it is made up of pupils from many different backgrounds, nationalities and experiences, each who have a wide range of skills, abilities, and interests. Individuality and difference is recognised and indeed celebrated in the school particularly through 'individual improvement'.

'Inclusion is about the quality of children's experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school'.

(Removing Barriers to Achievement 2004)

It is key in this policy that all in St Columban's feel special for whom they are and that they feel free from any form of injustice or prejudice. It is essential that all pupils feel cared for and safe as equal members of the school community. All pupils have the right to full entitlement and access to high quality education within a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum. Each pupil no matter how they differ from others should feel valued and are offered curricular, pastoral and extra-curricular opportunities that allow pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills so ensuring progress, success and self-confidence.

Legal Framework

In putting together this Single Equality Scheme in the form of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, we are responding to the introduction of the Equality Act 2010.

This policy has been devised to enable our school to meet its general duty in:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct
- Advancing equality of opportunity between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Fostering good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not

We do this by:

- Providing a secure environment in which all of our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued
- Including and valuing the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity
- Providing positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and people with disabilities
- Reviewing our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity
- Making inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities of St Columban's Primary School

1. Aim

Equality and Diversity is about making a difference to the lives of the people we serve, treating all people with dignity and respect, and recognising the value of each individual. As a catholic school we are committed to ensuring that our services meet the varied and individual needs of children and young people in our school, that our employment practices are fair and promote equality and that we respect the wide variety of lifestyles and cultures, locally and nationally.

We aim to prepare children and young people for living within a diverse society with increasing global connections and controversial issues.

We work hard to build strong and trusting relationships with our pupils and their families in order to harness their engagement and enjoyment in all aspects of school life. We recognise that pupils and family members may experience a range of different needs during different times in their lives and we endeavour to meet these needs by working in close partnership with relevant agencies.

2. Our Ethos

St Columban's Primary School is a welcoming and caring community of children, Parents / Carers, staff and Governors. Together we continually strive to provide a happy and supportive environment in which the unique potential in every child is realised.

Our vision is that within a comprehensive curriculum we will enable each child to share the responsibility for becoming independent and confident learners and achievers in a continually changing world.

Our mission statement is;

“ St Columban's Primary School in partnership with parents and the community will strive through effective teaching to enable pupils to discover and develop to the full; their talents, attitudes and abilities in a caring and supportive environment”

3. **Guiding Principles**

The following principles are accepted by St Columban's Primary School.

- a. ***All learners are of equal value.***
- b. ***Relevant differences are recognised***

Treating people equally can mean treating them differently. Policies, practices and programmes do not discriminate, but may be differentiated to take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- Disability – so that reasonable adjustments are made
- Ethnicity – so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- Gender – so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- Religion, belief or faith background, sexual identity

4. ***We foster positive attitudes, relationships and a shared sense of belonging***

Policies and programmes promote:

- Positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

5. ***Staff recruitment, retention and development***

Steps are taken to positively promote equality, especially where there is evidence of inequality and to ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in recruitment, professional development and promotion:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity

6. *Reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist*

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of policies and programmes, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by addressing, reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist between:

- Disabled and non-disabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys, women and men

7. Implementation

Admissions

- St Columban's Primary School welcomes applications from the whole community
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our school, on the basis of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependents, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, political activities, socio-economic background, living situation, being a member of a travelling community or an asylum seeker or having spent convictions
- We discourage discriminatory behaviour by staff or Parents / Carers and will take appropriate action
- Displaying of openly racist insignia, distribution of racist material, name-calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the school premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner
- We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our school because of any disability but if necessary make reasonable adjustments to meet their needs.

8. School Curriculum

The curriculum offered at St Columban's Primary School encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves.

Equality and diversity is embedded as far as possible in all areas of the curriculum and pupils are given opportunities to explore prejudice and discrimination, and to positively explore difference in relation to race/ethnicity, religion/belief, gender, disability.

