

Glencastle National School Inclusion policy

Language:

There is no universally agreed consensus on which terminology to use in relation to disability. However, our school has decided to use person first language placing a reference to the person before the reference to the disability with the exception of autism. As recommended by (AS I AM 2019) the term autistic can be used reflecting preferences from parents and students in their communication.

Section 1

Introduction:

In Glencastle National School, we value the individuality of all our children. We are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all children. The achievements, attitudes and wellbeing of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that Glencastle National School promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of 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 pupils or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for our children. We make this a reality through the attention we pay to the different groups of children within our school:

- All genders
- Children who need support to learn English as another language
- Children with special educational needs
- Gifted and talented children
- Children who are at risk of disaffection or exclusion
- Children from different ethnic or minority groups

The Primary Curriculum is our starting point for planning a curriculum that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. We meet these needs through;

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to children's diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of children
- Providing other curricular opportunities outside the Primary Curriculum to meet the needs of individuals or groups of children. (This includes speech and language therapy and mobility training)

We achieve educational inclusion by continually reviewing and reflecting upon what we do, through asking ourselves these key questions;

- Do all of our children achieve their best?

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

Teaching and learning style:

We aim to give our children the opportunity to succeed and reach the highest level of personal achievement. We analyse the attainment of different groups of pupils to ensure that all pupils are achieving as much as they can. We also make ongoing assessments and observations of each child's progress. Teachers use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their children. For some children, we differentiate the lessons to cater for different learning abilities. This enables some of our children to make progress in their own lessons, perhaps after significant amounts of time spent away from school.

When the attainment of a child falls significantly below the expected level, teachers enable the child to succeed by planning work that is in line with that child's individual needs.

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

Teachers ensure children;

- 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 grouping 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 SMART and challenging targets that enable them to succeed
- Are encouraged to participate fully, regardless of disabilities or medical needs
- Adapt physical environment to suit the child's learning needs.

International Children – Children entitled to Language Support:

(c.f. SEN Policy))

Ensuring access to the curriculum by;

(c.f. SEN Policy))

Children with Disabilities:

Some children in our school have disabilities and consequently need additional resources. The school is committed to providing an environment that allows these children full access to all areas of learning. All our classrooms entrances are wide enough for wheelchair access, and the designated points of entry for our school also allow wheelchair access.

Our teachers modify their teaching and learning as appropriate for these children. For example, they may give additional time to children with disabilities to complete certain activities. They speak clearly and slowly as required, use a range of communication techniques; the Soundfield System, arrange the classroom furniture for optimal accessibility, incorporate technical aids as part of the educational experience and work with SNAs on toileting and other physical needs. In their planning, teachers ensure that they give children with disabilities the opportunity to develop skills in practical aspects of the curriculum.

Teachers ensure that the work for these 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 children 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
- Uses assessment techniques that reflect their individual needs and abilities

In response to the Disability Act 2001, the Board of Management is constantly reviewing how the school can be made more accessible for disabled children.

Racism and Inclusion:

The diversity of our society is addressed through our schemes of work, which reflect the programs of study of the Primary School Curriculum. Teachers are flexible in their planning and offer appropriate challenges to all pupils, regardless of ethnic or social background. Should a racist incident occur, procedure followed is based on our Code of Behavior and Anti-bullying policies.

Summary:

In Glencastle National School the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and wellbeing of every child is important. We follow the necessary regulations to ensure that we take the experiences and needs of all our children into account when planning for inclusivity.

Section 2 : Children with SEN

Introduction:

The need for an in-depth description of inclusion in our school was developed from the collective desire of the teaching staff to have a defined and uniform whole school approach to the issue of integration. The policy was devised following consultation with all stake holders including school staff as well as the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS). The school strives to include all children in curricular learning experiences.

The Education for persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 states that 'A child with SEN shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the degree or nature of those needs of the child is such that it would be inconsistent with the best interest of the child, or effects the effective provision of education of the children with whom the child is to be educated'

Aims:

- to provide a teaching and learning experience that enables pupils with Special Needs become exposed to learning in a mainstream setting where possible.
- to enable all children to work together celebrating difference and develop a tolerance and understanding of others.
- to develop the social skills and self-esteem of all children, particularly those with SEN

Staff Roles:

Principal:

- direct responsibility for co-ordinating an effective whole school approach to integration/inclusion
- responsibility for the provision of in service training and adequate resourcing
- monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and making relevant adjustments when/ if needed.
- working with parents and out of school agencies

Special Class Teachers:

The Special Class teachers will

- identify the appropriate curriculum area the child with Special Needs should experience
- ensure S.N.A support is available during integration if needed
- collaborate and consult with mainstream class teachers in setting realistic targets
- assume responsibility for an ongoing Student Support Plan in consultation with support services, parents and Principal
- working with parents and out of school agencies when required

Class Teachers:

The mainstream class teachers will

- adjust programmes to meet the needs of the Special Class pupil
- provide a suitable seating arrangement in the mainstream setting
- collaborate with the Special Class teacher and the SNAs

Implementation:

The school promotes a policy of integration with age appropriate peers on a social level and ability appropriate on a curriculum level suitable to their needs

For integration/inclusion to be effective it must

- further develop social skills
- not interfere with the level of learning within each class
- be done in conjunction with and have the goodwill of the class teacher

The process must be open to review at all times. Early levels of integration into mainstream are on a social level. The child with Special Needs' curriculum targets will be secondary until the following classroom social skills have been mastered

- entering the class without trepidation
- sitting down at a designated desk
- interacting on a social level with child(ren) nearest them
- having lunch with the whole class
- re-acting to general teacher instructions within the classroom setting

Reverse Integration

When deemed appropriate teachers create reverse integration opportunities to assist the child with SEN develop their tolerance and social skills in their familiar environment with familiar staff.

This may involve a group of children or a whole class from the mainstream joining the SEN class in their classroom setting to take part in a variety of learning and social experiences e.g. cookery, lego therapy, yoga.

Hopefully this will lead to conventional integration into mainstream in the long term.

Curricular Integration:

When the child with Special Needs has adjusted on a social level the child will slowly be introduced to areas of the curriculum appropriate to their interest and ability level.

Children from the Special classes are also integrated for school outings, Receiving the Sacraments and activities such as Sports Day and Fire Drill.

Staff Development:

Opportunities for in -service and staff development in relation to the implementation of a workable system of integration will be provided when the opportunity arises in Education Centres and/or NCSE. This information is shared with relevant staff members when applicable.

Assessment:

Assessment by observation and testing (some forms of checklists) will be conducted by the class teacher to ensure effective and meaningful integration.

I.C.T:

All children will have access to digital devices, both in mainstream and in the Special classes. Where appropriate, Assistive Technology is sought, if recommended by NEPS, Speech and Language Therapists, Enable Ireland or Occupational Therapy/HSE.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as new methods for inclusion and integration become available.

Ratified by Board of Management on 10th October 2023

Chairperson: Tom Mc Andrew

Date: 10/10/23

Principal: Catherine Mc Intyre

Date: 10/10/23