

# Equality, Accessibility and Participation Policy      Gaelscoil Chill Mhantáin

## Introductory Statement

This policy document was drawn up:

- a. To ensure equality of access to all pupils and staff in the school environment
- b. To ensure that no condition be allowed hinder a person's participation in school life

Policy formation was a collaborative exercise between staff, Board of Management, parents and children.

## Rationale

The policy was re-drafted because:

1. Legislation in relation to equality of access has been activated , such as the
  - Employment Equality Act 1998
  - Education Act                      1998
  - Equality Status Act    2000
2. To promote the principles of justice and equality for all in accessing and participating in the curriculum as provided by Gaelscoil Chill Mhantáin

## Relationship with School Ethos

Gaelscoil Chill Mhantáin 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 instill a sense of pride in our own culture whilst simultaneously cultivating an understanding of the value of cultural diversity and preparing our pupils for like in a multicultural society.
- Ensuring compliance with all requirements of legislation
- Promoting equal opportunities in an environment where diversity is respected, valued and celebrated.
- That each person in our school feels valued and respected.

## Organisational Procedures

### Enrolment

All pupils are welcome to enroll regardless of Race, Religion, gender, family status, disability, or member of the 'Travelling Community' and arrangements are made on enrolment for families who do not wish their children to participate in Religion, R.S.E..

### Interviewing

The Board of Management is an equal opportunities Employer as per the Equal Status Act 2000, and the Employment Equality Act 1998, and 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 CPSMA handbook and 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 staff are also made aware of the different cultural practices of these parents / children through verbal communication. The school does not have an Anti-/racism charter at this point in time.

The school has a policy of communicating with both parents on pupil progress where divorce or separation is an issue, unless a Court Ruling prescribes differently.

## Parental Involvement

The Parents Association of the school have an input into the formulation of the Equality policy. The Board and Parent Association refers all parents to the Education Welfare Act 2000 at regular intervals through monthly newsletters and circulars which highlight issues such as

- a) School attendance, the Education Welfare Board and absenteeism
- b) Multi-culturalism, drug awareness, obesity etc. through organizing talks for parents

The school will also identify parents on low income who are unable to afford books / uniforms/ school outings / P.E. & Music and refer them to where they can source assistance.

## 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 language teachers, SNA'S and teaching materials. There is regular communication between 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 Hurling, football, basketball 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.

## Curriculum Access

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

SESE offers many areas where diversity and differences can be celebrated. 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 2 LST/RT teachers. Children with Special Needs in Mainstream have access to Learning Support and Resource hours in addition to full time mainstream integration.

## Evaluation of Policy

The policy is subject to continual review under the following –

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

## Ratification / Review / Implementation

**This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in 2007 and implemented immediately. It will be reviewed on a yearly basis.**

Created	2007
Reviewed	2014
To be reviewed	2015