



Equal Entitlement Policy

Purpose of an Equal Entitlement Policy.

Currently there are groups of children who may experience disadvantage in the education they receive because of their special educational needs, gender, ethnic or social-economic background.

Equalising opportunities means ensuring that all children can achieve and that these achievements are valued.

There are three key elements to equalising opportunities:

1. Equality of opportunity

It is not enough to provide a curriculum and leave children to benefit from it. The school's role is to promote access to it and development through it. An accessible curriculum will have elements in it that attract all children, because they are recognised by all.

2. Equality of contribution

Children do more than receive knowledge; they contribute themselves to the process of education by bringing to it their own cultural experiences, values and perspectives. Schools must utilise such contributions in the learning process.

3. Equality of esteem

Children need to be visibly shown esteem as individuals, children and family members in order to develop self-esteem. The partnership between parent and school in the education of the child will be particularly important.

Following are the schools

1. Multi-cultural/anti-racist policy.
2. Gender policy (now in draft).
3. Policy on special needs provision (including SENDO).

Multicultural and Anti Racist Policy

Racism is defined as "Prejudiced beliefs and attitudes of individuals, both conscious and unconscious, the uneven distribution of collective power and influence, and discriminatory practices, procedures and customs."

General Principles

- a. Given the nature of our increasingly multi-cultural society St Patrick's has a duty to prepare all of our students to play a fulfilling and dignified role within it building upon the strengths of cultural diversity.
- b. Two essential aspects of the approach required to achieve this aim are Multi-Culturalism and Anit-Racism.
- c. These values which are an integral part of our Christian ethos should permeate the practices of the whole school with regard to both the formal and hidden curricula.

Ethos

- a. Given that the ethos of the school is reflected in the physical environment, we should ensure that displays reflect the diversity of our intake. Racist graffiti should be reported immediately to a member of the Senior Management Team and removed as soon as possible.
- b. Assemblies must be sensitive to the many different religious groups within the school. No child should ever be asked to participate in an act of worship which requires them to compromise their own faith.
- c. A wide range of school activities should be offered and actively encouraged so that students are not excluded from participation on cultural grounds.
- d. When students enter the school their names must be correctly established and recorded with due regard to ethnic origins. Correct pronunciation must also be established.
- e. The policy of the school with regard to Multi-Culturalism and Anti-Racism needs to be made explicit to new members of the School. The school naturally expecting positive support and cooperation by students, parents and staff for these values.

Racial Abuse

- a. Action here should be guided by two major principles:
 - i) to protect the victim of such attacks
 - ii) to make a strong and immediate response in such a way as to make the school's position clear.

Where possible some form of constructive dialogue with those concerned should also take place.
- b. Precise action taken will depend upon the severity of the offence
e.g.

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|-----|---|--|
| i) | Attacks, intimidation, graffiti, introducing racist material | Full report to Form Tutor, and Year Head. Formal letter to parents requiring them to attend a follow-up interview. |
| ii) | Name calling, other (e.g. non co-operation with a student on grounds of colour) | Challenge the behaviour in every situation and follow it up making it clear that it is NOT acceptable. |

In the event of repeated offences follow the procedure outlined in (i) above.

Language/Dialect

- a. The school should value the linguistic diversity of its members, acknowledging that an individual's language and her/his sense of identity are interrelated. The range of dialect within the school should likewise be valued. Bilingualism should be viewed as a strength. It should be recognised that the use of mother tongue in the classroom can assist conceptual development.
- b. All teachers, whatever their subject area, have a responsibility to ensure that the language in their classrooms is understood by, and is appropriate for their students.
- c. All staff should be aware that the testing procedures used at primary/secondary transition are unlikely to take account of cultural differences and may therefore provide an inaccurate diagnosis of students' abilities.
- d. The school is using MIDYIS tests that do take account of cultural needs.
Staff preparing internal assessments and tests should also ensure that students are not doomed to failure purely on account of inappropriate demands of language.

Community Links

- a. The school is part of and serves the wider community around it.
- b. School social occasions should reflect our commitment to Multi-culturalism.
- c. We recognise that there are areas of specialist knowledge and expertise with the community on which we can draw.
- d. Parents should be encouraged to feel that they are welcome in school and the school environment should reflect this with permanent display boards of information in all the major languages of the community.

Curriculum (Pastoral and Academic)

- a. Staff need to be aware that their own attitudes and expectations play a crucial role in student performance and achievement.
- b. Multi-Cultural and Anti-Racist perspectives should infuse both the pastoral and academic curricula.
- c. The curriculum should provide opportunity for the study of Racism as a phenomenon e.g. History, PSHE and Citizenship.
- d. Departments and year teams should monitor their practices and procedures to ensure that they lead to genuine equality for all of our students.

