



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement

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1. Purpose

This statement sets out our commitment and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and its purpose is to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of this statement and its application in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion for all pupils and staff.

2. Statement

2.1. Introduction

The British International School Bratislava (BISB) is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). EDI ensures fair treatment and opportunity for all. It aims to eradicate prejudice and discrimination because of an individual or group of individual's protected characteristics. Protected factors as defined by the European Union are:- race, religion/belief, political views, disability, SEN status, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation. At its core, equality means fairness: we must ensure that individuals, or groups of individuals, are not treated less favourably because of their protected characteristics. Equality also means equality of opportunity: we must also ensure that those who may be disadvantaged can get the tools they need to access the same, fair opportunities as their peers. Diversity is recognising, respecting and celebrating each other's differences. A diverse environment is one with a wide range of backgrounds and mindsets, which allows for an empowered culture of creativity and innovation. Inclusion means creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued.

We recognise the value of diverse environments and strive to promote a culture in which all pupils, staff and members of the school community are welcomed and supported to fulfil their potential, irrespective of their background or personal characteristics.

We are committed to an ethos and culture of inclusion in our school for all pupils, irrespective of race, religion/belief, political views, disability, SEN status, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation.

2.2. Mission and Values

BISB is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of all our children and young people and where all members of our school community are of equal worth. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength that enriches our lives. We take account of differences and strive to remove any barriers to learning and development. As an international school we welcome students from all over the world, from a diverse range of cultures and linguistic backgrounds and we celebrate this.

Our diverse student population means that we should always be sensitive to the fact that different parts of the world have different cultural (values and norms) and legal contexts. What is considered important in one part of the world, is not in another. In addition, the pace of change on issues relating to diversity and inclusion varies from country to country. However, at BISB within our school community we strive to be inclusive, to embrace diversity and to enshrine equality into the core of our school.

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, bullying and harassment. As a school community, we recognise the need to champion equality; ensure inclusion for all pupils in the full life of our school; and, where possible and appropriate, make necessary adjustments to enable everyone's participation.

BISB believes that education, both formal and informal learning, is fundamental to equality of opportunity. We prepare young people for life and are a powerful influence on access to and advancement in employment. All young people should be able to learn and develop fully in a truly diverse and inclusive environment. Our school vision is to shape a generation of creative and resilient



global citizens who will change our world for the better. Within this vision we have a particular focus on resilience, wellbeing and purpose. We live in a world in which innovation is exciting and essential to ensure a thriving society and to be able to do this it is vital that we are all able to embrace diversity. It will be our students who solve existential issues created in our lifetimes, and to do this, they will need the mindset to produce new ideas. We need to teach our students how to innovate collaboratively and share these innovations with our community and understanding the diverse nature of the world around us is vital to being able learn these skills. At BISB we seek to prepare our students for their role in a challenging and rapidly changing world. We provide an environment that is nurturing, academically stimulating and internationally aware. Our students develop as confident, open-minded, respectful young people, inspired to become responsible and active global citizens.

We seek to ensure that our policies and practices are all fully inclusive and supportive of a welcoming culture for all communities and we seek to ensure that this is evidenced in our practices and procedures. We are non-selective and strive to provide education to all although our Learning Support policy clarifies our position on SEN inclusivity in greater detail.

2.3. Promoting Equality and Diversity at BISB

Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, learning and teaching will endeavour to:

- Ensure equality of access to the whole school experience for all pupils regardless of gender, religion or belief, race, belonging to a nationality or ethnic group, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital and family status, skin colour, language, political beliefs or being of a different mindset, national or social origin, property, gender or other status or because of reporting criminality or other anti-social activity.
- Prepare our students for life in a diverse society and for living in a multicultural society by making a conscious effort to promote good relations between different racial groups.
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping.
- Regularly audit our resources to ensure we are using a diverse range of materials.
- Promote attitudes, values and skills that challenge discriminatory behaviour.
- Allow our pupils to appreciate their own identities, gender, cultures, religions and beliefs, and to celebrate the diversity of other identities, genders, cultures, religions and belief systems.
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions.
- Be sensitive and accept that people can have a different identity to that which those around them commonly see.
- Develop pupils' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, and challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality.
- Ensure that the curriculum covers issues of equality, diversity, religion, human rights and inclusion.
- Celebrate diversity and make a conscious effort to promote the positive contribution of different ethnic groups, nationalities and religious groups in the curriculum, as well as profiling the positive contributions made to society by a wide variety of groups.
- Celebrate what we have in common.
- Seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education.
- Provide educational visits and extra-curricular activities that involve all pupil groupings. Ensure that these trips and activities are accessible to all.



