



Equal Opportunities Policy

This policy was adopted at a meeting of:

Torphins Playgroup Pre-School

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On (*date*)

Signed Designation

Statement of Purpose

The Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) setting welcomes and respects all children, parents, staff, professionals and other members of the local community and will not discriminate against them on the grounds of their race or ethnicity, their disability, their gender or sexual orientation, their age or religion. Our aim is to be inclusive and to celebrate positively the rich diversity in society. We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all.

Throughout this guidance the term **parents** is used to include all main caregivers.

Complying with The Law

The Equality Act 2010, and subsequent revisions, makes it illegal to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their race or ethnicity, their disability, gender or sexual orientation, their age or religion. We will exercise due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This will include both **direct** and **indirect** discrimination, described as follows:

It is unlawful to discriminate against people who have 'protected characteristics' - treating someone less favourably because of certain attributes of who they are. This is known as **direct discrimination**. The protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex. You do not have to have a protected characteristic to be discriminated against. If someone thinks you have a characteristic and treats you less favourably, that is **direct discrimination by perception**.

Indirect discrimination occurs when an organisation's practices, policies or procedures have the effect of disadvantaging people who share certain protected characteristics. This may not be unlawful if an employer can show that there is an 'objective justification' for it. This involves demonstrating a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

What's the difference? Direct and indirect discrimination (ACAS website).

Behaviour that does not comply with the Act will be challenged and in the case of staff could lead to disciplinary procedures being invoked.

Anyone who feels that they have been discriminated against as outlined in the Act may raise a grievance or make a complaint through the appropriate procedures.

See also: Complaints Policy and Recruitment Policy

Children

Within the setting's guidelines and procedures all children will have equality of opportunity, including consideration for a place on the waiting list and subsequent enrolment in the ELC setting. Where there are barriers to access or learning for children due to disability, learning difficulties or language, solutions will be sought and appropriate support put in place. A child's home language will always be respected and encouraged.

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. We will support and build on the child's preferred learning style and match the pace of learning to their individual needs.

Activities and use of play equipment will be open to all children, giving them the opportunity to develop in an environment that is free from prejudice, gender stereotyping and discrimination.

Opportunities to experience other cultures, languages and celebrations will be included in the curriculum. We will encourage children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others. Meals and snacks will reflect and respect religious requirements and ethnicity, while offering all children a chance to explore global food.

Parents

The setting will encourage the involvement of parents by making them welcome and by respecting the differences in families, their language and culture, and by supporting them to contribute in whatever way they can.

We will ensure that systems are in place to allow all parents with a **physical disability** to access the service. Where **language, hearing or speech impairment** present **barriers** we will use interpreters and signers as appropriate. We will use a variety of communication approaches in order to reach all parents (see below).

We will be sensitive to any parent with limited reading skills that impact on form filling and understanding written communications, and will support them in a manner that preserves their dignity.

When **communicating** with parents we will be aware that some have limited reading skills and others may not have English as their home language. We will endeavour to communicate in a variety of ways using written, verbal, pictorial or symbolic communications. Translations will be used where possible. Welcome packs will be translated into key languages spoken within the setting. English speaking parents who have a home language that is not English may be asked to pass non-confidential information to others who share their home language, or to act as interpreters in suitable situations.

The time, place and manner in which **meetings** are conducted will ensure that all families are enabled to attend, contribute and have equal opportunity to be involved in the running of the setting.

We will ensure that our service is widely advertised through various media and venues to allow all potential service users access to this information.

Staff

Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training and any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination. All job applicants and others who work for us will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the grounds listed above.

Wherever possible, advertisements and job application packs will be written in other languages as well as in English if necessary for a particular community.

Age positive practices will be adopted by management. Recruitment, training , promotions and retiral of staff will not be done on the basis of age unless it can be objectively justified. We will comply with The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 at all times.

We will be proactive in seeking to minimise any restrictions or limitations staff may experience due to disability. We will put appropriate support mechanisms in place and where possible will make any necessary access adaptations.

Monitoring of this Policy

It will be the responsibility of the Manager to ensure that all staff, including new or temporary staff, are familiar with this policy and to monitor that it is being implemented. This policy should also be brought to the attention of all parents, visiting professionals and any other individuals accessing the setting. The responsibility of all to adhere to the policy should be highlighted. Monitoring and evaluation of the policy will be achieved through both formal and informal observation of staff practice and curriculum monitoring. We will carry out regular consultations with service users to ensure this guidance is being adhered to.

See also:

Additional Support Needs Policy
Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy
Duty of Candour Complaints Policy
Curriculum Policy
Outings Policy
Participation Policy
Safe Recruitment Policy
Staff Development Policy
Whistleblowing Policy

Links to national policy:

Health and Social Care Standards My support, my life (Scottish Government 2017)

1.1, 1.2, 1.6, 2.9, 2.3, 2.10, 4.23

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf>

(*Building the Ambition*, Scottish Government 2014)

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/earlyyears/prebirthtothree/index.asp>

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/earlylearningandchildcare/curriculum/index.asp> (*Curriculum for Excellence*, Scottish Government)

<http://www.sssc.uk.com/about-the-sssc/codes-of-practice/what-are-the-codes-of-practice>

Find out more:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents> (*Equality Act 2010*) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

<https://beta.gov.scot/policies/early-education-and-care/early-learning-and-childcare/>

<https://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality>

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1841> (*Age Discrimination*)

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4614> (*Direct and indirect discrimination*)