Resources

- a. The school recognises the need to provide resources which reflect accurately our multi-cultural society. Given that we may be forced by economic necessity to use out dated and often unsuitable materials these should be used positively to draw attention to negative images so that discussion can take place.
- b. Where resources are created in school, inaccurate, crude stereotyping should be avoided - this would include Racism through omission.
- c. Guidelines for the purchase of books etc. for staff and students are available from the school librarian.

Staff Appointments

- a. Cultural diversity amongst the whole staff should be viewed positively. Whilst the school is committed to the principle that the best person for a post should be appointed, it is important that the teaching and non-teaching staff should represent a range of cultural backgrounds at all levels and this will be a factor to consider.

The Future

The responsibility for the implementation of the school's Multi-Cultural/Anti-Racist policy must be shared by ALL staff if we are successfully to create a school environment in which all students can feel valued and are able to achieve their full potential.

It is essential that this policy document is seen as a starting point rather than as an end in itself and that it is subject to review, modification and update in the light of our experiences.

Gender Policy

ETHOS

- a) The ethos of the school should be one that reflects the needs of all its students and staff. We recognise that both sexes are affected by sexism but it is girls and women who are disadvantaged. The physical environment is an important indicator of the school's ethos. Displays should take care not to reinforce gender stereotypes and should provide an opportunity to challenge sexist assumptions.
- b) The organisation and administration of the school should not reinforce differences through unnecessary divisions such as gender-based class lists. Staff should be sensitive in their methods of grouping students and avoid gender-based divisions unless they are particularly relevant to the students needs.
- c) Sex equality should be promoted through pastoral periods and assemblies and should take account of the achievements of women.
- d) A wide range of activities should be offered to students. Care must be taken, wherever possible, not to exclude students or staff from activities because of their gender.
- e) The school's gender policy should be made explicit to new members of the school and to parents of all students at the school.

HARASSMENT

St Patrick's has adopted an anti-Harassment Policy that all staff have. In the event of a Harassment claim the action of the school will be guided by two major principles:

1. To protect the victim of such attacks.
2. To make a strong and immediate response in such a way as to make the school's position clear i.e. that such behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Precise action taken will depend upon the severity of the offence, but in any instance some form of constructive dialogue should take place.

Definitions of harassment:

Physical assault

Verbal abuse

Unwanted attention

Sexist or patronising behaviour

Offensive graffiti/pictures

CURRICULUM

- a) Staff need to be aware that their own attitudes and expectations play a crucial role in student performance and achievement.
- b) The pastoral and academic curricula should endeavour to avoid all discrimination and sex stereotyping and make equal entitlement a key focus. There is a particular need to raise awareness given the gender imbalance of the school.
- c) Departments and Year Teams should monitor their practices and procedures to ensure that they lead to genuine opportunity for all students.
- d) Teaching strategies should be developed which enhance a positive self image for all students.
- e) Assessment procedures should avoid gender bias. Records of Achievement in terms of extra curricular activities should not disadvantage a particular sex.

RESOURCES

- a) Visual materials should avoid sex stereotyping and should depict women and men equally involved in all roles of society.
- b) Sexist assumptions of popular culture and its images in books, magazines and on television should be discussed and challenged.
- c) Literature by women authors, about women and with women as central characters, in non-stereotypical roles, should be positively sought.
- d) All school-made resources should avoid crude sex stereotyping.
- e) Equal time should be allotted to girls and boys for the use of resources such as computers.

LANGUAGE

We need to be aware of the fundamental role which language plays in conveying values. It is important to try to ensure that the words we use do not betray unconscious bias. This is difficult because we have learned language alongside cultural attitudes over a long period.

Some obvious points to note would be:

Use gender-neutral terms where gender is not significant.

e.g. headteacher not headmaster
Business people not businessmen
Humankind not mankind.

Be careful in using gender-specific pronouns. They can imply that certain activities are more appropriate for one sex than the other. The use of plurals can help to avoid this e.g. Secretaries often shield their bosses from awkward situations by screening phone calls.

rather than
The secretary often shields her boss by screening his phone calls.

If plurals are inappropriate, both single pronouns should be used- she/he or s/he.

Be careful about using adjectives which suggest traditional gender-related characteristics.

E.g. strong boys, helpful girls

The extreme versions of this are deeply offensive and should never be used e.g. bossy women, giggly girls, nagging wives.