

Prejudice, bias, stereotyping and discrimination may appear in many forms, on a variety of grounds – including: race, colour, national origin, gender, age, ability/disability, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, social circumstances and marital or family status. It is necessary to take positive action to promote a respect for diversity and to counter discrimination and the learning of negative attitudes to differences in people.¹ All children are entitled to equality of access and to opportunities to enjoy and to learn within a stimulating and safe care environment. Embedding anti-bias and multi-cultural education into childcare ethos and practice gives all children the opportunity to develop to their maximum potential. By ensuring equal access and participation for all children, we contribute to the creation of a more just and equal society.

At the core of Barnardos work is the belief that every child has the right to reach his or her potential and that their family is crucial to their development. We work with children in the firm belief that early intervention and finding solutions to problems before they grow is vital – because every childhood lasts a lifetime.

ABOUT THIS INITIATIVE

This publication aims to acknowledge the difficult and time-consuming task that childcare practitioners face in ensuring that their equal opportunities/diversity policies are developed and implemented to reflect the changes that our society is experiencing. It does this by providing:

- A **Position Paper** on including anti-discriminatory practice as a central theme in early childhood programmes.
- A **Self-Assessment Questionnaire** intended as an aid to identifying areas of practice where practitioners feel they are doing well and areas in which they feel there could be some improvement.
- A **Model Policy** based on best practice models, which it is hoped will be a source of information and inspiration as well as a basis for discussion among childcare providers. The Model Policy is also intended to act as an illustration of the wider implications that such a policy will have for a service which is aiming to ensure that the principles of equality are fully implemented.
- A **Step-by-Step Guide** to suggest how your planned policy development might be implemented.

¹ *Quality in Diversity in Early Learning* 1998 A collaborative work by Members of the Early Childhood Education Forum National Children's Bureau

• Acknowledgements •

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Seán Redmond
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WHY INCLUDE ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD?

Anti-discriminatory practice acknowledges the richness and uniqueness of human life. It is something we need to value and share with the children we work with.

There are many reasons to include consideration of anti-discriminatory practice as a central theme in early childhood programmes. When you value anti-discriminatory practice, you maximize the positive impact of your programme for all your children by:

- Building children's positive self-esteem (when you do this you give them the confidence to reach out to new learning experience)
- Affirming children's individual and group identities with regard to race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disabling conditions, financial circumstances - when you do this you pave the way for children - who are ever fascinated with how they are alike and different from one another - to appreciate human differences as a natural part of life
- Strengthening ties with families - when you do this you promote families' involvement with their children's early childhood programmes.

Further, when you include an anti-discriminatory approach in your work with children, you are preparing them for citizenship in a society where people speak different languages, practice different customs, and embrace different values. You are also helping children to appreciate that there is sameness within difference. By starting in early childhood, you will be helping individuals to learn to work together, communicate across their differences, and value just and fair treatment for all. You will also be preparing children to fight bias and discrimination directed toward themselves, members of their community or wider society.

Making consideration of anti-discriminatory practice a major part of your programme is particularly important in early childhood because it is during this period, and especially between the ages of 2 and 5 that children are curious about sameness and difference and are becoming very aware of gender, race, ethnicity, disabilities, and other differences among people. Because young children are aware of diversity, you need to prepare yourself and know how to support diversity in your work. You need to treat their questions and comments seriously and respectfully, just as you would if they were expressing curiosity about nature or other phenomena. While learning about difference young children are also acquiring attitudes and values from those around them, their families, friends, media and society, some that are positive and some, which are not. How you respond to the ideas about difference that children express will influence the feelings and judgments they will form.

If you work with children and families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, the opportunities for valuing anti-discriminatory practice in the curriculum may be quite apparent. But if you are working with children from similar backgrounds, you need to be sure that you address anti-discriminatory practice in the curriculum. You will need to counter stereotypes or misconceptions they may have. All children need to be exposed to new experiences and to broaden their understanding of how people live.

Underlying a commitment to anti-discriminatory practice is a set of beliefs and values:

- A sense of *trust* in others
- A sense of *justice*
- A belief in *cooperation* and *shared learning*
- A belief that *all children can be competent*
- A belief that *all children can be proud of their culture and heritage*
- A belief that *all children can be curious about and learn to accept human similarities and differences*
- A *sense of the individuality* of each child
- A sense that *a group of children is a small society where there is fairness, opportunity, caring, and satisfaction for all its members.*

When you value an anti-discriminatory approach, you are addressing the needs of the “whole child” and promoting both affective and cognitive development. You are recognizing that children live in diverse social and physical environments. You are imparting a sense of shared humanity.

