



Ballycraigy Primary School

Pastoral Care – Equality and Inclusion Policy

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| Date | January 2020 |
| Date ratified by governors | 27/01/2020 |
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| Next review due | January 2022 |

Context

This policy is set within the context of the School's vision and aims which state that:

'Our staff and pupils are eager to develop a sense of loyalty to the school and to each other. Our school provides a welcoming, attractive and stimulating environment conducive to learning and we celebrate both academic and non-academic achievement. The positive morale of staff and pupils promotes a collaborative culture. This culture supports realistic, achievable expectations and is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and by the Six Principles of Nurture.'

The aims of the school are based on a belief in the worth of each individual and on the importance of tolerance and understanding.

This policy has been developed from the Department of Education's policy and guidance provided for the framework for our School's CRED Policy, which also links to **all other policies** in school, especially the school's Pastoral Care, Anti-Bullying, Child Protection and Safeguarding, PDMU and Equal Opportunities policies.

All school policies state the rights of equal opportunities for everyone.

This policy is also based upon the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (SEND Act).

A staged implementation of the new SEN Framework is anticipated to be put in place during 2020.

It is recognised, and welcomed, that Northern Ireland is now an increasingly diverse society and that young people are interacting with those from many different religious, cultural and social backgrounds.

Children are also now becoming more aware of and exploring their sexual orientation and/or transgender issues at a young age. Within school, both curricular and extra-curricular activities give the opportunity for pupils to learn about others and to understand and respect difference, addressing the different aspects of equality and the need for the rights of everyone to ensure the inclusion of all children in activities and events, irrespective of age, ability, gender, religious beliefs or any other difference.

Aims and Objectives of this Policy

- To contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination; and
- By providing formal and non-formal education opportunities for them to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions.
- To ensure that learners, at each stage of their development, have an understanding of and respect for the rights, equality and diversity of all without discrimination;
- To educate children and young people to live and participate in a changing world, so that they value and respect difference and engage positively with it, taking account of the ongoing intercommunity divisions arising from conflict and increasing diversity within our society;

- To equip children and young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to develop mutual understanding and recognition of, and respect for, difference.

The intended outcomes of this policy are to develop learners who:

- Understand and respect the right, equality, inclusion and diversity (including linguistic diversity) of all; and
- Develop the skills, attitudes and behaviours that enable them to value and respect difference and engage positively with it.

(DoE Quality Indicators)

In Ballycraigy Primary School

Objectives:

In line with DoE guidance and Quality Indicators, the objectives of our school policy are:

- To ensure that all of our pupils, at every stage of development, have an understanding of and respect for the rights, equality and diversity of all without discrimination.
- To educate our young people to live and participate in a changing world, so that they value and respect difference and engage positively with it,
- To equip our pupils with the skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to develop mutual understanding and recognition of, and respect for, difference.

Definitions

The following aspects are defined by the Department of Education as follows:

'Equality' – Equality is the creation of an equal society, where everyone can participate and all have the opportunity to fulfil their potential

'Diversity' – Diversity is the recognition of individual as well as group differences, treating people as individuals and placing positive value on diversity in the community.

'Inclusion' - Inclusion is much more than being in the same place at the same time and Ballycraigy Primary School is committed to the practical and pastoral elements of inclusion that focus on the child as a learner and continually seeks to take action to remove barriers to both participation and learning. (see Pastoral Care Policy)

'Special Educational Need' is defined as *'a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made'*

It is our objective that our children with special educational needs will, as far as is possible, be educated alongside their peers. The school staff will ensure that they take part in activities together with pupils who do not have special educational needs.

'S.E.N. Provision' - *Educational provision which is different from, or additional to, the provision made generally for children of comparable age.'*

[Code of Practice N. Ireland]

'Learning Difficulty' - a child has a learning difficulty if he/she has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age and/or has a disability which

either prevents or hinders him/her from making use of everyday educational facilities generally provided for children of his/her age in ordinary schools.

'Disability' - 'Someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities' (*Part 1 of Disability Discrimination Act 1995*)

Community Relations is to encourage greater cross-community contact and co-operation; to support, encourage and develop mutual understanding; and to promote recognition of and respect for cultural diversity.

