

Policy Document No: ELC16
Category: Early Learning
Topic: Equal Opportunity Policy



Date of issue: January 2005
Last Review Date: December 2016

Considerations:

Philosophy: Mount Scopus Memorial College promote equal opportunities for all.

Children's needs: Equal access and rights regardless of gender, race, religion, impairment, family status, age.

Parent's needs: Equal access and rights for children regardless of gender, race, religion, impairment, marital status, political conviction, pregnancy, family responsibility, family status.

Staff needs: Staff require equal employment opportunities regardless of gender, marital status, pregnancy, race, religion, political conviction, impairment, family responsibility, family status and age; and protection from harassment due to sex, race, impairment or any other reason.

Management needs: To reflect the community in which the service is located. To obtain an equal balance between sound management practises and recognising individual rights of staff, children, parents and management.

Background and Legislation

Guide to the National Quality Standard, standards 4.2, 5.1, 5.2

Education and Care Services National Regulations Part 4, regulation 155, Ministerial Council For Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, 2011

Child Care Service Handbook – Australian Government – www.facs.gov.au/childcarehandbook

Family Assistance Act 1999.

Policy Statement

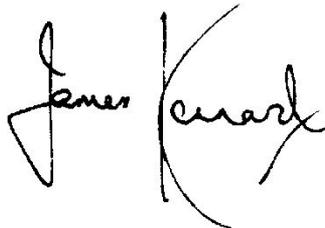
Szalmuk Family Early Learning Centre and Fink Ivany Early Learning centre are committed to the principles of Equal Opportunity in relation to community access to the centre and the appointment of staff. Individuals will be treated with respect regardless of their gender, race, religion, age, impairment, marital status, political conviction, pregnancy, family responsibility or family status. The centre will actively promote the positive aspects of diversity and encourage acceptance and appreciation of individual differences. Child care will be made available to the community using the Commonwealth "Priority of Access Guidelines" foremost, followed by the Mount Scopus Memorial College Admissions Criteria.

How the policy will be implemented - specific practices and procedures

- Parents and staff will be given clear instructions about the Commonwealth "Priority of Access Guidelines". (See Appendix 1).
- Equal Opportunity principles will be an integral part of the centre's daily programs and routines. Children will be given positive experiences which encourage equal opportunity. Programs will actively include opportunities for the children to experience diversity of culture, gender roles etc.
- Staff will treat individual children and their families with respect. They will take into account individual differences in language, attitudes, abilities, assumptions and expectations.
- The Centre will have up to date information regarding Equal Opportunities Legislation.
- Children who have a disability will not be discriminated against and will be afforded access to the centre where:
 - o A place exists.
 - o They meet the required priority of access.
 - o The centre's resources are able to adequately care for the child.
- All staff will be selected and employed according to equal opportunity guidelines.

- Applicants with disabilities who apply for advertised positions will be assessed according to the selection criteria and will not be discriminated against because of their disability.
- During orientation the centre will provide relevant information to staff concerning procedures to be followed in the event of harassment or discrimination in the workplace. All employees will be provided with information which defines the range of behaviours that constitute harassment.
- Clear guidelines on Grievance Procedures will be developed in accordance with the state and Federal Equal Opportunity Legislation and are to be read in conjunction with the Disputes Resolution provisions within the College's certified agreements. These procedures will be made available to staff.
- Staff members with pre-school aged children will not be discriminated against in relation to their employment at the centre.
- Management will endeavour to:
 - identify discriminatory and harassing conduct;
 - publicise Equal Opportunity policy and complaints procedures to all staff;
 - train all staff on steps as to reporting current complaints;
 - Investigate and document complaints.
- No child, parent, staff member or potential staff member will be excluded from the centre due to living with HIV/AIDS.
- Information about a child, parent or staff member living with HIV/AIDS will be kept strictly confidential at all times.
- Staff will follow universal hygiene procedures to eliminate any risk of HIV/AIDS transmission in the centre.

Approved by the College Principal:



Date: December 2016

Refer to Child Care Service Handbook – www.facs.gov.au/childcarehandbook

First Priority:

A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.

Second Priority:

A child of a single parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under section 14 of the Family Assistance Act.

Third Priority:

Any other child.

Within each category the following children are to be given priority:

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
- Children in families, which include a disabled person.
- Children in families with a non-English speaking background.
- Children in socially isolated families.
- Children of single parents.

According to the legislation services are to follow the guidelines when they are filling vacancies (unless they are a work based service in which case children of employees can be given top priority) and, when there are no vacancies, they may require a child who is third priority to leave the child care service, or alter their days, in order to provide a place for a higher priority child.

This provision however only applies if:

- The person liable to pay child care fees for that child was notified on enrolment that the service followed this policy; and
- The service gives that person at least 14 days' notice of the requirement for the child to leave the child care service.