



St. Brigid's B.N.S.
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Equality Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy is devised to comply with various acts of the Oireachtas such as Education Act (1998) the Equal Status Act (2000) and the Employment Equality Act (1998). It seeks to promote the principles of justice and equality for all members of the school community. This policy was formulated by staff and the Board of Management (B.O.M.) of St. Brigid's B.N.S. in consultation with parents.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is:

- To enable all pupils to access and participate in education
- To promote the principles of justice and equality for all
- To encourage critical reflection on school norms and practices
- To comply with Equality legislation - Education Act 1998, Employment Equality Act 1998, Equal Status Act 2000 & Equality Act 2004
- To review existing practice within our school
- To promote a harmonious and pleasant working environment for staff and pupils.

Relationship to characteristic spirit

- St. Brigid's B.N.S. is committed to the preparation of pupils for life by promoting the values of respect for all, in a caring and safe environment.
- St. Brigid's B.N.S. endeavours to enable every pupil to actively participate on all school activities regardless of physical disability, race, religion or additional needs.

Aims

By implementing this policy the school hopes:

- To ensure the promotion of equal opportunities for all persons in the school
- To create and maintain an environment where diversity is valued and celebrated
- That each person in the school feels valued and respected
- To ensure that the school complies with legislative requirements and principles of good practice.
- To promote a harmonious and pleasant working environment for staff and pupils where everyone feels valued and respected.

Vision Statement

Through creating an environment which reflects diversity in a positive manner, our school seeks to nurture a sense of personal identity, self-esteem and awareness of one's particular abilities, aptitudes and limitations, combined with a respect for the rights and beliefs of others.

Organisational Areas

Enrolment

St. Brigid's B.N.S. treats all applicants equally in accordance with our Admission Policy, legislative requirements and Department of Education & Skills guidelines. (c/f St. Brigid's B.N.S. Admission Policy).

Staff

- All appointment procedures followed by the Board of Management comply with the Constitution of Boards and Rules of Procedure for National Schools.
- Staff members are informed of developments in equality issues e.g. new legislation, guidelines.
- Staff members are aware of organisations that can provide information or offer support.

Parental Involvement

- Every effort is made to support parents whose first language is not English.
- All parents are encouraged to get involved in the Parents' Association and to attend functions and activities organised by them and by the school.

Uniform

As agreed with the B.O.M. and parents, all pupils in St. Brigid's B.N.S. shall wear a uniform. The wearing of jewellery is not permitted.

Code of Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy

- The school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy promotes respect for all.
- The Code of Behaviour addresses procedures for dealing with all forms of unacceptable behaviour.
- Every effort is made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school.

- (c/f Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy)

Homework

Our school's Homework Policy addresses issues in relation to

- pupils with special needs.
- pupils whose first language is not English and may need different work from the majority of pupils in a class.
- the involvement of parents.

(c/f Homework Policy)

Resources

- Posters/projects on display support the principle and practice of equality.
- Positive images of other cultures are displayed in the school environment and classrooms.

- The principles of equality and respect for diversity are reflected in the pupils' textbooks.
- There are books in the library that explore different cultures, different family structures and achievements of both male and female role models.
- Resources are available to support pupils with additional needs.
(c/f Special Needs Policy)

Playground

All pupils play in allocated play areas. All yard rules reflect our policy of inclusion within a safe environment.

Tours and Extra-Curricular Activities

All pupils, irrespective of circumstances, have opportunities to participate in school tours or other outings organised by the school.

Transition to Post Primary

- All pupils have equal access to transfer/transition programmes. Pupils are free to attend an induction day in the school to which they are transferring.
- The school liaises with secondary schools to help all pupils transfer to second level successfully.

Curriculum

- All pupils have equal opportunities to experience all aspects of the curriculum, to participate in activities and to use resources.
- A wide variety of teaching methodologies are employed to support integration and promote equality of participation e.g. Circle Time, co-operative learning, groupings etc.
- Special consideration may be given to pupils when standardised tests are administered if necessary.
- Teachers monitor language in the classroom and challenge existing inequalities/stereotypes.
- Opportunities are given to senior classes to analyse media coverage of news stories.
- Opportunities are given to pupils to explore the other language/s of the classroom and to learn a little of that language.
- Some subjects e.g. Language, Drama, Music, Visual Arts, SESE (History, Geography and Science) are used to
 - celebrate difference
 - promote cultural awareness and tolerance
 - focus on the work and achievements of scientists, historians, geographers of both genders

- Equality, diversity, and multiculturalism are explored through SPHE.
- Opportunities are provided to explore the teachings and values of other religions and cultures.
- Sports coaches or other specialist teachers are made aware of the obligation on schools to include pupils with special educational needs at a level appropriate to their abilities.

Success Criteria

The success of this policy will be determined by:

- Pupils participating in all areas of school life at a level appropriate to their abilities
- Awareness of the concepts of equality and justice
- Reduction in incidents of bullying/racism
- Pupils using appropriate language
- Parental satisfaction with the values being promoted in the school
- Mutual respect between parents, pupils, teachers and all ancillary staff.
- Good working relationships within the school

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of staff, pupils, parents and BOM are responsible for implementing this policy and ensuring equal access and participation by the entire school community.

The staff has responsibility in promoting the concept of equality and justice for all, both within specific educational programmes and in the “hidden” curriculum throughout the school day.

Ratification and Communication

The policy is available for the school community to view on the school website www.stbrigidsbns.ie.

Ratified by Board of Management on 25th November 2020.

Signed: Seán Moran
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 25th November 2020