The 'Every School A Good School' Policy for School Improvement (ESAGS - 2009) highlights four areas of a good school:

- Child Centred Provision
- High Quality Teaching & Learning
- Effective Leadership
- A School Connected to its Local Community

A School Connected to its Local Community is highlighted by:

- Good relationships that facilitate engagement and communication between the school and its parents and the wider community that it serves.
- The school and its teachers are held in respect by parents and the local community who in turn actively support the work of the school.
- The school uses its involvement in particular programmes (for example Extended Schools or Specialist Schools) effectively in meeting the needs of the community and nearby schools.
- Good relationships and clear channels of communication are in place between the school and the education agencies that support it.
- The school works closely with other relevant statutory and voluntary agencies whose work impacts on education, especially Health, Social Services, the Public Library Service and, where appropriate, local Neighbourhood Renewal groups.
- Increasing engagement between schools, parents and families, recognising the powerful influence they and local communities exercise on educational outcomes.

In 2015, our school formed a link with Six Mile Integrated Primary School through the Shared Education Signature Project. This has flourished and progressed annually and the various activities and events are highlighted on our school Facebook page and Class Dojo.

Our school is also part of MFT (Moving Forward Together). This is a collaboration of all schools in the Antrim and Randalstown area, across all phases and all sectors. This provides children opportunities for participation in additional events e.g. Community Choir, One Mile Challenge etc. and staff opportunities for training and personal development.

The Implementation of Equality and Inclusion in our School

Our school seeks to implement a whole school approach whereby all staff and pupils are involved and aims to promote Equality and Inclusion through the following ways:

- Providing opportunities for learning about Equality and Inclusion through different areas of the curriculum, including PDMU and other subjects. (Within PDMU, *Strand 2 Mutual Understanding in the Local and Wider Community* examines issues relating to

personal and social relationships, interdependence and the need for mutual understanding and respect in the community and in the wider world);

- Whole school Assemblies and other planned events;
- Involving pupils in Shared Education activities through which they have the opportunity to link with pupils from other schools across different backgrounds and traditions;
- Encouraging global awareness through initiatives such as the Rights Respecting Schools Award;
- Providing a broad range of extra-curricular activities, visits and tours through which pupils have the opportunity to work with others and learn about different cultures and traditions;
- Encouraging pupils to be active members of the school community through bodies such as the School Council and Eco Action Team;
- Working with staff from external agencies;
- Promoting staff development through staff training and support to enable members of staff to teach all aspects of Equality and Inclusion and to use different strategies in order to do so. Staff development should also extend to non-teaching staff and the Board of Governors will also avail of training opportunities.

Responsibilities

- Members of the Board of Governors have an important role in promoting and encouraging the practical implementation of this policy on a whole school basis.
- All members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, have the responsibility to promote good community relations, equality of opportunity and a respect for diversity.
- Class teachers will make specific reference to links to this policy in Medium Term Planning.
- Subject co-ordinators will make appropriate reference to this policy in all relevant policies and schemes of work.
- The Pastoral Care co-ordinator will have responsibility for ensuring progression and clear lines of development and will support teachers as required. The Pastoral Care co-ordinator has further responsibilities in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy throughout the curriculum and all aspects of school life.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of this policy, procedures and curriculum content will be evaluated annually through the evaluation of the School Development Plan. Use will also be made of the Quality Indicators set down by the Department of Education and evidence will be gathered from a range of sources, including staff and pupil evaluations and questionnaires and examples of pupils' work.

An audit of the school's performance using the ISEF document will be repeated periodically to determine progress.

Consultation with staff, pupils and parents will inform planning.

A positive approach will be taken to ensure that school achievements within Equality and Inclusion will be celebrated through informative wall displays, communication with parents, special assemblies and local media involvement.

Appendices

Whole School Initiatives/Key Stage Events/Wider School Activities

Using the ESAGS Indicators

Good relationships that facilitate engagement and communication between the school and its parents and the wider community that it serves.

