



Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál
New Inn,
Cashel,
Co. Tipperary E25 VH05

Phone/Fax (052) 7462122

Equality of Access and Participation Policy

This policy was reviewed and ratified by all the staff in March 2019.

Rationale

- To comply with the Education Act (1998), Equal Status Act (2000) and the Employment Equality Act (1998)
- To promote a sense of ownership and belonging in our school community
- To promote the principles of equality and justice within our school community

Vision

As part of Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál's mission statement our aim is to create an atmosphere of inclusiveness, respectfulness of differences and an awareness of individuals needs. Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál is committed to the preparation of pupils for life in a multi-cultural society, while upholding the Catholic ethos of the school and committed to enabling each person to participate in all school related activities.

Aims

- To ensure that the school complies with legislative requirements and principles of good practise
- To ensure that each person in our school feels valued and respected
- To ensure the creation of an environment where diversity is valued and celebrated
- To ensure the awarding of equal opportunities to all persons
- To prepare our pupils for life in a multicultural society and with an understanding of the value of cultural diversity and pride in their own culture

Organisational Areas

Gender: Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál is a mixed school up to first class, whereby after that the boys from second class up attend New Inn Boys National School. Boys and girls here in Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál are treated equally and are afforded the same opportunities in the

school. Boys and girls are expected to participate fully in all curricular areas. All school documents are gender "proofed".

Race: Children of all races are welcome in our school and are enrolled subject to our Admission Policy.

Religion: Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál is a Catholic School. However no child is discriminated against on the basis of religion. Non-Catholic children are not required to participate in the Religion Class, which is allocated 30 minutes per day, and the teacher allows them to undertake other schoolwork. If, however, parents do not wish their child to be present during the religion class they must make their arrangements for the supervision of their child during this time. The Revised Curriculum states, "In seeking to develop the full potential of the individual the curriculum takes into account the child's affective, aesthetic, spiritual, moral and religious needs. The spiritual dimension is a fundamental aspect of individual experience, and its religious and cultural expression is an inextricable part of Irish culture and history. "Religion in our school is cross curricular and if parents do not wish their child educated in such an environment it would be prudent for them to seek multi-denominational education.

Special Needs: Children with special needs will be educated in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education and Science to the Board of Management. Notwithstanding the availability of such resources, parents who are dissatisfied with the level of education provision in our school are advised to consider a Special School, which is designed and resourced to cater specifically for children with special needs.

Enrolment: All pupils are welcome to enrol in our school irrespective of race, religion, membership of traveller community, family status, gender, sexual orientation and disability. All pupils are placed in age appropriate classes.

Arrangement have been made for pupils who do not wish to take part in religion classes. The characteristic spirit of the school is explained to parents so that they are aware of the religious denomination of the school.

The enrolment form takes into account that parents may be separated, divorced or single parent families.

Staff: The Board of Management is an equal opportunities employer i.e. does not discriminate against any application for a position (or continuation in employment, training opportunities, promotion etc.) in the school based on the nine grounds as set out in the Equal Status Act. (Age, Member of the Traveller Community, Sexual Orientation, Family Status, Disability, Gender, Religion, Race)

All staff members are made aware of promotional posts within the school.

The format outlined in the CPSMA Board of Management handbook for the advertisement and selection of staff is known and followed.

A policy is in place in relation to harassment and bullying of staff.

Where possible we try to accommodate people in relation to job sharing, secondment, staff development, career breaks, study leave, maternity and paternity leave applications, etc.

Areas for consideration and Improvement

- What procedures are in place for reporting on pupil progress where parents are separated or divorced?
- What procedures are in place for parents who do not have a working knowledge of English? Who may be able to read?
- Do we have a list of support agencies that can assist the family in integrating in the community?
- Do we use multi-lingual notices in the school?
- Does our Parents Association have a gender balance? Does our Parents Association have a broad balance? E.g. Member of international community/Traveller Community etc.
- Do we encourage parents to come into the classroom to share experiences?
- What is the procedure for dealing with parents who cannot afford the uniform?
- What is the procedure for dealing with parents who wish their child to wear some cultural garment with/instead of the uniform?
- Are all parents aware of the Education Act (2000) and issues relating to attendance?
- How are non-English speaking parents made aware of it's implications?
- What is our procedure for dealing with absenteeism?
- What are our strategies for encouraging attendance?
- What if pupils absent themselves to participate in religious/cultural ceremonies that do not coincide with those of the school?
- Does our healthy lunch policy accommodate the dietary requirements/restrictions of pupils and of religious fastings?
- Is any preparation done with the class/staff prior to the child's/staff member's first day?
- How is the child/staff member assisted to settle into the new class/school?
- How are new staff inducted into the school?
- What supports are offered to pupils with other needs, eg. Asylum seekers, refugees etc?
- Are all pupils given the same homework? Do we take into consideration Special Needs, Disability etc?
- How do we cater for children who are learning English for the first time?

It was ratified on 1/4/19

Signed By: Breda Hickey Date: 1/4/19
Chairperson, B.O.M.