To begin, you need to spend time thinking about your own beliefs, behaviors, and knowledge about diversity. You will need to source information on diversity education and on anti-discriminatory practice to support your growth. Then take your focus to the lives and experiences of your children and their families and communities. Only then will you be ready to plan a curriculum that expands your own vision, capitalises on children’s experiences, and provides new learning experiences. Finally, you need to consider your role as a policy maker and how the policies in your programme respond to issues of diversity.

No matter where you begin, you will need to think about the beliefs and attitudes about human beings that you want to promote in your programme. Related to this, is the necessity of assessing your own behaviour and looking at what you say and do and how you communicate to children that you value diversity. Children look to you as a model of how they should act toward others. Ask yourself if children find their images, interests or experiences reflected in your programme and the environment.

Do boys and girls feel free to play and work in all the areas of the room? If you have children of diverse economic backgrounds, is their range of experience represented in the curriculum? In a study of families, for example, you can ask children, “What is your favorite place?” which emphasizes the child’s use of space, rather than, “How many rooms are there in your house?” Examine your selection of books, pictures, tapes, and stories. Do they represent diverse cultures, races, ages, and the interests of the children in your group? Do they avoid stereotypes?

Think about policies in your programme and think about how they serve your families' needs. Valuing diversity is a challenge. It requires attention to who you are as a caregiver, who your children, families and communities are, and what your programme is like. It offers opportunities to learn about yourself and to help children value themselves and others.

All children are entitled to equality of access and to opportunities to enjoy and to learn within a stimulating and safe care environment. An equal opportunities policy is a public statement of commitment to opposing and challenging all kinds of discrimination. Childcare providers can play a part in tackling discrimination - they can act as a catalyst for the beginning of new attitudes within society. An emphasis on multi-cultural play opportunities for all children can encourage and develop positive attitudes to difference of culture, language, gender, religion, and income levels. By challenging discriminatory practices and providing positive images for children from a young age, providers can do a great deal towards tackling prejudice.

The attached self-assessment questionnaire is for your own information. It is intended as an aid to identifying areas of your practice where you are doing well and areas in which you feel there could be some improvement.

• Self-Assessment Questionnaire •

I use materials and provide activities that reflect and support:

- Differently abled people of various class, ethnic and cultural backgrounds working and being with their families and playing.

Always

Sometimes

Never

- Diversity in family lifestyles including single mothers or fathers; mothers in jobs outside the home and fathers at home; fathers in jobs outside the home and mothers at home; families with grandparents or other relatives and no parents; families with two mothers or two fathers; middle income and low income families; families with differently abled members; foster families; and families whose members come from different ethnic and cultural groups.

Always

Sometimes

Never

- For every 'Always' answer give yourself 2 points
- For every 'Sometimes' answer give yourself 1 point
- For every 'Never' answer give yourself 0 points

Now total your points and examine the results:

- If you scored between 14 and 16 you are operating out of an anti-bias approach
- If you scored between 11 and 13 you are engaging an anti-bias approach in some areas.
- If you scored between 5 and 10, you may be operating out of what Louise Derman-Sparks calls a 'tourist approach' i.e. introducing cultural activities at special times, seeing other cultures as 'exotic' and not incorporating them into all aspects of the programme. The 'tourist approach' does not support children or give them the tools they need to comfortably, empathically and fairly interact with diversity.
- If your score is 4 or below, you are reflecting and teaching from the dominant culture's point of view and ignoring the experiences and views of people from groups different from your own.

REASONS TO HAVE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

All forms of childcare provision...should be “without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child’s, his/her parent’s or legal guardian’s race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, nationality, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status” (U.N. Convention 2.1)¹

Target 14 of the European Commission’s Network on Childcare Action Programme – Quality Targets in Services for Young Children states:

“All services should positively assert the value of diversity and make provision both for children and adults which acknowledges and supports diversity of language, ethnicity, religion, gender and disability and challenges stereotypes”

“A policy statement provides a public statement of commitment and a framework for the development of practice.”²

Children need to feel valued and to be protected from discrimination. Childcare providers can play a part in tackling discrimination - they can be proactive in supporting attitudinal change within society. An anti-discriminatory emphasis on play opportunities for children can encourage and develop positive attitudes to difference including gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. By challenging discriminatory practices and providing positive images for children from a young age, providers can do a great deal towards tackling prejudice both within the service and in the wider community.

