**Scoil Charthaigh Naofa**

**Policy on Equal Opportunity/Gender Equity**

**Introductory Statement**

This policy document was drawn up:

1. To ensure equality of access to all pupils and staff in the school environment
2. 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 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 Scoil Charthaigh Naofa
3. To recognize the new reality created by the amalgamation of Killina Girl’s Nation School and Rahan Boy’s National School.

**Links to School Ethos**

Scoil Charthaigh Naofa 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.
* Ensuring compliance with all requirements of legislation
* Promoting equal opportunities in an environment where diversity is respected valued and celebrated.

**Organizational 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 or R.S.E. This arrangement does not include removal from the class due to supervision constraints nor does it preclude exposure to religious references or materials that are part of the daily life of the school.

**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 is 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. However we have a strong discipline and anti bullying policy and any incidents of racism can be dealt with by these policies.

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.

**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 basketball, football, camogie etc. in a manner favourable to all sexes, races and religions. Special efforts are made to avoid stereotyping when designating tasks and presenting classroom materials. Each teacher also conducts formal sessions on equality and gender equity.

**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.

Special arrangements are made for children of foreign nationals and children with specific learning difficulties in relation to the teaching of Irish. Exemptions are sought for children of non-nationals who enroll in 3rd class or higher and for children with a psychological report recommending exemption from Irish, subject to parental consent and in keeping with the professional recommendation of the class teacher.

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**

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 of Scoil Charthaigh Naofa in September 2008 and implemented immediately. It will be reviewed every three years.

Reviewed September 2025