

# Ballylifford Primary School



## Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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## Equal Opportunities, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

(to be read in conjunction with the Disability Equality Scheme & Accessibility Plan, and the Inclusion Policy)

### Introduction

Pupils and parents/guardians are made aware of the existence of this policy and all related policies through our school website and an information pack which all pupils receive in Term 1 of each academic year. This policy and other related policies can be requested from the main office. All staff have access to electronic versions of all school policies.

Policies are reviewed annually and may be amended in response to feedback from pupils, staff, parents and external schools.

### Principles

Ballylifford PS is committed to Equal Opportunities and Inclusion. We aim to engender a sense of community and belonging, and to offer new opportunities to pupils who may have experienced previous difficulties. We model Equal Opportunities and Inclusion in our staffing policies, relationships with parents/carers and the community in order to meet legislative requirements as laid down in the Equality Act 2010.

Equal Opportunities is the responsibility of the whole school community and must be reflected throughout the school and be addressed in the taught and hidden curriculum. The staff and governors see this as an integral part of school life and reflecting the Catholic ethos.

All staff, governors, parents/guardians and pupils regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, gender and socio-economic background, are welcome and will be encouraged to participate in the life of the school.

## Policy Statement

This policy describes the way in which Ballylifford PS will meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. This Act replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Sex Discrimination Act.

This policy is read in line with DENI and CCMS guidance:

DENI - <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/circular-2012-02-guidance-on-cred-policy.pdf>

CCMS - <http://www.onlineccms.com/index.php/publications/ccms-circulars/equal-opportunities-policy-tnc-2009-2>

The policy will be applied to all staff and pupils, as well as any volunteers working in the school.

### **This policy aims to:**

- maximise the potential of all pupils irrespective of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation.
- oppose all forms of prejudice, which seek to discriminate against employees, pupils and volunteers.
- not tolerate name calling, generalisations about racial groups, insulting remarks, undue pressure against individuals, bullying, graffiti and other such offences.
- continue to evaluate and develop our school and curriculum in order to meet the needs of pupils and so provide the best possible environment in which pupils may achieve their full potential intellectually, emotionally, physically, morally and spiritually.
- ensure that the services it provides are accessible to all and endeavour to positively encourage and benefit people from disadvantaged groups.

## Disability Equality Scheme & Accessibility Plan

We aim to accord equal value to every one of our pupils.

In accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, we are committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity for disabled pupils and to the elimination of discrimination. It is our policy to 'make reasonable adjustments' so that pupils with disabilities can develop spiritually, academically, socially and can relate their development to their local and wider world, preparing for adult life with self-respect and self-belief.

As part of our existing work we recognise our duty to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled pupils and other pupils.
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA.
- eliminate harassment of disabled pupils that is related to their disability.
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled pupils.
- encourage participation by disabled pupils in school life.
- take steps to meet disabled student's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

This includes ensuring access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum, to the physical environment of the school and in the delivery of written information to disabled pupils. The school attempts to provide challenge to pupils of all abilities and backgrounds. This includes pupils of the highest ability, monitored by the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator, pupils with Special Educational Needs and pupils with Disabilities monitored by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. Pupils with Disabilities may be identified as Gifted and Talented or as having Special Educational Needs.

Governors recognise its three key duties towards disabled pupils:

- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage.
- to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

## **Principles and Practice**

- The staff and governors in the school are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for those pupils who have disabilities and ensuring that provision is suited to each individual and is able to respond to individuals' evolving needs.
- The staff ensure that pupils with disabilities join in the activities of the school together with pupils who do not have disabilities, so far as that is reasonably practical and compatible with the efficient education of other pupils in the school, and the efficient use of resources and learning is maximised.
- Pupils with disabilities are recorded on the SEN register which is updated termly and available to all staff.
- Lessons are differentiated to enable pupils to access mainstream classrooms.
- Pupils with disabilities have access to school outings by offering additional staffing, consulting the child and parents about appropriate provision. Risk assessments are drawn up in consultation with the child's parents.
- The staff and Governors act at all times to overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils and are proactive in making reasonable adjustments with the intention of including all pupils.
- Small groups, nurture groups and individual programmes are designed in consultation with parents to address the needs of disabled pupils for whom the mainstream provision is not appropriate.
- The SENCO has received training to ensure accessibility to examinations. Special arrangements include: readers, prompts, scribes, laptops, rest breaks, separate rooms, enlarged papers.
- The school is open access and complies with the DDA.
- Principal, staff and governors report annually to parents on the policy and effectiveness of the school's work for pupils with disability.

## **Inclusion Policy**

We aim to accord equal value to every one of our pupils.

- We believe that every individual at school has an entitlement to personal, social and intellectual development and must be given the opportunity to achieve their potential in learning.
- Everyone is unique in terms of characteristics, interests, abilities, motivation and learning.
- We will endeavour to design our education system to take into account these wide diversities.