DEFINITION OF A POLICY

A policy is defined using all of the following criteria:

1. It is a governing principle and mandates or constrains actions
2. It has organisation-wide application
3. It will change infrequently and sets a course for the foreseeable future
4. It helps ensure compliance, enhances the organisation's mission or reduces institutional risk
5. It is approved at the senior levels of the organisation

PROCEDURE/GUIDELINES

A procedure/guideline is a series of interrelated steps that are taken to help implement the policy as follows:

1. Lists steps to follow in order to comply with the policy
2. Uses an introductory section for complex procedures or those with options
3. Clearly identifies options
4. Clearly identifies cautions or warnings
5. Refers reader to:

Related documents

Relevant appendix entries

And/or

Relevant special situations

Procedures describe how the policy is to be implemented whereas guidelines are less prescriptive and are provided to assist professional judgment. Guidelines are used as a reference point in relation to accountability.

HOW TO DEVELOP THE POLICY

Identify a member of staff who will lead the development of this policy, its implementation, and monitoring. This task is a complex one and will require senior management support.

Convene a working group to support the policy development. This should include representatives from staff, parents/guardians and management committee. It is important also to consider how children might be involved in the process.

Audit current procedures and practices. See for example the Self Assessment Questionnaire included with this pack.

Gather the necessary information. You will need to be aware of your statutory obligations arising from the legislation which underpins inclusive practice - in particular the Equal Status Act 2000 and the Employment Equality Act 1998.

It is also important to gather as much information as you can on the principles of good practice that apply to equality issues. (See Appendix).

Draft the policy and consult with the whole service community to include staff, children, parents/guardians and management committee.

When the policy is agreed **ensure that it is promoted.** Communicate it to everyone involved in the whole service. Include it in your induction plan.

IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

Produce an action plan to support the implementation of the policy. See the Appendix for an example of an implementation plan.

Consider the training and development implications for staff and management. Ensure that they receive appropriate training and support e.g. awareness of personal values and their impact on practice, skills to challenge oppressive behaviour; inclusion of an introduction to the policy in the staff Induction Programme.

Equal opportunities should be a key feature of all service policies. **Review all other service policies in light of this policy.** E.g. Do you operate a 'first come first served' admissions policy – this may inadvertently discriminate against those who have recently moved into the area and/or do not have the necessary literacy or language skills or information to access the service.

Identify mechanisms to **monitor the policy.**

REVIEWING AND EVALUATING THE POLICY

Review and evaluate the policy for its effectiveness in eliminating discrimination and promoting equality.

Ensure that any equality issues arising from reviews and evaluations are used **to inform planning and decision making.**

MODEL POLICY

Attached to this document you will find a MODEL EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY. This is provided to help you with the wording of your own policy.

It is essential that you do not merely take this model and use it as your own unless you are ready, willing and in a position to own it's every statement and to implement it.

It is suggested that you read through it and discuss it as a team in order to decide which parts apply to your current practice, which parts could apply from now on and which parts require further development. You may decide to add to it or amend it to fit your own requirements or you may use it only as an example. Each childcare provider has to judge what is possible within their resources in terms of knowledge, information, time, staff, finances etc.

What matters most is that you are striving to provide a service that values and caters for the diverse abilities, needs and backgrounds of all children.

Remember to give the children the opportunity to participate in all decisions which affect them.

MODEL EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. CONTEXT

You may like to summarize here the main issues for the service from an equal opportunities perspective.

Issues, which may be relevant here, include:

- *Location;*
- *Ethnic composition of children and staff;*
- *Gender balance;*
- *Disability;*
- *Socio-economic background of children;*
- *Religious and linguistic diversity of children;*
- *Children's mobility – Travellers, refugees, asylum seekers;*
- *Diverse family structures;*

2. SERVICE ETHOS

The service opposes all forms of racism, harassment, prejudice and discrimination.

The service publicly supports and actively promotes good personal and community relations. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the service.

A positive ethos of mutual respect and trust is fostered amongst the children and staff in which all those involved in the service (the service community) feel valued and safe.

The dietary and dress requirements of different religious groups are catered for as far as resources permit. Children will be introduced to a culturally diverse range of foods.

