



Equal Opportunities

Policy

Dunscore Pre-school Centre welcomes and respects all children, parents, carers, family members, 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. We intend to provide and maintain equality of opportunity for all within the Pre-School Centre and reflect the needs of members and future members of the Pre-School Centre and the wider community.

Procedures

Complying with The Law

As described in Appendix One, The Equality Act 2010, and subsequent revisions, it is illegal to discriminate against a person. The centre will advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with all involved with it. The need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, both **direct** and **indirect** will be considered in all our activities.

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

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

Advertising our Pre-School Centre

We will try to ensure that everyone in the Community knows about our Pre-School Centre and what it has to offer. Our Toddler Group Session's will be advertised in various locations within the local Community, including social media. We will liaise with our local primary school, and our local health visitor to ensure any new families to the area are aware of the services we offer, and that we are able to communicate with them in an appropriate way. We will also advertise our enrolment days for Pre-School children within the local community using a wide range of media and venues. Various community events will be run to further integrate the centre within the community.

Admission

This Pre-School Centre is open to every family in the community. The waiting list is operated in line with our Admissions Policy. Spaces are reserved to cover children moving into the area during term time and children with additional support needs. Children will have equality of opportunity when

being considered for a place on the waiting list and subsequent registration at the centre. The individual needs of every child and family wishing to join will be taken into consideration. This will include providing any specific dietary requirements and providing information (written and spoken) in clear appropriate language.

Employment

The Management Committee of the Pre-School Centre will appoint the best person for each job and will treat fairly all applicants. All decisions about recruitment, selection, promotion, training and any other benefits will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

No applicant will be rejected on the grounds of age, gender, sexuality, class, means, family status, disability, colour, ethnic origin, culture, religion or belief. Commitment to implementing the Pre-School Centre's Equal Opportunity Policy will form part of the job description for all workers.

Applicants will be given clear, concise and accurate information about posts through advertisements to enable them to assess their own suitability.

Language used must not deter any potentially disadvantaged applicant from applying.

When we interview we will ask only questions relevant to the job and will ask broadly the same questions of each interviewee. Interview panels will be fully aware of our commitment to equal opportunities in our employment practices.

As employers we will ensure that members of staff and applicants for employment are given equal opportunities in all aspects of recruitment, training, promotion, and employment, irrespective of sex, marital status, age, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, religion, sexual orientation, disability or health problem, provided such disability or health problem does not impede their capacity to do the job. 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.

Part-time workers will not be discriminated against and the same conditions of service will apply.

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.

The Role of Parents and Carers

The Pre-School Centre will encourage parents and carers to become involved by making them welcome, by respecting the differences in families, their language and cultures and by encouraging them to contribute in whatever way they can.

We will encourage involvement from parents and carers in a wide range of ways including:

- Providing regular news to keep everyone informed of what's going on

within the Centre. This will be in formats suitable to the needs of the current parent and carers.

- Encouraging parents and carers to visit the Centre when ever possible and to discuss their child's progress with staff.
- Advertising any events within the Centre and in the local community.
- All communication will use a variety of communication approaches in order to reach all parents. This can include written, verbal, pictorial or symbolic communications.
- Ensuring that parents with a physical disability are able to access the service, meetings and events
- Where language, hearing or speech impairment present barriers we will use interpreters and signers as appropriate.
- 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.
- Encouraging membership of the pre-school committee
- Holding meetings at a time and manner which ensures all families have the opportunity to attend and contribute to the running of the group.

Children within The Pre-School Centre

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment will be open to all children and offer them opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice, gender stereotyping and discrimination.

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.

Guidelines and learning outcomes and experiences relating to equal opportunities are part of "A Curriculum for Excellence". These will be used when planning the children's learning experience. We will support and build on the child's preferred learning style and match the pace of learning to their individual needs.

Opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Some of the ways we will do this include:

- Reading and discussing stories from different cultures
- Consideration will be shown towards any child displaying difficulties with speech; and other children will be encouraged to understand them.
- Inviting members of the community from different backgrounds to come to the Centre and discuss with the children their culture/beliefs
- Encouraging the children to ask questions and discuss the differences between themselves and others in a positive manner.

- Meals and snacks will reflect and respect religious requirements and ethnicity, while offering all children a chance to explore global food.
- Experiencing other languages
- Festivals of different faiths will be celebrated, along with the stories, celebrations, food and clothing which they involve. This will be done without indoctrination in any specific faith, but to recognise respectful awareness of the diversity of backgrounds and cultures within the group, the local area and around the world.

Resources

We will regularly check our books, posters etc. to ensure that they positively and accurately reflect a multi-racial society.

Boys and girls should have the opportunity to, and be actively encouraged to, use **all** activities.

Additional Support Needs and Disabilities

The Pre-School Centre recognises the wide range of additional support needs and disabilities of children and families in their community. Where ever possible, we will provide for the needs of all the pre-school children in the community.

For further information refer to *Additional Support Needs Policies & Procedures*.

Planning of Pre-School Centre meetings, communications and events will take into account the needs of people with disabilities or additional needs. This will include taking into consideration the time, place and manner in which meetings are conducted, allowing all families to attend, contribute and have equal opportunity to be involved in the running of the setting.

Discriminatory Behaviour or Remarks

These are unacceptable in the Pre-School Centre from staff, parents, carers or children. They include remarks which discriminate on grounds of race and or reinforce stereotypes.

The response will aim to be sensitive and supportive to the feelings of the victim and to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices.

We will challenge any statements made by anyone in the Pre-School Centre which are sexist or racist or which reinforce stereotypes by :

- Never ignoring a discriminatory act
- Never excusing a discriminatory act
- Intervening immediately to comfort the victim and to help the excluder to understand that discrimination hurts the victim
- Setting limits and making firm rules to which everyone must adhere.

Appendix One

Current Legislation

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, their gender or sexual orientation, their age or religion.

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'. (ACAS website).