



Cambridgeshire
County Council



EQUALITIES

Early Years and Childcare

What does it mean for us?

Equalities - What does this mean?

Cambridgeshire County Council welcomes the diversity of gender, ages, abilities, ethnic origins, beliefs and cultures of the people who make up our society.

We need to ensure that everybody* in society is treated fairly and equally. We can do this by:

- Acknowledging the differences between people
- Celebrating those differences as part of the society that we live in.

* When we refer to everybody we mean whatever their age, gender, ability, attainment, ethnicity, educational or personal need, religion, belief, home language and background.

When working with children and families this is best achieved by:

- Listening and responding to their views
- Finding out about their lives (the way they live, their likes, preferences and dislikes)
- Respecting their beliefs and opinions
- Considering and meeting their individual needs
- Understanding how discrimination affects their lives.

What is this leaflet for?

This leaflet will help you to understand:

- Equality of access and opportunity – what you need to know and do
- The revised Early Years and Childcare Equalities Policy
- Where you can get further advice about equalities.

It will also make you more aware of:

- The laws that apply to equalities
- Some of the issues about equalities that may arise in your work and everyday lives.

REMEMBER - Treating children and people 'the same' does not mean we are treating them equally.

Sometimes in order to treat people equally you have to treat them differently

Early Years and Childcare Equalities Policy (revised 2007)

The Equalities Policy applies to anybody working in or with early years and childcare settings (Cambridgeshire County Council staff, providers and practitioners in early years and childcare settings, trainers and people working for organisations that have contracts to develop and support early years and childcare with Cambridgeshire County Council).

The policy aims to:

- Promote equality of access and opportunity for all children to learn, play, and be well cared for
- Ensure that all children can access the early years education, childcare and/or out of school care supported by the County Council.

The Equalities Policy applies to all aspects of our work including employment practices (recruitment, working arrangements) and our dealings with families/carers and communities.

NB. You must have an Equalities Policy Statement for your own service. The Early Years and Childcare Equalities Policy informs but does not replace the Equalities Policy that you have developed and are implementing.

What legislation do we need to know about?

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/RevisedStatutes/Acts/ukpga/1975/cukpga_19750065_en_1

Childcare Act 2006

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/RevisedStatutes/Acts/ukpga/2006/cukpga_20060021_en_1

Race Relations (Amendment) Act (RRAA) 2000

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/RevisedStatutes/Acts/ukpga/2000/cukpga_20000034_en_1

Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/RevisedStatutes/Acts/ukpga/2001/cukpga_20010010_en_1

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 (Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2002)

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/RevisedStatutes/Acts/ukpga/2005/cukpga_20050013_en_1

Human Rights Act 1998

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/RevisedStatutes/Acts/ukpga/1998/cukpga_19980042_en_1

Equality Act 2006

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/RevisedStatutes/Acts/ukpga/2006/cukpga_20060003_en_1

You can find out more by looking on the websites above or asking your Early Years Foundation Stage Adviser (EYFA) or Childcare and Playwork Adviser (CAPA), Area Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) or Development/Support Officer.

What do we need to do?

Legislation and the Early Years and Childcare Equalities Policy state that we must promote equality of access and opportunity. But what exactly does that mean and how do we do it?

We need to:

- **Value diversity and value differences** – this includes differences in identities, cultures, beliefs, abilities and social practices
- **Recognise the impact of discrimination and social inequalities** on children and families
- **Help all of our children to reach their individual potential** – this is only achieved when we value children and adults for their individuality, ensure a sense of belonging and respect where children come from, what they achieve and what they bring to the setting
- **Recognise the importance of what is learned in childhood** and how it lays the foundation for a more just and equal society
- **Challenge negative labels and attitudes.**

How can we do it?

By thinking about our own views and attitudes and how they affect our work

We need to think about and understand:

- The feelings we have
- The words we use
- Why we behave in certain ways
- What we offer to children and how
- Our expectations for children and their families.



By having Special Educational Needs and Equalities Coordinators

You will need to have an appropriately trained, designated Special Needs Coordinator (SENCo) and Equalities Coordinator (ENCo) in your setting or in your childminding network.

These people should work with all staff, parents and children to:

- Ensure policies and procedures are understood and being implemented
- Review and monitor the implementation of policies
- Challenge situations where they are not being applied
- Ensure that knowledge about equalities is up to date
- Ensure that all staff access appropriate training.

Childminders need to make sure that they understand and implement anti-discriminatory practice and ensure that they keep their knowledge up to date.

By accessing appropriate training

The Early Years and Childcare Service offers a number of training courses that you can attend, including specific training for Equalities Coordinators (ENCo's) and Special Needs Coordinators (SENCo's).

These people should work with all staff, parents and children to:

- Learn more about equalities and how it affects your work with children and families
- Share your ideas, successes and concerns
- Reflect on your practice
- Acknowledge what you do well
- Consider ways of improving.