Children and staff are enabled to celebrate festivals and other events relevant to their particular faith.

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff members deal with all forms of bullying and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently.

Children, staff and parents/guardians are aware that intolerant behaviour is always unacceptable.

3. AIMS OF THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Equality of Opportunity at (*name of service*) is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement.

We aim to:

- Make the service a place where everyone, irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability, family structure and social circumstances, feels welcome and valued.

- Ensure that children have the opportunity to receive the support and guidance they need on an individual basis and take account of the personal and cultural needs specific to them as individuals.
- Work in partnership with families and the wider community, to promote equality of opportunity and to oppose all forms of oppressive behaviour, prejudice and discrimination.
- Develop children's sense of personal and group identity which is confident, open to difference and receptive to change and respectful towards other identities.
- Enable children and staff to have the confidence and skills to challenge instances of prejudice, intolerance and discrimination.
- Equip children and staff to understand that reason, logic and sensitivity have to underpin ways and means of resolving arguments and conflicts.
- Ensure that equality of opportunity is an integral part of all planning and decision making within the service.

This is based on the following core values and ethos as expressed in our aims/mission statement.

(Include your Aims/ Mission Statement here)

These aims are designed to ensure inclusion for all and that children are prepared for full participation in society.

4. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Your policy should set out the service's commitments and cover the responsibilities of:

The management committee,

The service manager,

Staff,

Children,

Parents/ Carers,

Relevant agencies e.g. Childcare Committee, Health Board etc.

Visitors to the service.

Commitments:

All of the service policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities. We promote positive and proactive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity.

All staff members contribute to the development and review of policy documents. We ensure the involvement of the management committee and take steps to enable the contribution of parents/guardians as well as the children.

The evaluation of policies is used to identify specific actions to address equality issues.

Staff interactions with children and curriculum content are monitored to ensure appropriate breadth of content.

Our commitment will be demonstrated through:

- Monitoring the impact of all of our policies on different groups
- Fostering respect for all groups
- Promoting positive non-discriminatory behaviour
- Eradicating barriers in order to maximise participation and achievement of all
- Ensuring high expectations of all
- Drawing on the diverse experiences and skills of all children and their families, staff and the wider community

Responsibilities:

a) Management Committee

Ensuring the service complies with all relevant legislation.

Ensuring the policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

b) Service Manager

Implementing the policy and its related procedures and strategies.

Ensuring that all staff members are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support.

Taking appropriate action in any cases of discrimination.

Having a designated member of staff responsible for the service's equal opportunities policy.

c) All Staff

Knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping and dealing with any related incidents.

Promoting equality and good relations and not discriminating on grounds of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability or social circumstances.

Keeping up to date on equality issues by attending training and information opportunities.

d) Parents/Carers

Being aware of and complying with the service's equal opportunities policy and understanding that it applies to all children and all those involved with the service.

Supporting staff in developing a shared understanding and an appreciation of the benefits of an anti-discriminatory approach.

e) Relevant Agencies

Supporting the service in the development and implementation of the policy.

Being aware of and complying with the service's equal opportunities policy

f) Visitors

Being aware of and complying with the service's equal opportunities policy.

Breaches of the policy

You need to set out the action that will be taken if people do not comply with the policy.

Victims of bullying and harassment will be given every support. Those responsible will also be supported by appropriately challenging the behaviour, by providing accurate information on the issue, by giving the person an opportunity to think about the affects of their actions and by being clear that such behaviour is not accepted in the service.

5. STAFFING: RECRUITMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The service adheres to recruitment practices which are fair, equitable and in line with statutory duties.

We will ensure that our recruitment policy does not discriminate against minority ethnic groups or against those with disabilities.

We will take appropriate action to seek staff and management committee members from a diversity of backgrounds.

Issues of equality and diversity will feature in staff inductions, training and staff meetings.

All staff will have access to support and guidance as appropriate and to career progression opportunities.

We will actively seek to work with local minority community organisations and where possible access the expertise, skills, knowledge and experiences of people from local minority communities.

Ensuring the premises is accessible to any applicant.

6. ADMISSIONS

The admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered fairly and consistently so that children from particular communities are not disadvantaged.

Comprehensive information about children's ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in all admission forms (with due regard to confidentiality).

7. CURRICULUM³/PROGRAMME

Curriculum planning takes account of the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all children attending the service.

