

Disability and Equalities Policy

1. Introduction

This single policy outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors to promote equality and support achievement for all. This involves tackling the barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes so that there is equality of access and the diversity within the school community is celebrated and valued.

We believe that equality at our school should be embedded in all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. We believe that equality is a key principle for treating all people the same irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs/faitn tradition, sexual orientation, age or any other of the protected characteristics (Single Equalities Act 2010).

The policy is not designed to be prescriptive but to reflect our ethos and long term aims in promoting equality for all community members in achieving positive outcomes in learning and living in line with our beliefs, values and Government legislation.

Measuring the Impact of this Policy

This policy will be revised in line with the whole school policy review programme after no longer than three years. We will evaluate the impact of this policy and the main findings from equality impact reviews will be published for the school community in the Head Teachers Report to Governors and via the school website.

2. Promoting Equality: Curriculum

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed. To achieve this we will ensure:

- Curriculum planning reflects a commitment to equality;
- The curriculum prepares pupils for life in a diverse society and uses opportunities to reflect the background and experience of pupils and families in the school;
- There will be opportunities in the curriculum to explore concepts and issues related to identity and equality;
- The promotion of attitudes and values that celebrate and respect diversity and challenge discriminatory behaviour and language wherever it occurs;
- The use of images and materials which positively reflect a range of cultures, identities and lifestyles;
- We build the curriculum around pupils interest, strengths and individual needs

3. Promoting Equality: Exams

The Disability and Equality Act, special needs and access arrangements
Disability and Equality Act

- The Disability and Equality Act 2010 extends the application of the Disability Equality Duty in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.
- Special needs - Discussions will take place between the Deputy Head/Curriculum Team Leader and the subject Leader to decide any special arrangement for the exam. The Exam Officer will inform the subject Leader and candidate that the special arrangements have been granted. (ie. providing screens, extra work space etc)

4. Promoting Equality: Achievement

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, social background and sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes we recognise that:

- Adults in the school will be expected to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity;
- It is important to identify the particular needs of individuals and groups within the school and to use targeted interventions to narrow gaps in achievement;
- A range of teaching methods is used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.
- All pupils are actively encouraged to engage fully in their own learning;
- We must recognise, value and facilitate the skills individuals and groups have so that they can develop these in others.

5. Promoting Equality: The ethos and culture of the school

At Derrymount School, we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community;

- We aim to achieve a feeling of openness and tolerance which welcomes everyone to the school;
- The students are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect;
- The displays around the school reflect diversity across all aspects of equality;
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure access for pupils, staff and visitors (including parents) with disabilities (this not only includes physical access, but takes account wider access to school information and activities);
- Provision is made to cater for the cultural, moral and spiritual needs of all students through planning of assemblies, classroom based and off-site activities;
- Students' views are actively encouraged and respected. Pupils are given an effective voice for example, through advocacy, Tutor group sessions, the School Council, pupil surveys and there are regular opportunities to engage with pupils about their learning and the life of the school;
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils feel welcomed and included.

6. Promoting Equality: Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- All posts are advertised formally and open to the widest pool of applicants;
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and to ensure equality of opportunity.
- Steps are taken to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels of the school;
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds;
- Equalities policy and practice is covered in all staff inductions;
- All supply staff and contractors are made aware of the equalities policy and practice;
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and the impact of policies are kept under regular review.

7. Promoting Equality: Countering and Challenging Harassment and Bullying

- The school counters and challenges all types of discriminatory behaviour and this is made clear to staff, pupils, parents and governors;
- The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with prejudice related bullying incidents and the Deputy Head Teacher is responsible for recording and monitoring incidents;

- The school reports to Governors, parents and LA on an annual basis the number of prejudice related incidents recorded in the school.

8. Promoting Equality: Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

Derrymount School aims to work in partnership with parents/carers. We:

- Take action to ensure all parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the life of the school;
- Maintain good channels of communication, e.g. through parent meetings, home school diaries, annual reviews, telephone calls, surveys, coffee meetings; to ensure parents' views are captured to inform practice;
- Encourage members of the local community to join in school activities and celebrations;
- Ensure that the parents/carers of all newly arrived pupils are made to feel welcome.

9. Responsibility for the Policy

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In our school, all members of the school community have a responsibility for promoting equalities.

The Governing Body has responsibility for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community;
- The school's equalities policy is maintained and updated regularly; and that equality schemes are easily identifiable (these may be included within the School Improvement Plan, the school's Accessibility Plan or may be stand-alone documents);
- The actions, procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented;
- The designated Equalities Governor will have an overview, on behalf of the governing body, on all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy and ensure that appropriate action is taken in relation to these incidents.

The Head Teacher and Senior Leadership team has responsibility for:

- In partnership with the Governing body, providing leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Overseeing the implementation of the equality policy and schemes;
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact;
- Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with, the equalities policy;
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support;
- Taking appropriate action in response to any prejudice-related incidents.

All school staff have responsibility for:

- The implementation of the school's equalities policy and schemes;
- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Ensuring they do not discriminate on grounds of ethnicity and culture, disability, sexual orientation or other groups vulnerable to discrimination.
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation.

This policy is to be reviewed no later than Sept 30th 2017