- All pupils will have access to high quality and appropriate education.
- All pupils need appropriate curriculum, resources and positive staff attitudes and skills to ensure they are included in a meaningful sense.
- The child is at the centre of the teaching and learning process.
- Inclusion is a lifelong issue.
- Inclusion is about inclusive learning rather than where the student is educated.
- Inclusion is not a simple concept restricted to issues of placement, although mainstream access is an important goal, which needs active planning and promotion. Inclusion means meeting individual needs, working in partnership with pupils, parents and teachers, and involving schools in developing a more inclusive approach.

### Key principles

**Inclusion is most likely to be achieved when diversity is recognised, valued and regarded positively.**

- **Entitlement.** All pupils are entitled to receive with a suitable peer group, a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, in the least restrictive environment.
- **Participation.** All pupils are entitled to be treated with respect, taking into account their views.
- **Individual needs.** The development of inclusive practises needs to meet the needs of individuals.
- **Planning.** All educational and multi-agency planning should be based on inclusive principles.

**Inclusion requires strategic planning at system and individual levels.**

- **Collective responsibility.** Inclusion extends to society as a whole. Within all educational establishments it should be an issue for all staff rather than the responsibility of a particular group or individual.
- **Professional development.** Inclusion requires the extension and sharing of existing skills and the development of new ones.

**As a school we need to:**

- foster a climate that is flexible and creative in response to individual need.
- ensure that inclusion is part of the school's equal opportunities policy and put in place strategies for implementation, funding and monitoring.
- recognise that inclusion is the responsibility of all staff who need to be consulted regarding developments from the outset.
- provide opportunities for relevant professional development to support inclusive practises.

## **Equal Opportunities - Multi-Cultural, Gender, Race, Ability and Class, Disability**

It is our school policy to:

- incorporate a balanced view of the world through a multi-cultural approach.
- recognise that our pupils are world citizens who will meet a wide variety of cultures throughout their lives.
- seek to promote non-sexist attitudes in both pupils and staff.
- allow pupils equal access to opportunities which will equip them for adult life and to achieve challenging expectations.
- work towards the eradication of sexual stereotyping.
- ensure that no child or adult should be treated in any way differently, or in a derogatory manner, because of their race.
- challenge racism in the context of a caring school community.
- recognise good effort and attitudes regardless of academic achievement.
- allow all pupils access to equipment, resources and teacher time regardless of their academic achievements.
- value all efforts and achievements of pupils in all areas of the curriculum.
- ensure that pupils should not be treated in any way differently because of an assumed social class.
- ensure that assumptions will not be made as regards class difference.
- ensure that pupils should not be treated in any way differently to others due to their individual physical disabilities and needs.
- ensure a provision should be made for the individual special needs of any disabled pupils within our school community.
- ensure a physically disabled child has a right to take part in all activities within the school environment in so far as their individual disability allows them to do so.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The **Senior Leadership Team** is responsible for ensuring that:

- the different needs of different pupils are met and that the performance of different groups of pupils are monitored and evaluated.
- there is a response to different patterns of attainment and progress, behaviour or attitudes, attendance.
- strategies are implemented to raise performance, aspirations and self-esteem.
- the policy for equal access and opportunities is monitored and reviewed
- staff development is provided to raise awareness of differences in need and to promote strategies to raise achievement of all pupils.
- the school affirms and supports ethnic, cultural and religious and social diversity and effectively promotes good personal, community and race relations.

**Teachers** are responsible for ensuring that:

- teaching style, methods, language, questioning and classroom management include and engage all pupils.
- there are equal and high expectations of all pupils.
- stereotypes and what are thought to be stereotypical activities are effectively challenged.
- teaching strategies are reviewed in relation to variations in learning and attainment and in light of known good practice.

## Actions

The school will:

- monitor any issues that arise within the school and take appropriate action, fully supporting any person in the school who is faced with prejudice or discrimination.
- undertake an annual evaluation process to ensure that the policy is clear, in keeping with current legislation and being adhered to.
- treat seriously any breaches of the policy, regarding them as misconduct which may lead to disciplinary proceedings.



## PROCEDURES IN CASES OF AN ALLEGED BREACH OF THIS POLICY

### **Stage 1**

Any person who experiences, witnesses, or is reasonably led to believe that this Equal Opportunities Policy has not been respected, should bring the situation to the attention of the appropriate member of the staff through the school's line management structure.

Depending on the nature of the circumstances the staff member may wish to report directly to a senior staff member or directly to the Principal.

The person responsible for this breach will be reminded of the existence and purpose of this policy and asked to adhere to the policy. The school's staff and pupils code of conduct will be followed.

### **Stage 2**

If the person continues behaving in an unacceptable manner, the matter will be referred to the principal, who will decide the best course of action. This may result in disciplinary action.

### **Equal opportunities specific to staff**

Ballylifford PS is an equal opportunities employer. The School prides itself in providing equal opportunities for all of its staff and pupils regardless of disability, religion, sexual orientation, culture, gender, ethnic origin, colour, class or age.

The following guidelines are adhered to:

CCMS (Teaching Staff) - <http://www.onlineccms.com/index.php/publications/ccms-circulars/equal-opportunities-policy-tnc-2009-2>

EA (Non-Teaching Staff) - [EA Document](#)

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BoG Chairperson**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Principal**

**Approved by Governors:** May 2019

**Next Review:** May 2021