



# Equality & Inclusion Policy

## **Article 2**

*All children have these rights (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child), no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.*

**Oct 2021**

## **1. Mission Statement**

We, the Governors and staff of St Therese of Lisieux Primary school, are committed to providing our pupils with a positive attitude towards Catholic education. Christ's values and gospel message are an intrinsic part of our ethos, daily running of the school and our curriculum. We try to ensure that we work in partnership with the home, parish and the wider community to strengthen our pupils' vision of their role as part of the Catholic community.

“With a smile and a helping hand we inspire the children of today, to become the adults of tomorrow”.

## **2. Introduction**

St Therese of Lisieux PS is committed to equality and inclusion.

We recognise the value of diverse environments and strive to promote a culture in which all pupils, staff and members of the school community are welcomed and supported to fulfil their potential, irrespective of their background or personal characteristics. We are committed to an ethos and culture of inclusion for all pupils.

St Therese of Lisieux PS is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of all our children and where all members of our school community are of equal worth.

We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength that enriches our lives. We take account of differences and strive to remove any barriers to learning and development.

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination and bullying and harassment. As a school community, we recognise the need to champion equality and ensure inclusion for all pupils in the full life of our school; where appropriate making necessary adjustments to enable everyone's participation.

At St Therese of Lisieux PS we believe that education (both formal and informal learning) is fundamental to equality of opportunity. It prepares young people for life and is a powerful influence on access to and advancement in employment. All young people should be able to learn and develop fully in a truly diverse and inclusive environment.

Over the past decade our community has become more diverse. In particular, there has been a significant increase in the diversity of our pupils' race, ethnicity and cultural heritage.

Our policies and practices aim to be inclusive and supportive of a welcoming culture for all communities. We continue to reflect on our curriculum, our practices, procedures and resources to ensure that we offer a safe welcoming environment where differences are respected and valued and where every child can flourish.

### **3. Equality and Inclusion – School Policies**

Through this policy, and the wider practices within St Therese of Lisieux PS we seek to empower our young people to embrace diversity and challenge discrimination. We equip our Governors and staff to fulfil their legal responsibilities, ensure that our school's safeguarding procedures are comprehensive and inclusive and enable robust monitoring of our progress as a school.

Inclusion underpins all our school policies.

As part of our overall school policy development we have a range of policies in place, which are regularly reviewed, to ensure our school is addressing statutory responsibilities, including our Pastoral Care Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, SEND Policy, RSE Policy, PDMU Policy and our Admissions Policy. Any arising incident will be dealt with by the appropriate policy.

It is our belief that equality and inclusion is central to all of our policies and that we maintain an ethos that welcomes diversity and promotes equal opportunities for all, ensuring all our pupils and their families feel valued and supported and making sure that equality and inclusion is evident in everyday school life.

### **4. Responsibilities**

The Board of Governors have overall responsibility to:

*'Promote equality, good relations and diversity and to comply with education and employment legislation and anti-discrimination, human rights and equality legislation that affect its statutory duties in relation to the school'*

*'Every school a good school – the governors role'* (Department of Education NI, August 2019)

The Governors have overall responsibility to manage the implementation of equality and diversity in our school.

The Principal is responsible for:

ensuring policies and procedures are in place to comply with equality legislation;

- ensuring the school implements policies and practices in line with the principles of equality and inclusion;
- following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying;
- ensuring appropriate training and awareness raising is undertaken with staff;
- ensuring that appropriate records are kept of any cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying.

The School Leadership Team are responsible for:

- putting the school's equality and inclusion policies and codes into practice;
- making sure that all staff know their responsibilities and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out;
- following the relevant procedures and taking action where necessary.

The School's Pastoral Care and Safeguarding Team will manage the implementation of the policy in partnership with the Principal. All School Staff (teaching and non-teaching) have a responsibility for the day to day operation of this policy and will contribute to an inclusive and welcoming environment within the school.

Pupils are responsible for:

- respecting others in their language and actions;
- following all of the relevant school policies and codes of conduct in line with the principles of equality and inclusion.

## **5. How do we promote Equality and Inclusion?**

St Therese of Lisieux PS promotes diversity and inclusion through the following activities:

- Development of a whole school approach
- Our inclusive mission statement
- Liaison with the Intercultural Education Service
- Use of IES translated documents where appropriate
- Promoting and using interpreting services
- Using a range of resources and teaching approaches to ensure the needs of pupils are met, including pupils with additional needs and/or disabilities
- Using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages for newcomer pupils to monitor progress and plan for language learning
- Using appropriate terminology and language
- Making reasonable adjustments for pupils and staff with disabilities
- Tackling stereotypes
- Providing resources that challenge stereotypes around gender roles, diverse ethnic/cultural groups and people with disabilities
- Challenging unacceptable and bullying behaviour, and putting appropriate interventions in place when necessary
- Increasing the visibility/role modelling opportunities of minority groups
- Setting clear expectations about acceptable behaviour
- Whole School Nurture, Impact of Trauma and Diversity Training for **all** staff
- Have allocated accessible parking
- Having all accessible toilets/changing facilities
- Having an accessible main entrance and building
- Having signage, displays and resources reflecting all languages and cultures throughout the school
- Liaising closely with the School Meals Service to ensure that dietary needs are met

- Assisting families in applications for Free School Meals
- Considering flexible payment schemes when planning trips and extra-curricular activities
- Offering 50% discount on music lessons, 123 Club and Breakfast Club to families on FSM
- Offering a wide range of keenly priced afterschool activities
- Examining where and when themes around equality and inclusion might be embedded into topics within each curriculum area
- Holding/attending equality and inclusion themed events
- Participating in Shared Education
- Ensuring that staff with specific areas of responsibility consider the implications of Equality and Inclusion
- Participating in the TREK and Roots of Empathy programmes
- Becoming a Rights Respecting School

## **6. Monitoring the Success of the Equality and Inclusion Policy**

Ensuring the successful implementation of this policy requires continuing self-reflection and ongoing review and assessment of the effectiveness of our approach.

It will be monitored by the Leadership Team to ensure that the needs of all children are being met and that equality and inclusion is embedded across the curriculum. Monitoring and evaluation will happen through discussion with staff and pupils, and through questionnaires with stakeholders at key points in our School Development Planning cycle. The Principal will report regularly to the Governors on the successes and challenges related to inclusion, as well as monitoring any bullying incidents and subsequent interventions.

## **7. Complaint Procedures**

Parents/carers are strongly encouraged to inform their child's class teacher(s) if they have any concerns about their child in school. Parents should make an appointment with the class teacher to explain the situation. The teacher will talk to those involved to clarify the issues and will address the concerns raised.

Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken, the concern should be reported to the Vice-Principal/Principal.

If the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed. Access to the Complaints procedure can be found on the school's website.

## **8. Review**

The Equality and Inclusion Policy will be reviewed and, if required, updated in line with our school policy review cycle or when directed to by the Department of Education in light of new guidance.