



## **Equal Opportunities Policy**

### **Statement of Purpose**

Torphins Playgroup 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.

### **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'.

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.

### **Children**

Within Torphins Playgroup all children will have equality of opportunity, including consideration for a place on the waiting list and subsequent enrolment in the 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**

Torphins Playgroup 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. 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.

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 Playgroup. 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 Torphins Playgroup will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against. 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.