The curriculum builds on the starting point of each child and recognises and supports the skills the child brings to the setting. It is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:

- Boys and girls
- Children learning English or Irish as an additional language
- Children from minority ethnic groups including Travellers
- Children who are gifted and talented
- Children with special educational needs
- Children who are in care

The service monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for children of all backgrounds

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. Children are helped to develop knowledge, understanding, respect and appreciation of their own and other's beliefs and cultures.

Children's self esteem and emotional well-being are promoted and they are helped to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, in the service and in the community.

The content of the curriculum reflects and values diversity. It encourages and enables children to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.

A wide range of positive images and objects are displayed to reflect non-stereotypical roles, racial, cultural and religious diversity and disability

Pictures and storybooks represent more than conventional two-parent families.

If a child's needs cannot be met without additional personnel and/or equipment funding will be sought to ensure that provision is appropriate to the child's needs.

Provision is made for religious observance for children and staff members.

8. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Every child has a value, not because of what they might achieve in the future but for who they are today.

Staff members ensure that the play space is an inclusive environment in which children feel all their contributions are valued.

Staff members are responsive to children's learning styles and take account of children's cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs.

All children's home languages and traditions are acknowledged and respected.

All children's abilities are affirmed.

The learning environment reflects the fact that diversity is valued and respected.

The identity of each child is acknowledged and affirmed.

9. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND THE COMMUNITY

All parents/guardians are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the service.

Contributions from parents/guardians regarding such matters as diet, special skin or hair care, comforters, family names, religion, language, health and medical conditions, favourite toys, likes and dislikes etc. are welcomed.

Individual families' religious beliefs and traditions are respected and treated with sensitivity.

The variety of family structures represented in the service is recognised.

While we do not have to embrace the lifestyle or values of another family, we need to treat each family with respect.

The service works in partnership with parents/guardians and the community to develop positive attitudes to diversity and to address specific incidents.

The service takes steps to encourage the involvement and participation of under represented groups of parents and sections of the community.

Information for parents/guardians is easily accessible, takes account of literacy difficulties in user-friendly language and is available in languages and formats other than English as appropriate.

Meetings for parents/guardians are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.

Informal events are designed to include the whole community and at times may target minority or marginalised groups.

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community and that it reflects current legislation.

Equality and diversity issues will be discussed regularly at team meetings and management committee meetings.

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated (*indicate by what length of time*) by the member of staff responsible for Equal Opportunities.

Member of staff responsible for Equal Opportunities:

.....
Date of Policy:

Date of Review:

References

Colette Murray & Annie O'Doherty '*Éist*' – *Respecting diversity in early childhood care, education and training* Pavee Point 2001

Commission for Racial Equality *Preparing a race equality policy for schools* CRE March 2002

OfSTED *Out of School Care: Guidance to the National Standards Office for Standards in Education* September 2001

An Equal Start – Promoting Equal Opportunities in the Early Years The Equality Commissions in Scotland:
The Commission for Racial Equality, The Disability Rights Commission and the Equal Opportunities Commission 2001

Guidance on writing an Equal Opportunities Policy A draft policy courtesy of Staffordshire LEA and Rita Chowdhury 2002

National Childcare Strategy Report of the Partnership 2000 Expert Working Group on Childcare,
January 1999

Aiming High Scotland – Quality Assurance SOSCN, Kids Club Network

(Footnotes)

¹ National Childcare Strategy, Report of the Partnership 2000 Expert Working group on Childcare, January 1999

² Colette Murray & Annie O'Doherty '*Éist*' – *Respecting diversity in early childhood care, education and training* Pavee Point 2001

³ The term curriculum is used to describe all the activities and experiences (planned and unplanned; formal and informal; overt and hidden) from which a child learns...it involves a consideration of the process of learning (how a child learns) and the learning progression (when a child learns) and the learning context (where and why a child learns) *Startright Report 1994*

SUGGESTED STEPS IN THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

(See attached Sample Project Plan)

1. LEAD RESPONSIBILITY, MONITORING & REVIEW

- Assigning Lead Responsibility to an appropriate person and establishing a Working Group with authority to oversee Research & Development as well as Implementation and Evaluation of the process
- Holding Review Meetings

2. INFORMATION

- Researching a Best Practice Resource List
- Auditing Exercise - this involves Auditing Existing Policies and Procedures in light of information gathered on Best Practice
- Focus Groups should involve all stakeholders i.e. Management Committee, Staff, Families, Children, Relevant Agencies, Other Providers involved in a similar process
- Interim Document for Management
- Feasibility Study & Report - The Feasibility Study will involve Resource Identification, Costs and Strategy to Deliver (e.g. Identifying possible sources of funding).