By seeking advice, support and guidance

There are people working for the County Council or partner organisations who can offer information, support and guidance, for example: Development Coordinators, Area SENCos, Early Years Foundation Stage Advisers, Childcare and Playwork Advisers, Childminding Support and Development Officers and Childcare Business and Employer Support Officers.

They can help you think about:

- **Resources:** Are your resources meeting the needs of the children? Do they reflect the society in which we live?
- **Activities:** Do the activities you provide encourage children's sense of identity, belonging and self worth?
- **Communication with parents:** Are you considering the needs of parents? Do they feel welcome in your setting/home?
- **Premises:** Are your premises welcoming and accessible? Have you considered all of the options?
- **Employment:** Do your recruitment and business practices comply with legislation and equalities policies?

LOCAL SUPPORT AND ADVICE

Early Years and Childcare Service

Tel: 01954 273360 • Fax: 01954 273351

Early Years Foundation Stage Advisers (EYFSA)

Tel: 01954 273339 • Fax: 01954 273351

EYC Workforce Development Team

Tel: 01954 283390 • Fax: 01954 273351

Childminding Development and Support Team

Tel: 01954 273358 • Fax: 01954 273351

Childcare and Playwork Adviser Team

Tel: 01954 273365 • Fax: 01954 273351

Childcare Business and Employer Support Team

Working in partnership with the Pre-school Learning Alliance


Tel: 01954 284203 • Fax: 01954 273351

Development Team Childcare and Integrated Services

Tel: 01954 283373 • Fax: 01954 273351

all based at:
Cambridgeshire
County Council
Unit 3
Bar Hill
Business Park
Saxon Way
Bar Hill
Cambridge
CB23 8SL

Or contact your support officer, Area SENCo or adviser directly.



The comments below may be a useful starting point for discussions about the way you address equalities in your work with children and families.

"We didn't have any racism here in the nursery until John joined us."

Racism is not started by the people who are subjected to it. It is very easy for children to tease someone who they think is different from them. By encouraging inclusion and promoting everyone's differences and special qualities, you should start to eliminate this behaviour.

"We've bought lots of resources to reflect different cultures: dolls, dressing up clothes, cooking utensils and musical instruments but we are not sure how to use them."

It is great to have a range of toys and resources that illustrate different needs, lifestyles and cultures. Why not ask the children or their parents/carers to explain or even spend some time with you demonstrating how the items you have are used?

"I always celebrate Eid with the children I look after. I have a special 'festivals' box and each year we take out the Eid pack, use it and then put it away again."

Festivals are an important part of many religions. But they should be celebrated with respect and not just treated as another themed activity. Instead, try talking throughout the year about the special times that are coming up and which children will be celebrating them.

"In our group, the girls always play in the Home Corner with the dolls and the boys play on the bikes - they enjoy that."

Children may feel pressured from an early age to stick to activities that they have been led to believe are "only for girls" or "boys-only". It is important to encourage children to see that both boys and girls can take part in all of the activities and play with all of the toys you provide.

Organisations and local services that can help:

Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service (CREDS)

- Cambridge Professional Development Centre, Foster Road, Trumpington Cambridge CB2 9NL
Tel: 01223 568841
email: creds@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
- Scott House, 5 George Street, Huntingdon PE29 3AD
Tel: 01480 372327
email: creds@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire County Council Access Service

Castle Court, Cambridge CB3 0AP
Tel: 01223 717941

Cambridgeshire Interpretation & Translation Agency (CINTRA)

351-353 Newmarket Road
Cambridge CB5 8JG
Tel: 01223 346870 Fax: 01223 309923
email: translation@cintra.org.uk
email: booking@cintra.org.uk

Early Childhood Unit, National Children's Bureau

Tel: 020 7843 6449
www.ncb.org.uk/Page.asp?sve=802

Early Years Equality (EYE)

49 Heatherlea Avenue, Ecclesall, Sheffield S17 2SL
email: cm.equality@btinternet.com

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Freepost RRLG-GHUX-CTRX
Arndale House, Arndale Centre
Manchester M4 3EQ
Tel: 0845 604 6610
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com>

Friends, Families and Travellers

113 Queen's Road, Brighton
East Sussex BN1 3XG
Tel: 01273 234777
www.gypsy-traveller.org

Kids

6 Aztec Row, Berners Road
London N1 0PW
Tel: 020 7359 3073
www.kids.org.uk

Ormiston Children and Families Trust

51 Cambridge Road, Milton
Cambridge CB24 6AW
Tel: 01223 426148
www.ormiston.org

If you would like a copy of the text of this document in large print, Braille, audio tape or in another language, please call **01954 273360** or email: eycinfo@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire County Council

Office of Children and Young People's Services
Early Years and Childcare Service

Unit 3, Bar Hill Business Park, Saxon Way, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB23 8SL