



Diversity and Equality Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and direction for all individuals who are a part of Royal City Cooperative Preschool. This includes staff, students, volunteers in the classroom, volunteer parents and Board of Directors. RCCP is committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Ministry of Education - Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 – Part VI - Service System planning for child care and early years programs and services. Provincial Interest - #49

(1) It is a matter of provincial interest that there be a system of child care and early years programs and services that, (f) respects equity, inclusiveness and diversity in communities.

The Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms – states that: all individuals must be treated equally, regardless of their race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability

Canadian Human Rights Act – states that: employer and service providers are required to accommodate special needs, including those of people with disabilities, short of undue hardship.

DEFINITIONS

Equity

Equity is an attempt to ensure fair treatment, equality of opportunity, and fairness in access to information and resources for all.

Diversity

Diversity is the representation of varied identities and differences including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identity, mental or physical ability, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, neighbourhood, socio-economic status and language; collectively and as individuals. It also includes diversity of thought, ideas, perspective, and values.

Inclusion

Inclusion creates a space to show that we value people and encourage them to bring more of themselves. It builds a culture of belonging by actively inviting the contribution and participation of all people. We recognize every person's voice adds value, and we strive to create balance in the face of power differences and equal opportunities.

(Ford Foundation for Social Justice)

We strive to:

- provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued;
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about different ethnic groups and people with disabilities;
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality and diversity; and
- make inclusion a thread which runs through all of the activities of the pre-school.

PROCEDURES

Registration

Royal City Cooperative Preschool is open to all members of our community.

- We provide information in clear, concise language whether in spoken or written form
- We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our preschool because of any disability.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy.
- We develop an action plan to ensure that people with disabilities can participate successfully in the services offered by the pre-school and in the curriculum offered.

Employment

- Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the position, subject to references and Criminal Records checks. This ensures fairness in the selection process. All job descriptions include a commitment to equality and diversity as part of their specifications.
- We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for staff to enable them to develop practices which enable all children to flourish.
- We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for equality and diversity.

Curriculum

The curriculum offered at Royal City Cooperative Preschool encourages children to develop positive attitudes to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathize with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking while decreasing the instances of stereotyping at the earliest stages.

We do this by:

- making children feel valued and good about themselves;

- focus on physical environments, including toys, books, equipment and resources, reflect a rich and diverse demographic landscape and respond to unique needs and abilities;
- ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
- reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources;
- avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of materials;
- celebrating a wide range of festivals;
- creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
- helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable;
- ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities; and
- ensuring that children whose first language is not English have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning.

Valuing Diversity in Families

- We welcome the diversity of family life and work with all families.
- We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life into the preschool.
- We invite and encourage families to share and educate us about any holidays that they celebrate.
- We encourage parents/caregivers to take part in the life of the preschool and to contribute fully.
- For families who have a first language other than English, we value the contribution their culture and language offer.
- We celebrate the cultural diversity of our families through guest speakers;
- In conjunction with the County of Wellington, we offer a specialized payment system for families of differing means.

Meetings

- Annual General Meetings are arranged to ensure that all families may be involved in the running of the preschool.
- Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways - written, verbal and in translation (if available)- to ensure that all parents have information about access to the meetings.

Accountability

It is the goal of RCCP to continue to commit to make sure that this policy remains relevant, effective and appropriate. Any concerns or complaints should be brought to the Board of Directors.