

Supporting Social Inclusion

Social inclusion is about making kids feel included, valued and welcomed in every aspect of their school community. It involves providing students with the opportunity to learn and live within an environment that recognizes their strengths and contributions.

Our work at school

To help support social inclusion, our school community focuses on:

- **Fostering a positive school culture** – Our goal is to create an environment that's welcoming and inclusive of all students and celebrates diversity.
- **Addressing issues of access** – We believe students should not only feel physically included, but also emotionally connected to different activities and aspects of the school experience.
- **Strengthening a sense of good citizenship** – We provide opportunities for students to develop their leadership and social skills to help them appreciate and value difference.
- **Making positive interactions happen** – Teachers use a range of strategies to support interactions between students and their classmates in non-academic aspects of school life (e.g., extracurricular activities).
- **Using the power of words** – We incorporate books within the school library that reflect people with disabilities in positive roles and who have meaningful friendships with peers.
- **Providing supportive strategies** – We assist families in making sure their child can build relationships beyond the school environment.

Helping at home

- **Extend your child's social network**
 - o School isn't the only source of friends and playmates. Try looking wider than school and same-age peers as you help your child develop friendships with others.
- **Ideas from families for families**
 - o Organize some time for your child to hang out with other kids and ensure your home is a fun and inviting place to be.
 - o Watch to see where other neighbourhood children hang out, what they enjoy doing, and what they talk about.
 - o Get your child involved in community activities, and join them whenever possible.
 - o Help your child reach out to other children by assisting with telephone calls, text messages and invitations to socialize.
 - o Take turns with other parents at hosting slumber parties, pizza dinners or volunteering to be a driver for carpool.
 - o Help your child develop age-appropriate hobbies.
 - o Find roles you feel your child can excel at given their strengths, talents and interests.
 - o Maintain ongoing contact with school staff about school-day friendships, upcoming activities and extracurricular programs.

Helpful resources

Check out this article on how you can help support your child in building relationships and socializing with other kids

[Reflections on Friendships
bit.ly/1phvyPg](https://bit.ly/1phvyPg)