3. POLICY

- 1st Draft
- 2nd Draft
- Final Draft
- Published Policy

4. CONSULTATION

- Involve all stakeholders (i.e. Management Committee, Staff, Families, Children, Relevant Agencies, Other Providers involved in a similar process) in reviewing the Draft Policy

5. CAPACITY BUILDING

- Assess Training Needs, Modifications to the Environment (incl. Equipment & Materials) and Changes to Administration and Monitoring Systems.

6. DISSEMINATION / COMMUNICATION

- Dissemination/Communication Plan - Dissemination and Communication will involve informing all stakeholders about the policy and its implementation.
- Launch - A Launch Date will provide an opportunity to highlight the beginning of the implementation process. It will also be a major milestone in what will become a continuing process of development, review and evaluation that is integral to the service. The Launch Date may involve holding an EVENT (a seminar or a presentation) for all stakeholders. You may also decide to PUBLISH your policy document as a model for other services.

7. EVALUATION

- All stages of the process should be subject to ongoing evaluation.

RESOURCES

Damon, Emma ***All Kinds of Beliefs : A lift-the-flap-book*** 2000 London: Tango Books.
This is a children's book which celebrates all kinds of children with all kinds of religious and cultural beliefs.

Diversity in Early Childhood: A collection of essays 2002 National Children's Resource Centre, Barnardos

This is a collection of essays written by practitioners and academics, on some aspects of diversity experienced by children in Ireland today. Subjects include: Travellers, disability, rural childcare, inclusive education, unaccompanied minors and asylum seeking children in Ireland.

Murray, Colette and O'Doherty, Annie ***Éist: Respecting diversity in early childhood care, education and training*** 2001 Dublin: Pavee Point Publications.

This report is written for a diverse and multi-professional audience including both policy makers and professionals working in the field of early childhood care, education and training. It aims to raise awareness and provide recommendations for the inclusion of diversity education in all early years training centres and colleges, childcare organisations and early years settings.

Equality and Diversity: an anti-bias approach 2002 Barnardos, Pavee Point, Know Racism, NCCRI

This resource pack contains four posters and six sets of picture sequence cards depicting children in early years services in Ireland. The aim of the pack is to depict positive images of children from a variety of backgrounds, cultures and minority groups in early years services.

Connolly, Paul ***Fair Play: talking with children about prejudice and discrimination*** 2002 Belfast: Barnardo's Parenting Matters and Save the Children.

This is a booklet written for parents and guardians of children in Northern Ireland which aims to offer practical advice and guidance on how we can help and support children who are discriminated against.

'Respect': education without prejudice – a challenge for early years educators in Ireland – papers presented at a Pavee Point Conference in Dublin Castle 16th October 1998 2001 Dublin: Pavee Point
The aim of the conference 'Education without Prejudice' was to highlight the need to address the issues of racism, discrimination and prejudice in training and practice in the early years sector.

French, Geraldine ***Supporting Quality: guidelines for best practice in early childhood services*** 2003 National Children's Resource Centre, Barnardos, Christchurch Square, Dublin 8.

This is the second edition of the guidelines. It is intended to be of use to all providers of early childhood services and early childhood practitioners for children aged 0 – 8, in statutory, voluntary, community, workplace and private services. It covers areas such as policies and procedures; management, human resources; partnership with families; physical environment; curriculum; observations and assessments; and health and safety.

Vandenbroeck, Michel ***The View of the Yeti: Bringing up children in the spirit of self-awareness and kindredship*** 1999 Bernard van Leer Foundation.

This book is about shifting perspectives and about accepting each other as human beings in all our diversity. The discussion at the centre of this book is about bringing up children from birth to not only accept diversity but to cherish it and to thrive in an increasingly diverse world.

Siraj-Blatchford, Iram ***The early years: laying the foundations for racial equality*** 1994 London: Trentham Books Ltd.

This book provides advice to early years workers on how to promote racial equality among the children in their care.

Brown, Babette ***Unlearning Discrimination in the Early Years*** 2002 London: Trentham Books Ltd.

