

# St. Anthony's School

## Inclusion Policy

### Introduction:

In St. Anthony's school we value the individuality of all of our students. We are committed to giving all of our students every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of students' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all the students. The achievements, attitudes and well being of all our students matter. This policy helps to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all our students, irrespective of their ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

### Aims and Objectives:

Our school aims to be an inclusive school. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual students, or groups of students. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for our students. We make this a reality through the attention we pay to the different groups of students within our school:

- Students with Special Educational Needs which may include one or more of the following: Mild GLD, Mild/Mod GLD, ASD, ADHD, Assessed Syndromes, Physical Disability, Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Emotional Difficulties
- Girls and boys
- Students who need support to learn English as another language
- Students that are at risk of disaffection or exclusion
- Students from different ethnic and minority groups

The Primary Curriculum, JCL programme and the NCCA Guidelines for Children with Mild General Learning Difficulties is our starting point for planning a curriculum together with each student's IEP targets, that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of students. We meet these needs through:

- Setting suitable learning challenges

- Responding to students diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students
- Providing other curricular opportunities outside the Primary Curriculum and JCL programme to meet the needs of individuals or groups of students ( This includes sport, school trips, access to Speech & language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and/ or mobility training from relevant professionals)

We achieve educational inclusion by continually reviewing what we do, through asking ourselves these **key questions**:

- Do all our students achieve their best?
- Are there differences in the achievement of different groups of students?
- What are we doing for those students who are not achieving their best?
- Are our actions effective?
- Are we successful in promoting racial and social harmony and preparing students to live in a diverse and multicultural society?

### **Teaching and Learning Style:**

We aim to give our students the opportunity to succeed and reach the highest level of personal achievement possible for them. We analyse the attainment of different groups of students to ensure that all students are achieving to the highest of their ability. We also make ongoing assessments of each student's progress. Teachers use this information when planning their class lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all our students. For some students, we use programmes from a range of other class levels that suit the students better. This enables our students to make progress on their own level, at their own pace with encouragement and support from the teachers.

When the attainment of a student falls significantly below the level expected of that student, the teacher enables the student to succeed by planning differentiated work that is in line with that student's individual needs, and may use other materials, or extend the breadth of work within the area or areas for which the student shows particular aptitude.

Teachers are also familiar with the relevant legislation governing equal opportunities, race, gender and disability.

#### **Teachers ensure students;**

- Feel secure and know that their contributions are valued
- Appreciate and value the differences they see in others
- Take responsibility for their own actions
- Are taught in groupings that allow them all to experience success
- Use materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- Have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles
- Have challenging, individual and differentiated targets that enable them to succeed

#### **International Children- Children entitled to Language Support**

Students may have particular learning and assessment requirements, which are linked to their progress in learning English as an additional language.

The teaching, learning, achievements, attitudes and well being of all our students are important. We encourage all our students to achieve the highest possible standards. We do this through taking account of each child's life experience and needs. Students who need language support have skills and knowledge about language similar to Irish children speaking English. Their ability to participate in the full curriculum may be in advance of their communicative skills in English.

In St. Anthony's School teachers take action to help students who are learning English as an additional language by various means:

**1. Developing their spoken and written English by:**

- Ensuring that vocabulary work covers the technical as well as the everyday meaning of key words, metaphors and idioms
- Explaining how speaking and writing in English is structured for different purposes across a range of subjects
- Providing a range of reading materials that highlight the different ways in which English is used
- Ensuring there are effective opportunities for talking, signing and that talking and signing is used to support writing
- Encouraging students to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another
- Building on students experiences of language at home and in the wider community, so their 'developing uses' of English and other languages support one another

**2. Ensuring access to the curriculum by:**

- Using accessible texts and materials to suit children's ages and levels of learning
- Providing support through IT and video and audio materials

We do not withdraw students from lessons to receive language support.

**Students with Disabilities:**

All the students in our school have some form of learning difficulties which may also include additional disabilities as listed on page 1 and consequently they all need additional resources and support. The school is committed to providing an environment that allows these students full access to all areas of learning. Environmentally all our classrooms and door entrances are wide enough for wheelchair access, and the designated points of entry for our school also allow wheelchair access. There are tactile edges on paths to aid Visually impaired persons and our classrooms which require surround systems are equipped with

Soundfield Systems to aid persons with hearing impairment or wearing hearing aids. We have regular visits throughout the school year by the Visiting Teacher for the Deaf- Flor & the Visiting Teacher for the Visually Impaired-Audrey who support the students both in school and at home to access the curriculum and learning to the best of their ability.

Academically our teachers modify their teaching and learning as appropriate for all students. For example, they may give additional time to students to complete certain activities. They speak clearly and slowly as required, use a range of communication techniques (ISL/Visuals); arrange the classroom furniture for optimal accessibility, incorporate technical aids as part of the educational experience and work with Special Needs Assistants on toileting and other physical needs. In their planning, teachers ensure that they give all students the opportunity to develop skills in practical aspects of the curriculum. We also have an ISL Tutor every year for the 'Say Yes To Language' 40 hrs to support our students and staff with ISL signing and language.

#### **Teachers therefore ensure that the work for all children**

- Takes account of their pace of learning and the equipment they use
- Takes account of the effort and concentration needed in oral work, or when using, for example, vision aids
- Is adapted or offers alternative activities in those subjects where students are unable to manipulate tools or equipment, or use certain types of materials
- Allows opportunities for them to take part in educational visits and other activities linked to their studies
- Encourages social interaction and development
- Uses assessment techniques that reflect their individual needs and abilities

The Board of Management is constantly reviewing how the school can be made more accessible for disabled students.

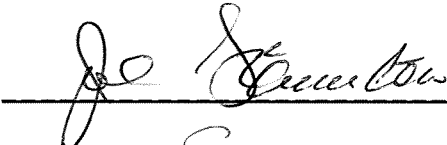
**Racism and Inclusion:**

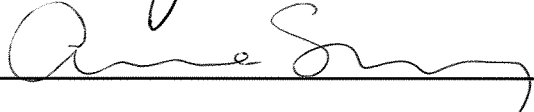
The diversity of our society is addressed through our schemes of work, which reflect the programmes of study of the Primary School Curriculum, Junior Cycle programme and School Leavers programme. Teachers are flexible in their planning and offer appropriate challenges to all pupils, regardless of ethnic or social/cultural background.

**Summary:**

In our school the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well being of every student are important. We follow the necessary regulations to ensure that we take the experiences and needs of all our students into account when planning for learning so that all children will be enabled to participate in and benefit from the education on offer in our school.

This policy was discussed by all staff at a CP meeting 9/12/24. It was brought to the Board of Management for approval in their January 2025 meeting.

Signed: Chairperson BOM  Date: 27/01/2025

Principal:  Date: 27/1/25