



Victoria Primary School

Newcomers Policy

2023

This policy should be read with the;

- Teaching and Learning policy
- Every School A Good School
 - Inclusion policy
 - Induction policy

Vision Statement

An inclusive, imaginative and inspiring Learning Community where everyone can be safe, healthy, happy and successful together.

Introduction

At Victoria Primary School we approach the inclusion of our newcomer children in a positive way. Great emphasis is placed on nurturing the children as secure, successful and fully participating members of the school and of the wider community. Newcomer children are encouraged to be fully integrated into the school's daily routines, the curriculum and the extracurricular activities. We acknowledge that pupils learning English as an additional language have expert status in terms of language and other cultures as well as having particular learning needs and abilities. Newcomer pupils can be used as a resource to help us celebrate diversity. We affirm they are just as capable as any other child and benefit from working alongside competent speakers of English. We are committed to giving our newcomer children equality of opportunity to achieve their best from their time spent at Victoria Primary School. At Victoria Primary School we promote the rights of every child in accordance with the UNCRC.

A 'newcomer pupil', for the purposes of the policy, refers to a child or young person who has enrolled in a school but who does not have satisfactory language skills to participate fully in the school curriculum and does not have a language in common with the teacher. This policy has been referred to previously as English as an additional language.

Statement of Intent

It is our aim at Victoria Primary school to:

- Ensure the classroom environment supports all learners.
- Ensure that the self-confidence and self-esteem of newcomer pupils is promoted.
- Help newcomer children to feel secure, and free from emotional and physical harm
- Make sure their opinions are valued and their concerns dealt with sympathetically and appropriately.
- Enable all pupils to work with their peers and to grow to value and respect the contributions and views of newcomer children.
- Make sure there are clear lines of communication and good flexible relationships with relevant external support agencies, including the IDS
- Ensure that positive approaches are used to establish and maintain good relationships between pupils who have English as a first language at home and those who do not.
- Promote awareness of the valuable contributions newcomer children bring to Victoria Primary School by developing an understanding and respect for differences among all staff, children and parents.
- Ensure that lessons are planned to support language acquisition.
- Ensure the curriculum is presented to ensure access by all.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the policy of the Department of Education to support Education and Library Boards (ELBs) and schools in welcoming newcomer pupils into their school communities, so that they are assisted in their acquisition of the language of instruction whether it be English or Irish, in an inclusive manner, to enable them to access the curriculum in particular, and partake in every aspect of school life. The Department will do this on two levels: - through a broad, consistent regional framework at ELB level and a flexible, responsive approach at school level. The overall aim is to build the capacity and skills of the school workforce to support newcomer pupils both now and into the future.

The Department has funded the setting up of a regional support service across the ELBs called the Inclusion and Diversity Service (IDS), to strengthen and improve support to newcomer pupils, by ensuring a consistent level of support and specialist advice is provided to all grant-aided and special schools.

The IDS is responsible for a variety of work areas from providing school-based support for initial parent/teacher meetings to follow-up advice on pastoral needs, basic language needs and curriculum support etc. In addition to this, it provides regional support for new teachers and Boards of Governors and is raising intercultural awareness etc.

The key services of the IDS that are currently available are:

- Diversity coordinators.
- Interpreting and translating services.
- Multi-lingual website - www.education-support.org.uk
- Toolkit for diversity in the primary school.
www.education-support.org.uk/teachers/ids/toolkit-for-diversity-primary/
- Continuous professional development.

The IDS can be contacted at:

Inclusion and Diversity Service
Education Authority
Antrim Board Centre
17 Lough Road
ANTRIM
BT41 4DH
Help-Line: 028 9448 2210
Email: ids@neelb.org.uk

The Department also funds schools directly via the Common Funding Formula to afford them the flexibility to determine the best way of teaching the language of instruction to newcomer pupils, to enable them to access the curriculum.

In our school, we value each child as a unique individual. We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to inclusion. All children in our school follow the requirements of the NI Curriculum. We provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress.

Language support takes place within classrooms and may involve supporting individual children or small groups of children and, at times, teaching the whole class. Language support can also support children whose first language is English. In the Foundation Stage, we provide opportunities for all children to develop their language.

Special Educational Needs and Gifted and Talented Pupils

- Most newcomer pupils needing additional support do not have SEN.
- Should SEN be identified, newcomer pupils have equal access to school's SEN provision.
- If newcomer pupils are identified as Gifted and Talented, they have equal access to school's provision.

Partnership with Parents

Staff strive to encourage parental and community involvement by:

- Providing a welcoming introduction for newly arrived pupils and their families/carers.
- Using plain English and translators and interpreters, where appropriate and available, to ensure good spoken and written communications.
- Identifying linguistic, cultural and religious background of pupils and establishing contact with wider community where possible.
- Celebrating and acknowledging the achievements of newcomer pupils in the wider community.
- Recognising and encouraging the use of first language.
- Helping parents understand how they can support their children at home, especially by continuing the development of their first language.

Effective Use of Support Staff

At Victoria Primary School classroom assistants and support staff are used effectively to make a meaningful difference to the inclusion and progress of newcomer children. At all times classroom assistants are to 'work under the direction of and in partnership with the teacher' The General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland, (2007) places a responsibility on the teacher to 'deploy, organise and guide the work of other adults to support pupils' learning when appropriate'. Support staff are included in professional development in the area of newcomer children. A support staff meeting is held monthly to help train and guide support staff in supporting the children.

In-Service Training

Identified in-service training will be undertaken in line with the school's development plan.

Monitoring

Monitoring pupil progress is vital and is undertaken in line with the school's monitoring policy.

This policy is closely aligned to the overarching policy on raising educational standards 'Every School a Good School'. It is also linked to the 'Teaching and Learning' policy and the 'SEN and Inclusion policy' and the 'Induction policy'

Evaluation and Review

The policy is a working document and is kept under constant review.

Signed – Chair of Governors: _____  _____

Signed – Principal: _____  _____

Date: October 2023

Review Date: 2025