



# Equality & Inclusion Policy

<b>Title</b>	<b>Equality and Inclusion Policy</b>
<b>Summary</b>	This policy sets out our commitment and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.
<b>Purpose</b>	To ensure that all stakeholders are aware of this policy and its application in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion for all pupils and staff.
<b>Operational Date</b>	November 2021
<b>Frequency of Review</b>	Every 3 Years
<b>Date last Reviewed and Approved by Board of Governors</b>	November 2021

## 1. Introduction

**Naíscoil agus Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche** 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 in Naíscoil agus Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche for all pupils, irrespective of race, religion/belief, political views, disability, SEN status, gender, gender identity (e.g. transgender) and/or sexual orientation (LGBTQ+).

In Naíscoil and Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche we believe that children learn best when they are happy and we value our happy family atmosphere here.

Naíscoil agus Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of all our children and young people 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.

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.

All our policies and practices are fully inclusive and supportive of a welcoming culture for all **communities; this is evidenced in our practices and procedures.**

## 2. Mission and Values

In Naíscoil and Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche we believe that bilingualism is excellent for language acquisition, for cognitive and academic development and for the self-confidence and self-esteem of the children. Bilingual children are better problem solvers and risk-takers, unafraid to get things wrong. We also believe that children learn best when they are happy and we value our happy family atmosphere in Naíscoil and Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche.

We also support the wider values of the Education Authority of Openness, Respect, Reflection, Responsibility, Excellence and Equality.

Naíscoil and Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche recognises the wider value of education, beyond solely the achievement of qualifications, allowing individuals to develop an understanding and experience of the value and range of diverse cultures, identities and backgrounds. We recognise that our school community is enriched by the diversity that each individual brings and are committed to creating a safe, welcoming environment for all, where each learner can flourish, knowing that differences are respected.

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

Through this policy, and the wider practices within Naíscoil and Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, 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 there are a number of policies that we must have in place and regularly review to ensure our school is addressing its statutory responsibilities. These include Anti-bullying Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Curriculum Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy, Uniform Policy and Admissions Policy. Any arising incident will be dealt with by the appropriate policy. There should never be any grey areas when it comes to young people's safety and well-being.

This is supplemented by a range of other policies that as a school we feel are important to have for our whole school community. 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 Naíscoil and Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche **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;
- 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*** (led by the Designated Teacher) 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/students*** 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?**

**Naíscoil and Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche** promotes equality and inclusion within our school through the following activities:

- ***School/Centre Practices***

***(such as using a range of resources and teaching approaches, use of appropriate terminology and language, tackling stereotypes, challenging homophobic, transphobic or any other type of bullying, increasing the visibility/ role modelling of minority groups, setting clear expectations about acceptable behaviour.)***

- ***Policies***

***(Equality and Inclusion plays a central role in our Pastoral Care Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, ICT and eSafety Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy, RSE Policy, SEN Policy and our School Development Plan.)***

- **Facilities**

*(we endeavour to promote and use interpreting services if/when needed, use translated documents where available/necessary, have allocated accessible parking, have accessible toilets/changing facilities, have an accessible main entrance and building, have signage, displays and resources reflecting all languages and cultures throughout the school, consider flexible payment schemes when planning trips and extra-curricular activities.)*

- **Curriculum**

*(including examining where and when themes around equality and inclusion might be embedded into topics within each curriculum area, participating in Shared Education projects, and ensuring that staff with specific areas of responsibility consider the implications of Equality and Inclusion with their teams.)*

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

This policy will be monitored via a range of methods:

- Number of bullying incidents by equality characteristic to be monitored and appropriate action taken as necessary;
- Embedding of equality and inclusion across curriculum areas to be monitored
- Number of comments and complaints in relation to equality and inclusion to be monitored;
- a Record of training / information presented to staff/ pupils to be kept
- Positive stories on equality and inclusion to be highlighted
- Feedback from pupils, staff, parents and the wider community to be sought regularly
- Self Audit to be completed every autumn term to monitor Equality and Inclusion procedures (example in annex)

## **7. Complaint's Procedures**

Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche has a robust and transparent Complaints procedure. If a complaint is made regarding equality or inclusion, the Complaints process will be fairly and systematically applied. Access to the Complaints procedure can be found on the schools website at [www.bunscoilbb.com](http://www.bunscoilbb.com) or upon request to the principal.

## **8. Review cycle of policy**

The Equality and Inclusion Policy will be reviewed by all stakeholders, if required, updated every **three** years in line with our school policy review cycle.

## Annex 1

### How does our school setting embrace Equality & Inclusion?

Mark an 'X' in the correct column to indicate what you currently do and what gaps there are.



You should consider how best to fill those gaps and develop an activity plan.

Our School.....	We <b>do</b> this	We <b>don't</b> do this
Have an Equality and Inclusion Policy		
Examine all relevant policies for inclusivity, equality and diversity		
Explain clearly our values and school ethos		
Set clear expectations about acceptable behaviour		
Teach young people about the effect that behaviours and language have on other people		
Train all our staff in diversity and inclusion		
Have an inviting and inclusive reception area		
Have signage, displays and resources reflecting all languages and cultures throughout the school		
Organise activities that encourage links with people of different backgrounds		
Make every effort to ensure that the workforce represents the diversity of people in the community		
Promote activities that value the commonalities and differences among people		
Encourage all our people, both young people and staff to have a natural and respectful curiosity for others		
Use effective strategies for intervening in conflict situations that involve issues of identity or background		
Teach collaborative problem-solving techniques		
Encourage young people to talk about difference without making judgements		
Look for evidence of high expectations from all staff and young people		
Provide opportunities for pupils to maintain home language skills		
Provide opportunities for all to learn about one's own culture		
Provide opportunities for all to learn about other cultures and have evidence of the range of cultures the young people explore		
Provide workshops / training for staff to deepen knowledge of different cultures, social conventions, languages, accessibility and diversity		
Provide opportunities for parents to learn about the local area		
Provide information for parents on how the school is promoting equality/ inclusion		
Provide opportunities for members of different cultural groups to become involved in the school (Parent associations for example)		