



## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & GENDER EQUITY POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT:**

This policy document was drawn up:-

- To ensure equality of access to all pupils and staff in the school environment;
- To ensure that no condition be allowed hinder a person's participation in school life;
- To ensure a safe, caring, happy and disciplined environment where children's self-esteem, self-confidence, initiative and innovation can be nurtured within an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation.

### **RATIONALE:**

The policy was re-drafted because:-

The existing policy was originally drafted in 2004 and required updating.

Legislation in relation to equality of access has been activated, such as the:-

- Employment Equality Act 1998
- Education Act 1998
- Equality Status Act 2000

The nine grounds on which discrimination is prohibited are:

1. Gender
2. Civil Status
3. Family status
4. Sexual orientation
5. Religion
6. Age
7. Disability
8. Race
9. Member of the travelling community

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### **LINKS TO SCHOOL ETHOS:**

To promote the principles of justice and equality for all in accessing and participating in the curriculum as provided by St David's National School.

St David's 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 mission 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 regardless of race, religion, gender, family status, disability or whether or not they are a member of the 'Travelling Community'.

Arrangements are made on enrolment for families who do not wish their children to participate in religion, R.S.E or other curriculum areas.

### **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 during the interview process. Correct procedures for promotion will be strictly adhered to as per the CPSMA handbook and fair and equitable measures in relation to post of responsibility, maternity leave, career breaks, etc.

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### **INDUCTION AND TEACHING:**

The school infant 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 special education teachers, SNAs and teaching materials. There is regular communication between the class teacher and parents prior to and during the child's early school life. All 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, football, dancing etc. in a manner which is favourable to all sexes, races and religions. Special efforts are made to avoid stereotyping when designating tasks and presenting classroom materials. Teachers remind children regularly that boys and girls are equally able to do the same tasks and jobs etc. This can be done through debates in oral language/drama/ SPHE etc.

### **CURRICULUM ACCESS:**

The school endeavours to enable all pupils to access all curriculums which shall enable pupils to engage in appropriate intellectually stimulating work. All children are given an opportunity to engage in integration and appreciate other cultures and languages. 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' are also used to celebrate different cultures.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS:**

The school has a complement of two special education teachers (one full time in the school and one clustered with a local school). Children with special needs in mainstream have access to learning support and resource hours in addition to full time mainstream integration.

St David's N.S. also has a special class, opened in November 2023. Pupils in the class will be aided to access the full curriculum with the support and guidance of a class teacher and 2 SNAs.

There will be an aim for each pupil to integrate into the mainstream to some degree. This will be approached with the pupils' best interests in mind to ensure it is successful and positive for all involved. This will occur when deemed appropriated and successful for the pupil and the other pupils in the class, as decided by the class teacher, principal and mainstream class teachers, along with the SNAs involved. Every support will be given to integrate these pupils in daily school life such as break and yard times, eating times, school events etc. as well as access to the curriculum.

#### **EVALUATION OF POLICY:**

The policy is subject to continual review under the following;

- All pupils accessing the curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs;
- Increased awareness of difference and acceptance of same;
- Maintaining a happy school atmosphere;
- Staff and parental satisfaction;
- Improvement in pupil attainment level in academic and social areas.

#### **REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed as and when is required.

#### **RATIFICATION**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on date shown below.

**Ratified by Board of Management on:**

Signed: Cathy McAuley  
Chairperson

L. Gallispie  
Principal

Date: 11/6/24

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