This book challenges some of the preconceptions about early childhood development – for example that children cannot understand issues to do with fairness or with skin colour or disability or homophobia – by clearly explaining relevant theory and research and by giving examples of good practice.

Hyder, Tina and Kenway, Penny ***An Equal Future: A guide to anti-sexist practice in the early years*** 1995 London: National Early Years Network.

The aim of this guide is to describe the way girls and boys gain their knowledge and ideas about gender and to suggest ways to counter the impact of sexism and so to avoid stereotyping in all aspects of work in an early years setting.

Anti-Bias Approaches in the Early Years 2000 London: Save the Children.

This handbook offers information and practical activities for those who want to tackle discrimination and allow children to think and reflect on their experiences of differences in relation to ethnicity, disability and gender.

Guidelines for Developing a ‘Whole Organisation’ Approach to Address Racism and to Support Interculturalism 2001 National Consultative Committee on Interculturalism and Racism (NCCRI), Dublin. The guidelines are about promoting good practice and are designed to be consistent with equality legislation.

Playing Fair: A guide to tackling discrimination London: The National Early Years Network. As children grow they learn attitudes and beliefs about the world around them. They learn values, they learn what to respect, they learn the differences between people and start to behave and think differently about them. The trouble is they not only learn the positive and valuable messages, they pick up the unfair ones too.

An Introduction to the Equal Status Act 2000 2001 The Equality Authority, Clonmel Street, Dublin 2.

Askew, Sue and Ross, Carol ***Boys Don’t Cry: Boys and Sexism in Education*** 1993 Open University Press.

This book looks at the factors in school that affect the socialisation of boys, at pressures on them to conform to damaging male stereotypes, at relationships between boys and at bullying and aggressive behaviour in general.

All Our Children: a guide for those who care 1999 London: Early Years Trainers Anti-Racist Network (EYTARN).

This guide provides clear, theoretical and practical information on racism, sexism, Travellers and disability. It includes activities to be done with children around equality issues, lists of children’s books highlighting these issues, training ideas and resource information.

Lindon, J. ***Equal Opportunities in Practice*** 1998 London: Hodder & Stoughton.

The author looks at the principles and practice of equal opportunities; good practice in working with boys and girls; diversity in ethnic group and cultural tradition; world religions; good practice with disabled children and key issues in good practice.

Sample Project Plan:
Equal Opportunities Policy Development & Implementation

Project Plan: Equal Opportunities Policy Development & Implementation

ACTIONS	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12
1. Lead Responsibility¹ Monitoring & Review	Assign Lead Responsibility /Overseeing Authority					Review Meeting				Review Meeting		
2. Information		Best Practice Resource list		Auditing Exercise ²	Focus Groups ³ 1&2	Interim Document For Manager	Feasibility Study ⁴			Feasibility Report		
3. Policy						Policy Draft 1			Policy Draft 2	Final Draft	Published Policy	
4. Consultation³							Consultation 1		Consultation 2			
5. Capacity Building⁵							Assessment 1 Training Needs	Assessment 2 Environment & Equipment	Assessment 3 Administration & Other Needs			
6. Communication⁶	Communication Plan	Bulletin ⁷ to Staff		Bulletin to Staff		Bulletin to Staff		Bulletin to Staff				Launch
7. Evaluation												Evaluate Process

¹**Lead Responsibility** involves assigning Lead Responsibility to an appropriate person and establishing a Working Group with authority to oversee Research & Development as well as Implementation and Evaluation of the process.

²The Auditing Exercise involves Auditing Existing Policies and Procedures in light of information gathered on Best Practice.

³Focus Groups and **Consultation** should involve all stakeholders i.e. Management Committee, Staff, Families, Children, Relevant Agencies, Other Providers involved in a similar process.

⁴The Feasibility Study will involve Resource Identification, Costs and Strategy to Deliver (e.g. Identifying possible sources of funding).

⁵**Capacity Building** means any necessary Training, Modifications to the Environment (incl. Equipment & Materials) and Changes to Admin. and Monitoring Systems.

⁶**Dissemination/Communication** will involve informing all stakeholders about the policy and its implementation. A Launch Date will provide an opportunity to highlight the beginning of the implementation process. It will also be a major milestone in what will become a continuing

process of development, review and evaluation that is integral to the service. The Launch Date may involve holding an event (a seminar or a presentation) for all stakeholders. You may also decide to publish your policy document as a model for other services.

⁷Bulletin to inform staff members of progress - approx. 1/2 page.