- School website and Facebook Page created to inform the wider community of events in school and throughout the local community
- School Newsletter to inform parents of events in school and throughout the local community
- Class Dojo service to parents to remind them about events etc
- Children who win awards outside of school bring them in to be represented in assembly
- Two formal interviews are held for parents each year, in addition to our 'open door' policy
- 'Meet the Teacher' sessions are held each September to explain and support the role of the parent
- Information sessions are held for Jolly Phonics and AQE to support parents in helping and guiding their child appropriately

The school and its teachers are held in respect by parents and the local community who in turn actively support the work of the school.

- Annual Parent Audits regarding all aspects of school life
- PTA organises events and raises approx. £8000 per year, including a community Christmas and Summer Fair, table quiz, Break the Rules Day, Mothers' Day Shop etc.
- School has a Youth Centre attached. An EA Youth Club meets every Monday and Thursday evening.
- The Music Rooms, a local company, supplies lessons to children every Friday afternoon.
- Parent volunteers assist in school
- We annually participate in the town's community carol service
- Various businesses sponsor our Christmas and Summer Fair prizes
- Ministers, Youth Groups and Charity workers support our assemblies
- P2-P7 take part in the Young Enterprise Programme, facilitated by members of the local community
- P7 participates in 'Boys to Men...Girls to Ladies' programme, facilitated by St Jude's Parish Church
- We have an extensive range of after school activities for P1-7, open to boys and girls – irrespective of gender, ability etc.

The school uses its involvement in particular programmes (for example Extended Schools or Specialist Schools) effectively in meeting the needs of the community and nearby schools.

- Extended Schools money is used to raise standards using trained classroom assistants to run Breakfast Club, Homework Club and 2-3 Club
- Staff from both schools have participated in shared training: Northern Area Mental Health Initiative; iPad training delivered by iTeach
- Our school participates in the extended schools programme to work alongside Roundtower IPS, Parkhall Primary, Six Mile IPS, Greystone PS, St Joseph's PS, Steeple Nursery and Parkhall College to highlight mutual respect and diversity
- Pupil voice is important and the minutes from our School Council/Eco Action Team meetings are shared with all classes and parents (as appropriate)
- The MFT programme enables staff from all schools in the Antrim and Randalstown Area to collaborate in Literacy, Numeracy, Early Years, and Special Needs and pupils to meet for Peer Mediation and a One Mile Challenge.
- Our classes visit the local library to participate in storytelling sessions

Good relationships and clear channels of communication are in place between the school and the education agencies that support it.

- ECO Green Flag (6 to date) awarded with support from the local council
- We are an Eco Ambassador for our School Grounds
- Behaviour Support (EA –NE) is used to support pupils in school and to train staff accordingly
- We regularly contact the local council who provide support for our school e.g. garden work, bicycle maintenance, Active Communities
- All documentation e.g. BOG minutes, staff timesheets, attendance etc. are sent to the EA as required
- There is clear communication between school and the EA, supporting pupils with physical and academic needs – providing education plans and assistance as required

The school works closely with other relevant statutory and voluntary agencies whose work impacts on education, especially Health, Social Services, the Public Library Service and, where appropriate, local Neighbourhood Renewal groups.

- PSNI creation of Road Safety Banners, local neighbourhood visits and patrols, P7 Drugs talk
- The Child Protection Co-ordinator is involved in working with Social Services creating detailed reports about children, attending case conferences and liaising with the Principal and BOG
- We work alongside the Dairy Council, Action Cancer, Woman's Aid
- We have received 6 'Gold' Health Action Awards from Action Cancer
- Our P7 class work alongside Sentinus to create their Formula 1 car.
- Our School provides HSE booklets on healthy lunches and breaktime snacks to further enhance our Healthy Eating (Food In Schools) policy and procedures

- SU workers deliver a series of lessons to P5 and P7 about PDMU issues and 'moving to post primary education'
- The Fire and Rescue Service provide an informative talk to P5
- The student school council 'guides' us towards our UNICEF Rights Respecting School and Global Learning awards.

Increasing engagement between schools, parents and families, recognising the powerful influence they and local communities exercise on educational outcomes.

- We work alongside Six Mile IPS as described above
- We work alongside **all** schools in Antrim and Randalstown, cross sector and cross phase
- We visit the local playgroups and nurseries and invite them to various 'come and play' sessions to support the work of educational play based learning and to develop personal links with the local community

All of these activities and events are updated and improved upon annually.