



THE AGENCY FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION

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INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IMPLEMENTED ON BEQUIA

St Vincent and the Grenadines is leading the way in inclusive education, when officially, for the first time in the Eastern Caribbean, students with differentiated learning abilities are attending school with their counterparts.

The pilot project, which is being funded by the World Bank was officially implemented on Bequia at the start of the new academic year.

The project saw a number of consultations, workshops and fora with students, parents, teachers, education officials over the past year, spearheaded by a team from Brock University in Canada.

In an interview with the Agency for Public Information, Principal of the School for Children with Special Needs, Nazeem Smith said this is a monumental occasion in the move towards inclusive education and it can only aid in overall education system and national development.

Smith said it is the right of any student to access education within their locale, despite their learning abilities and the onus is on the policy makers to ensure the proper tools are in place to aid those students.

“All children have a right to access schools in their neighbourhood...the students are not being separated, they’re not just under the same roof but they are learning social skills, teachers are being equipped to teach the students all here together,” Smith said.

One of the consultants on the project, Professor Monique Sommer from Brock University said she was delighted to the students interacting and providing the support teachers need to handle students with differentiated learning abilities is at the core of inclusive education.

“The idea is that all children should go to school together...so we trying to help equip the teachers here to be able to serve students that have lots of different learning needs, different challenges and they have been doing exceptionally well,” Sommer said.

The project is being done in conjunction with the Sunshine School, the Bequia Anglican Primary School and the Bequia Community High School.

The Human Development Service Delivery Project is funded by the World Bank to the tune of 10.70 US million dollars, the project also included enhancing curricula and remedial education programmes in schools in Union Island and Bequia.

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