- Take account of the composition of individual teaching groups.
- Take account of the different learning needs of different groups of pupils, using an appropriate range of teaching strategies to enable all pupils to progress.
- Utilise seating plans to foster effective learning.
- Take account of the current performance of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils.
- Identify resources that support staff development and support staff in their planning for inclusion and equality.

Learning Environment

There must always be a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, race, disability, ability, social background and sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes for all our young people, we recognise the importance of:

- Teacher commitment, expertise and enthusiasm as a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils.
- Adults in the school providing good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality and diversity.
- The school, as a whole, placing a high priority on the provision for those with special educational needs and disabilities. We strive to meet all pupils' learning needs, including the more able.
- Striving to provide an environment in which all pupils and all parents who are admitted to the school have equal access to all facilities are provided and environment where they have access to all facilities and resources, as far as is reasonably possible.
- Creating an environment where all pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning.
- Encouraging pupils and parents to create an appropriate learning environment at home and providing them with advice about how to do this.
- Using a range of teaching methods throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.

Curriculum

At BISB we actively recognise differences and aim to ensure that:

- Our planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross-curricular themes, promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity.
- Pupils will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality through the Pastoral system that we have in place; our extra-curricular activities; monitoring of our curriculum and resources; and our PHSCE curriculum.
- Steps are taken to ensure that all pupils have access to mainstream curriculum by considering the cultural and lifestyle backgrounds of all pupils, their linguistic needs and their learning styles.
- All pupils have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression.

Ethos and Atmosphere

We are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community. To this end:



- Ensure equality of access to the whole school experience for all staff regardless of gender, religion or belief, race, belonging to a nationality or ethnic group, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital and family status, skin colour, language, political beliefs or being of a different mindset, national or social origin, property, gender or other status or because of reporting criminality or other anti-social activity.
- There should be an 'openness' of atmosphere and mutual respect which welcomes everyone to the school.
- The pupils are encouraged to greet visitors to the school, and adults within the school, with friendliness and courtesy while continuing to be vigilant about those who do not have visitor passes on.
- The displays around the school should be of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of school life and should be frequently monitored.
- When opportunities arise, e.g., during assemblies or presentations, there should be an awareness of portraying a diverse human population.

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within BISB is a high priority. These resources will:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally, and sexually diverse society.
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints.
- Show positive images of different ethnic groups, genders and people with disabilities.
- Reflect non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context.
- Include materials to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues.
- Be equally accessible to all members of school community, consistent with health and safety
- Not promote, explicitly or implicitly, racist, anti-disability, sexist, homophobic or ageist views.

Language

We recognise that it is important that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes.
- Does not intentionally offend.
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document.
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self-esteem.
- Recognises the individuality and background of all members of the school community, with everyone endeavouring to spell and pronounce names correctly.
- Uses appropriate terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals.
- Uses the preferred name and pronouns of individuals.

Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

- Pastoral staff take account of disability needs, gender, religious and racial differences, sexual orientation and the experience and needs of minority groups that have historically been the victims of prejudice.
- All pupils are encouraged to consider the full range of university and career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender or race.
- All pupils/staff/parents/carers are given support as appropriate when they experience or perceive discrimination. We also recognise that the perpetrators of discrimination are



themselves sometimes victims of their personal circumstances and therefore, where appropriate, remedial work is done to ensure that the actions do not occur again.

- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community.
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges.

Harassment and Bullying

It is the duty of the school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour. It will address this duty in several different ways:

- Incidents where there are unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) will be tackled. The school has a behaviour policy called the Behaviour Ladder where there are clear, agreed procedures for dealing with all negative behaviours in a consistent manner and this includes incidents such as unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender (or transgender).
- All bullying related to those with protected characteristics will be referred to an appropriate member of staff and be dealt with as a serious incident – and will be recorded and investigated thoroughly. These are dealt with via the CPOMS safeguarding system and all staff have been trained in the use of this and are expected to record all incidents on it and via the Behaviour Ladder.
- Incidents involving those with protected characteristics – specifically incidents relating to race, disability or homophobia – will be highlighted in behaviour logs to ensure effective monitoring. It will be the norm for parents/carers of the victim and the perpetrator to be notified of the incident, unless there are specific circumstances that make this inappropriate.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers to help all pupils to achieve their potential. For example:

- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the life of the school through the Global Campus, parents' evenings, transition events, the newsletter, performances, sporting events and the wide range of activities that we put on that parents are invited to join in with.
- Encouraging parents/carers to contact the school if they have any concerns about equality and diversity issues – the first point of contact should be Head of Primary/Secondary or the Deputy Head of Primary/Secondary, as appropriate.
- Wherever positive we should share our positive ideas about EDI with the wider community in order to lead by example.

