

Macosquin Primary School



Equality & Inclusion Policy



What is Inclusion?

Definition

“Inclusion is the process of planning to meet and of meeting the needs of all children and young people within the cultures, curricula and communities of schools in the fullest way possible, given:

- *their rights, wishes and the extent of their needs;*
- *the rights, wishes and needs of their peers; and*
- *the rights, wishes and needs of those adults who are responsible for them both at home and at school”*

(NI Strategy Group)

Key Principles

- **Valuing Diversity:** All children can learn and are the responsibility of the education service. They should be equally valued. Children present a rich and diverse range of strengths and needs. Diversity is not viewed as a problem to be overcome, but a rich source to support the learning of all. Inclusion is most likely to be achieved when this diversity is recognised and regarded positively.
- **Entitlement:** All children are entitled to receive a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. As far as possible, this should be in a local mainstream school. It is, however, recognised that appropriate support, advice and resources may be necessary to achieve this.
- **Participation:** Inclusion is concerned with fostering mutually sustaining relationships between schools and communities. All children and their parents are entitled to be treated with respect and should be actively encouraged to make their views known so that they can be taken into account.
- **Individual Needs:** Inclusion is concerned with the learning and participation of all children vulnerable to exclusionary pressures, not only those with impairments or those categorised as having Special Educational Needs (SEN). Inclusion involves reviewing the cultures, policies and practices in schools, taking into account the diversity of children in our locality.
- **Collective Needs:** There should be a balance between the needs of the individual and the collective needs of the group within which he/she is located and between the rights of the individual and the school’s responsibilities to the group.

- **Professional Development:** Inclusion is concerned with improving schools for staff as well as for children. Inclusion requires both extension of existing skills and the development of new ones. All staff need to be supported and have access to a range of appropriate courses, advice and resources.
- **Collective Responsibility:** Inclusion in Macosquin Primary School is the responsibility of the whole school community; Teachers, Pupils, Auxiliary and Ancillary Staff, Parents and Governors.

From Principles to Practice

Inclusive principles highlight the importance of meeting the individual needs of all children, whether they have identified SEN or not. We are dedicated to meeting the individual needs of each child. We see Inclusion as a process in which pupils, parents or carers, teachers and other agencies or departments work together in partnership to develop the application of its principles in each setting.

In order to promote and develop these principles Macosquin Primary School will:

- Provide leadership to promote successful inclusion and equality.
- Provide support for staff to develop inclusive policies and practices.
- In the context of our school ethos we will raise awareness of the need to be inclusive in all that we do. One of **Core Values** is to **Respect and Value:**

“Equality, Diversity and Respect...Creating a learning environment, where everyone feels safe and secure in the knowledge that their voice, beliefs and traditions are acknowledged and respected.”

- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive practice in our school and how it enhances the educational experiences for **all** learners.
- Ensure that, through the PATHS lessons, Class and School Council and our Parent Partnership, everyone has a voice that will be listened to.
- Endeavour to identify groups that may be liable to exclusion and take steps for their inclusion.
- Identify and disseminate good practice.
- Ensure that the principles of inclusion are incorporated fully into our full range of policies and procedures.

- Ensure that our organisational culture, policies and practices promote an understanding and acceptance of diversity.
- Develop policies and practice that encourage the use of language that is inclusive and respects diversity.
- Base all planning on the principles of inclusion.
- Celebrate and publicise the achievements of all learners.
- Facilitate multi-agency activity for young people at risk of exclusion from the full range of opportunities.
- Make all reasonable adjustments to ensure Inclusion is realised.
- Produce, maintain and regularly evaluate Inclusion Policy especially within the contexts of RE and PDMU & PATHS.

Acknowledgements

Education Authority (North Eastern Region)