

# Policy on Equal Opportunity/Gender Equity

## Introductory Statement

This policy document was drawn up by the staff:

- (i) To ensure equality of access to all pupils and staff in the school environment
- (ii) To ensure that no condition be allowed hinder a persons participation in school life.

## Rationale

The Policy was drafted because:

- (i) Legislation in relation to equality of access has been activated, such as the

**Employment Equality Act 1998**  
**Education Act 1998**  
**Equality Status Act 2000**

- (ii) To promote the principles of justice and equality for all in accessing and participating in the curriculum as provided by Kill 'o the Grange N.S

## Links to School Ethos

Kill o' the Grange N.S. endeavours to enable every pupil to actively participate in all school activities regardless of physical disability, gender, race, religion or learning disability. We also commit to preparing each and every pupil for life by promoting value and respect for all. The schools Ethos Statement promotes the spirit of inclusiveness and the principles of equality.

## Aims and Objectives

- To instil a sense of pride in our own culture whilst simultaneously cultivating an understanding of the value of cultural diversity.
- Ensuring compliance with all requirements of legislation
- Promoting equal opportunities in an environment where diversity is respected, valued and celebrated.

## **Organisational Procedures**

### **Enrolment**

All pupils are welcome to enrol, following the criteria as laid down in our Enrolment Policy, regardless of Race, Religion, gender, family status, disability, or member of the “Travelling Community.”

### **Interviewing**

The Board of Management is an equal opportunities Employer as per the Equal Status Act 2000, and the Employment Equality Act 1998. No discriminatory questions on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, family status etc. will be asked at interview. Correct procedures for promotion will be strictly adhered to as per the Board of Management handbook. Fair and equitable measures in relation to Post of Responsibility, Maternity Leave, Career breaks etc. will be implemented.

### **Communication**

While the school has a very low percentage of children of foreign nationals, verbal contact with parents of these children is the preferred mode of communication. The school does not have an Anti-racism charter at this point in time.

The staff communicates with both parents on pupil progress where divorce or separation is an issue, unless a Court Ruling prescribes differently.

### **Input of Parents**

The school refers parents to the Education Welfare Act 2000 at regular intervals through circulars and talks organised by the P.T.A. which highlight issues such as:

- (a) School attendance, the Education Welfare Board and absenteeism
- (b) Drug awareness, Bullying, Healthy eating/obesity etc.

The school will endeavour to assist parents on low income who are unable to afford books/uniforms/ school outings/assessment etc.

### **Induction and Teaching**

The school enrolment form gathers all the information the school will need to address issues of inequality, such as family background, medical concerns and learning or physical disabilities. This enables the school to access relevant supports such as Language teachers, Resource teaching, S.N.A.s, special furniture, teaching materials etc.

There is regular communication between Principal, class teacher and parents prior to and during the child's school life. Teaching materials acquired are chosen and used in a manner reflecting diversity.

All teachers share information which is updated annually. The school promotes non-academic activities such as soccer, hockey, swimming, chess, P.E. art, drama, etc. in a manner favourable to all sexes, races and religions. Classes are split( where necessary) on a non-academic non gender basis. Special efforts are made to avoid stereotyping when designating tasks and presenting classroom materials. Teachers will address issues of equality and gender equity.

## **Curriculum Access**

The school endeavours to enable all children to access all areas of the curriculum engaging them in appropriate intellectually stimulating work. Children are given opportunities to engage in integration, and appreciate other cultures and languages

Special arrangements are made for children of non-nationals and children with specific learning difficulties in relation to the teaching of Irish. Exemptions are sought for children of non-nationals who enrol in 3rd. class or higher and for children with a psychological report recommending exemption from Irish, subject to parental consent and in keeping with the professional recommendation of the class/learning support teachers.

SESE offers many areas where diversity and differences can be celebrated. Geography lessons will focus on people, food and the physical features of other countries. S.P.H.E.strands such as “Myself and Others” is also used to celebrate different cultures.

R.E. lessons and weekly Assemblies promote tolerance, respect etc.

## **Special Needs**

The school has 4 Special Education Teachers. Children with Special Needs have access to Learning Support and Resource hours in addition to full time mainstream integration. All children are assessed annually through standardised testing following which arrangements are put in place to assist children who are exceptionally able and children with learning difficulties.

## **Evaluation of Policy**

The policy is subject to continual review under the following:-

1. All the children accessing the curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs.
2. Increased awareness of differences and acceptance of same.
3. Maintaining a happy and tolerant school atmosphere.
4. Staff and parental satisfaction
5. Improvement in pupil attainment level and Social areas.

## **Ratification/Review/Implementation**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in 2007 and implemented immediately. It will be reviewed as necessary.

Revised 2010, 2013and 2017