Staffing and Staff Development

- We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. We should make a conscious effort to ensure that all pupils have access to a balance of genders of staff, a diverse range of staff ages and staff of different races, nationalities and religions.
- We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals.
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity.

Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- All posts must be advertised formally.



- All those involved in recruitment and selection must be trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure good practice which takes account of equalities through the recruitment and selection process.
- The school encourages applicants from all sections of the community.
- Access to opportunities for professional development needs to be monitored on equality grounds.
- Equalities policies and practices must be covered in all staff inductions.
- All supply staff need to be made aware of equalities policies and practices.
- Employment policy and procedures must be reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation but also impact.
- As part of the staff recruitment process all applicants are asked to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form. Summary information will be reviewed by the SLT.

2.4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – School Policies

Through this statement, and the wider practices within BISB we seek to empower our young people to embrace diversity and challenge discrimination. We equip our staff to fulfil their legal responsibilities, ensure that our school's safeguarding procedures are comprehensive and inclusive and enable robust monitoring of our progress as a school. Inclusion must underpin all BISB policies.

As part of our overall school policy development there are several policies that we must have in place and regularly review to ensure our school is addressing its statutory responsibilities. These include an Anti-bullying Policy, a Safeguarding Policy, a Curriculum Policy, a Behaviour Policy, a Uniform Policy, a Learning Support Policy, and an Admissions Policy. Any arising incident will be dealt with by the appropriate policy. There should never be any grey areas when it comes to young people's safety and well-being.

This is supplemented by a range of other policies that as a school we feel are important to have for our whole school community. It is our belief that equality, diversity and inclusion is central to **all** our policies and that we maintain an ethos that welcomes diversity and promotes equal opportunities for all, ensuring all our pupils and their families feel valued and supported and making sure that equality, diversity and inclusion is evident in everyday school life.

2.5. Responsibilities

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have overall responsibility to:

'Promote equality, good relations, and diversity and to comply with education and employment legislation and anti-discrimination, human rights and equality legislation that affect its statutory duties in relation to the school.

The SLT have overall responsibility to manage the implementation of equality and diversity in our school.

The **Principal** is responsible for:

- ensuring policies and procedures are in place to comply with equality legislation.
- ensuring the school implements policies and practices in line with the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.



- following the relevant procedures and acting in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying.
- ensuring appropriate training and awareness raising is undertaken with staff.
- ensuring that appropriate records are kept of any cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying.

The **School Senior Leadership Team** are responsible for:

- putting the school's equality, diversity and inclusion policies and codes into practice.
- making sure that all staff know their responsibilities and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out.
- following the relevant procedures and acting where necessary.

The School's Pastoral Care and Safeguarding Teams (led by the Designated Teachers) will manage the implementation of the statement in partnership with the Principal and SLT.

All School Staff (*teaching and non-teaching*) have a responsibility for the day-to-day operation of this statement and will contribute to an inclusive and welcoming environment within the school.

Pupils/students are responsible for:

- respecting others in their language and actions;
- following all of the relevant school policies and codes of conduct in line with the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.

2.6. How do we promote equality, diversity, and inclusion?

The British International School Bratislava promotes equality, diversity and inclusion within our school through the following activities:

- **School practices**
- **Policies**
- **Facilities**
- **Curriculum**
- **Training**

2.7. Complaint's Procedures

The school has a robust and transparent complaints procedure. If a complaint is made regarding equality or inclusion, the Complaints process will be fairly and systematically applied. Access to the Complaints procedure can be found on the school's website at [Important Documents \(nordangliaeducation.com\)](http://importantdocuments.nordangliaeducation.com).

2.8. Review cycle of statement

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement will be reviewed by all stakeholders and, if required, updated every three years in line with our school documents review cycle.



References

- [United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)
- [Slovak Anti-Discrimination Act Law 365/2004 Slovak version](#)
- [Slovak Anti-Discrimination Act Law 365/2004 English version](#)
- [EU Law: EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, Article 20 Equality](#)
- [EU Law: EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, Article 21 Anti-Discrimination](#)
- [Slovak Labour Code 311/2001](#)
- [BISB Complaints Policy and Procedure](#)

Appendices

- [Form for Reporting Discrimination](#)

Language

Inclusive language is essential to ensure that people who have been historically marginalised because of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability status, and/or other aspects of their identity feel included. We all have a responsibility to remove words and phrases from our vernacular that may be harmful to others. An intentional effort to use inclusive language may challenge deeply ingrained habits or beliefs but is needed to foster a sense of belonging for all within the inclusive Language in Practice

Using inclusive language is a continuous journey of education that includes actively listening to learn and being open to feedback (e.g., not responding defensively if someone recommends adjusting your word choice or phrasing in a given situation). Word-choice is often habitual. Another aspect of building one's inclusive language capability is being open to acknowledging and correcting a mistake. Listening to others, asking questions, and learning the historical context of words and phrases are important steps to take to use more inclusive language.