We do this by:

- Making children feel valued and good about themselves through the PDMU curriculum covered
- Ensuring that children have equal access to learning
- Recognising the different learning styles of children, making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities
- Regularly reviewing the teaching within each subject area as well as with the resources that are available to support this so that both the diversity of the school, local community and wider society as a whole are represented in this
- Creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance
- Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable
- Ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities
- Ensuring that if we have any children who need to learn English as an additional language they will have full access to the curriculum and be supported in their learning

Data is collected with regard to the attainment and achievement of all pupils in order to inform the planning and provision of support to individuals and groups of pupils

We recognise the specific assessment needs of pupils with additional needs such as SEN, etc., and also the importance of scrutinising assessment materials for cultural bias

9. *Valuing Diversity in Families*

- We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families
- We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life through PATHS/Literacy/RE
- We encourage Parents / Carers to take part in the life of St Columban's PS and to contribute fully to it
- We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means and offer information regarding sources of financial support

10. *Food and Dietary Needs*

- We work in partnership with Parents / Carers to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met as far as is reasonably possible
- We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them

11. *Events*

- Events are arranged to ensure that all families may become involved in the life of the school if they wish
- Information about events and meetings is communicated in a variety of ways (e.g. electronically, written and verbal), to ensure that all Parents / Carers have information about, and access to, the meetings

12. *Employment*

- Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria
- Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all
- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Criminal Records Dept.
- All job descriptions include a commitment to equality and diversity as part of their specifications
- We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible
- We may use the exemption clauses of the Race Relations Act and the Sex Discrimination Act where this is necessary to enable the service to best meet the needs

of the community

13. Staff Training

All staff at St Columban's Primary School will have their professional development needs met in relation to the inclusion agenda. This includes staff across all sections (teaching, support, mid-days, office staff, etc.) and support that will be provided to meet their training needs as outlined in our School Development Plan.

New and temporary staff will be made aware of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policies.

We review our practices annually to ensure that we are fully implementing our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

14. Roles and Responsibilities

All who are associated with St Columban's Primary and Nursery School have a responsibility for promoting equality and inclusion, and avoiding unfair discrimination.

15. School Governors:

- Provide leadership and drive for the development and regular review of the school's policies
- Provide leadership and ensure the accountability of the Principal and teaching staff for the communication and implementation of school policies
- Highlight good practice and promote it throughout the school and wider community
- Provide appropriate role models for staff, pupils, Parents / Carers and all other stakeholders
- Congratulate examples of good practice from the school
- Ensure a consistent response to incidents e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
- Making sure the school complies with all current equality legislation
- Making sure this policy and its procedures are followed

16. Principal:

- Initiate and oversee the development and regular review of equality policies and procedures
- Consult pupils, staff and stakeholders in the development and review of the policies
- Ensure that staff are trained as necessary to carry out the policies
- Oversee the effective implementation of the policies
- Provide appropriate role models for all staff and pupils
- Provide opportunities and mechanisms for the sharing of good practice
- Take appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination and ensure a consistent response to incidents e.g. bullying case, homophobic and racist incidents
- Ensure that the school carries out its statutory duties effectively

17. Staff:

- Proactively following this policy and any associated guidelines
- Provide role models for pupils through their own actions
- Deal with racist, sexist and homophobic incidents, and recognising and tackling other forms of bias and stereotyping
- Promote equality and good community relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socio-economic circumstances
- Keep up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities offered to them

18. Pupils:

- Treat others kindly and fairly without prejudice, discrimination or harassment
- Attend and engage in their own learning as well as helping other pupils to learn
- Tell staff about any prejudiced related incidents that occur

19. Parents / Carers / Carers:

- Support our school in its implementation of this policy
- Ensure their children attend and engage in the learning

- Tell staff about any prejudice related incidents that occur

20. Breaches of the Policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the principal and Governing Body. Anyone wishing to make a complaint will be advised to follow the School Complaints Procedure

21. Monitoring and Evaluation

As part of the monitoring and evaluation procedure, we will monitor any complaints made over a three yearly period and review the policy in line with these and any legal changes necessary.

