



MONTESSORI STEPPING STONES & WAABINY OSHC EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY



PURPOSE

Montessori Stepping Stones (MSS) is committed to the principles of, and strives to provide, equal opportunity in relation to community access to the service 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. MSS actively promote these positive aspects of diversity and encourage acceptance and appreciation of individual differences. Education and care will be made available to the community in accordance with the Commonwealth "Priority of Access Guidelines".

SCOPE

All children, families and staff attending or work at MSS in relation to the education and care of children service at Montessori Stepping Stones –including children, families, staff and 3rd parties who assist in the continuous improvement and implementation of quality practices.

DESCRIPTION/GENERAL

Our approach to equal opportunity is based on the principles of equity, inclusion and diversity. Children's rights and interests are paramount.

MSS supports equal opportunity principles and considers that where possible it has an obligation to promote equal access to the services it provides within Australian Government guidelines. The policy has been framed around equal opportunity principles as they are specified in both federal and applicable state and territory equal opportunity legislation.

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS

Laws relating to protection of privacy and confidentiality; duty of confidentiality arising from contract with parent; to whom and when information must be disclosed;

- The Equal Opportunity Act (WA)
- Priority of Access Guidelines (Child Care Service Handbook)
- Privacy Act
- Federal Discriminations Acts;
- Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act;
- Education and Care Services National (WA) Regulations

CHILDREN'S NEEDS

Equal access to our education and care services regardless of gender, race, religion, impairment, family status, or age. The right as a child to safety, comfort and care.

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FAMILIES' NEEDS

Equal access and rights for their children regardless of gender, race, religion, impairment, marital status, political conviction, pregnancy, family responsibility, family status. Priority of access if within Australian Government Guidelines.

EDUCATOR/STAFF NEEDS

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

MANAGEMENT NEEDS

To reflect the community in which MSS is located. To obtain an equal balance between sound management practises and individual rights.

Families and educators/staff will be given clear instructions about the Australian Government "Priority of Access Guidelines" and MSS will endeavour to ensure that all policies and practices are inclusive.

GUIDELINES

Equal Opportunity principles will be an integral part of the 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.

Educators/staff will treat individual children and their families with respect. They will take into account individual differences in language, attitudes, abilities, assumptions and expectations.

Children who have a disability will not be discriminated against and will be afforded access to the service where:

- a place exists;
- they meet the required priority of access;
- the service is able to access and/or borrow appropriate resources to care for the child.

All educators/staff will be selected and employed according to equal opportunity guidelines. Where the community, in which MSS is located, comprises of a particular ethnic group or there are cultural or linguistic needs, the nominated supervisor and educational leaders will make every effort to include workers from that group at the service, provided they meet the required selection criteria and are considered to be the best person for the position.

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.

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During orientation MSS will provide relevant information to educators/staff concerning procedures to be followed in the event of harassment or discrimination in the workplace. Sexual harassment is any deliberate verbal or physical sexual conduct that is unwelcome and uninvited. All educators/staff will be provided with information which defines the range of behaviours that constitute harassment.

Clear guidelines on grievance procedures are detailed in the MSS.P43 Workplace Harassment Prevention & Complaint Resolution policy, which was developed in accordance with the state and federal equal opportunity legislation and is readily available to all educators/staff.

Educators/staff members with school age children will not be discriminated against in relation to their employment at MSS.

The approved provider and supervisors at MSS will:

- identify discriminatory and harassing conduct;
- publicise equal opportunity policy and complaints procedures to all educators/staff;
- train all educators/staff on steps as to reporting current complaints;
- investigate and document complaints.

LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS

No child, parent/guardian, staff member or potential staff member will be excluded from the service due to living with HIV/AIDS. Information about a child, parent/guardian 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 service.

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