Here are a few general guidelines to keep in mind:

1. Use people-first language that centres on the individual rather than their descriptor.

For example, using "people with disabilities," rather than "disabled people."

2. Set aside any assumptions about the background and preferences of others; use neutral words related to gender, sexual orientation, and other distinguishing qualities.

For example, saying "you all" rather than "you guys," or "spouse or partner" rather than "husband" or "wife".

3. Consider the historical context and implications of words and phrases. It can be surprising to learn the origins of seemingly neutral idioms are based on oppression or cultural insensitivity.

For example, the phrase "divide and conquer" has connotations of the oppressions of colonialism, and "grandfathered in" has roots in Jim Crow-era voting laws that discriminated against Black individuals.

4. Listen to others when they share words or phrases, they find harmful.

For example, at one organisation, Black colleagues were asked to share words and phrases they find harmful or non-inclusive. Some, specific to voice and appearance ("can I touch your hair", "you're so articulate!" or "you sound white"), others with historical weight ("slaving away", "cracking the whip"), and still others pointing to a lack of cultural sensitivity ("what are you mixed with", "where are you from originally").



Inclusive language is a powerful tool for demonstrating inclusive behaviour and cultivating a sense of belonging among an increasingly diverse school population. It takes deliberate action to break habitual use of words and phrases that are not inclusive and often requires one to commit to a continuous journey of listening, learning and growing, the benefits and positive impact of which can be far-reaching across our school community, the wider organisation and beyond.

What is the difference between sex and gender?

Sociologists distinguish sex (*your physical characteristics or biological attributes assigned at birth*) from gender (*the societally defined roles, expectations and behaviours associated with your sex, or a person's self-identification with these*). For example, a person born male, may identify with the way society sees and expects boys and men to behave.

What are gender pronouns?

Gender pronouns refer to the way we identify and refer to others. For example, we describe people using '*he*' or '*she*', '*they*' or '*them*', and things as '*it*'. When using these gender pronouns, consciously or unconsciously, we may also be associating and ascribing to people what society decides is the appropriate behaviours and expectations related to a particular sex. And although we are not intending to, others may still feel that we are, and in turn, this may lead to people feeling uncomfortable or inaccurately represented. Increasingly, there are ways that can help overcome the sense that people are misrepresented by the pronouns used. Firstly, there are many other valid gender-neutral pronouns such as the singular '*they*' or '*ze*' for those of us who identify in gender terms as neither male nor female. Such persons describe themselves as '*non-binary*'. We can ask or be informed of the pronoun that an individual would prefer was used in relation to them.

Why do gender pronouns matter?

Sex does not predetermine a person's gender as gender is a social construct. For many people, the gender they identify with does not fit with the sex they were assigned at birth. When people ask us to use a particular pronoun and we listen and act on that request, we validate their identity and contribute to their sense of belonging. Be aware that the term '*preferred pronouns*' is unhelpful as this makes it sound like someone's gender is not a reality for this person. Suggesting this can be hurtful. By using gender-neutral pronouns, we can avoid associating a person with a specific gender they do not identify with, such as **he/she** and **him/her**. Instead, we can use **they/them**. Where possible we should aim to avoid referring to gender and instead use they/them if we do not need to refer to gender.

How can I use gender pronouns to be more inclusive?

We should always be sensitive to the fact that different parts of the world have different cultural (values and norms) and legal contexts. What is considered important in one part of the world, is not in another. In addition, the pace of change on issues relating to diversity and inclusion varies from country to country. In addition, individuals will want to address these issues in different ways. We can therefore ask or be informed of the pronoun that an individual would prefer was used in relation to them. You can contribute to a climate of inclusivity by modelling inclusive behaviour for others. For example, you could introduce yourself at the start of a meeting by using your gender pronouns. This encourages colleagues to do the same and raises awareness of the issue. However, remember that not everyone is equally comfortable sharing their pronouns.

When writing emails, remember to always be respectful and avoid gender stereotypes. Again, this encourages others to behave respectfully when referring to each other. Using gender neutral pronouns helps to avoid mistakes, like misgendering someone. This can be especially hurtful for transgender people, but also embarrassing for others.