**Maidenhill Nursery Class**

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**Equality Policy March 2020**

**Rationale**

The Equality Act 2010 states that everyone has the right to be treated fairly when using a service. It aims to protect service users from discrimination based on the following protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; race; religion and belief; sexual orientation; sex. Socio economic disadvantage was added as a protected characteristic in 2017.

Under this law, service providers have the duty to treat service users and employees fairly.

**Introduction**

Within Maidenhill Nursery Class we not only promote our common values, we also explore and celebrate our unique differences. We strongly believe in the importance of equality and equity and feel it is never too early to support children in challenging discrimination and stereotyping wherever it is encountered. We aim to take a proactive approach in ensuring all children and families have access to a service that meets their individual needs and that equality, equity and inclusion are at the heart of our core responsibilities.

**GIRFEC**

The Scottish Government’s Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) initiative aims to improve outcomes and wellbeing for all children. We will use the GIRFEC definition of wellbeing and the identified wellbeing indicators (Safe, Healthy, Attaining, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included) to plan for children’s individual needs and to ensure equality and equity where barriers may exist.

**Our 5 Commitments**

In addition, we are committed to ensuring our practice always reflects the following:

* We will ensure our nursery class is a welcoming and safe space for all children and family members.
* We will allow all children and families the opportunity to contribute to decisions and policies relating to how our nursery class is run. Where we feel it is necessary, we will target support to help individuals or groups to contribute.
* We will ensure that the experiences we plan for and the services we provide are accessible to all. Where we feel it is necessary, we will target support to help individuals or groups access the full range of experiences and services.
* We will provide opportunities through a wide range of experiences for all children and families to explore and celebrate their uniqueness and how it contributes to a diverse and dynamic nursery class and society.
* We will be proactive in tackling and challenging discrimination and victimisation (or perceived discrimination and victimisation) promptly and transparently.

**The Right to Play**

All children have the right to play, making sense of the world through their social interaction and schemas. We use ‘universal design’ principles to ensure that play opportunities within our nursery class are inclusive of all. Where barriers may exist, we are duty bound to remove them. We believe that by planning our environment and our opportunities to play to always be inclusive of children where barriers potentially would otherwise exist, then we are actually benefiting all of our children.

**Gender Equality**

Gender stereotypes are often formed from children’s very earliest experiences and from the attitudes and behaviours of the adults around them. We believe that gender stereotypes can often limit children’s perceptions of what it means to be a girl or boy and can limit access to the experiences children engage in. This in turn can limit opportunities in later life and can perpetuate negative stereotypes and attitudes. In our nursery class, we will always aim to remove barriers to play that are based on stereotypical perceptions of ‘boys activities’ and ‘girls activities’. Our learning experiences will ensure access for all and we will be proactive in encouraging all children to develop cognitive ability, confidence, self-esteem and relationships without any limits.

**Who is Responsible?**

It is the responsibility of every member of staff to ensure equality of opportunity and to target equitable approaches when necessary. All stakeholders should work collaboratively to monitor and review all policies and procedures in line with our Equality Policy.

The Head Teacher is the Equality Coordinator for our nursery class. Any comments or concerns should be directed to him. If you have raised a concern, Mr McDonald will record your concern, investigate, feedback to you and provide any supports as appropriate, in a timeous and transparent manner.

Alternatively, and in line with our Complaints Policy, service users may raise a concern in the following ways:

* **To East Renfrewshire Council Education Department**

If you are unhappy about the service you receive or the response to any complaint made directly to the Head Teacher (or his Depute), a complaint may be made to East Renfrewshire Council Education Department.

* **To Care Inspectorate**

Complaints can be made at any time to the Care Inspectorate for Scotland at the following address:

**Care Inspectorate, Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive, Dundee, DD1 4NY.**

N.B. Please allow 20 working days from complaint received by the Care Inspectorate until being informed of any actions undertaken.

## Monitoring and Review

The HT will monitor this policy, engaging with relevant stakeholders and service users. The policy will be reviewed annually in August and updated as required.

Next review: August 2021

Policy author: A McDonald, March 2020