



Equal Opportunities Policy (Revised 2017)

Background:

The 1st of Januari 2009 Sweden received a new law that aims at promoting the equal value and rights of all children in all school forms. (Discrimination Act 2008:567). Everyone has the right to feel safe and to be treated with respect. No one should be disadvantaged by discrimination. The Nursery shall protect the children according to the Swedish constitution and the UN Convention on the rights of the child.

The Equal Opportunities plan aims at promoting the equal rights of children and pupils. All school forms should counter discrimination, harassment and other offensive treatment. The staff should actively work against all forms of disadvantaging treatment.

Vision:

The English Nursery aims to be an inclusive organisation where everyone is treated with respect and dignity, and where there is equal opportunity for all. Our Nursery community consists of a diverse range of people. We strive to celebrate our differences in a positive environment, by understanding them and enjoying the diversity this brings. As an international nursery we work actively to develop knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding, courtesy and respect.

All children and adults within the nursery have a right to be treated with respect. This includes a right to:

1. Develop and learn in a secure, caring and well organized environment.
2. Be treated with physical, emotional and verbal respect.
3. Feel respected for their gender, ethical and cultural background, age, abilities and disabilities.
4. Freedom from degrading comments or harassment and inappropriate use of humor.
5. Receive equal opportunities to work, learn and develop.

Principles:

The English Nursery is actively working with creating a culture in which equal opportunities and equal treatment are a priority for all. The Nursery is committed to the following principles:

1. We meet the needs of all children.
2. We identify children in need of more support and plan for how we can support them.
3. Staff are responsible for creating an environment where children feel that they have equal opportunities, are treated with respect, challenge gender stereotypes and gender roles and making sure children feel included.
4. The children are viewed as individuals and expectations are adjusted for each child. Instruction, learning opportunities, and movement within the curriculum are individualized to correspond with individual needs, interests, and abilities.
5. The children and their families are entitled to be treated with respect and collaborates with the staff to create a good relationship between home-nursery.
6. Children are encouraged to challenge any inappropriate behaviour or comments through discussions.
7. Degrading and abusive language and behaviour will not be tolerated.
8. In the case of comments/incidents witnessed by others, silence and non intervention will be viewed as agreement.



Goals and guidelines according to Lpfö 98/2010

Goals

The preschool should strive to ensure that each child develops;

- Openness, respect, solidarity and responsibility,
- Ability to take account of and empathise with the situation of others, as well as a willingness to help others.
- Ability to discover, reflect on and work out their position on different ethical dilemmas and fundamental questions of life in daily reality.
- Understanding that all persons have equal value independent of social background and regardless of gender, ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief, sexual orientation or functional impairment.
- Respect for all forms of life, as well as care for their immediate environment.

Guidelines

Staff working in a nursery are responsible for;

- Showing respect for the individual and help in creating a democratic climate in the preschool, where a feeling of belonging and responsibility can develop, and where children have the opportunity of showing solidarity.
- Stimulate interaction between children and help them to resolve conflicts, as well as work out misunderstandings, compromise and respect each other.
- Ensuring that each child's needs are respected and satisfied, and that they are able to experience their own intrinsic value.
- Making sure the preschool use democratic working methods where children actively participate.
- Emphasizing and approaching the problems involved in ethical dilemmas and questions of life.
- Making children aware that people may have different attitudes and values that determine their views and actions
- Making sure norms are developed for the work and participation of children in their own groups.
- Co-operate with the home concerning the child's upbringing, and discuss with parents the rules and attitudes in the preschool.



The Equal Opportunities Policy in our daily work

- We actively work to ensure that all children develop their identity and feel safe regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, belief, sexual orientation, abilities or inabilities
- The staff act as good role models.
- We show and guide all children how to deal with conflicts.
- We show how they can talk to each other in a respectful way.
- We show how they can listen to each other.
- We show how they can take turns.
- We show how they can help each other.
- We show how they can pay attention to each other.
- We show how they can apologize.
- We demonstrate that our differences are valuable and that everyone can contribute.
- We strengthen the children in their empathetic ability and social skills by teaching them to respect the will of others by listening to "no" and "stop".
- We encourage by praising positive behavior.
- We argue that negative behavior has negative consequences for both oneself and others.
- We encourage the children to take responsibility for their own behavior and making their own choices no matter what the "friends" do.
- We have created a nursery environment that is suitable for **all** children.
- Staff have made thoughtful purchases of material and literature.
- We talk the children and together we discuss different gender roles, family forms, sexual orientations and different cultures and traditions.
- We explore and talk about similarities and differences to create understanding and respect.
- We pay attention to our own and others' approach to the gender and, as a group, we conduct reflective discussions about norms and stereotypes.
- The staff conduct observations on children's play through an equal treatment and gender perspective.
- We show children how to behave through different forms of role play
- We actively work to include the children's home culture in the nursery by celebrating various cultural festivals (eg Lucia, Diwali).



Definitions:

Harassment is any behaviour, which is hurtful, unwanted or upsetting to the victim. It can include comments, actions, jokes and suggestions. It is often scary and threatening for the victim. Sometimes it can be persistent and sometimes it can be a one-time event. It can be directed to one person or a group of people. It can involve physical contact or be verbal, written or silent. People can be harassed for a number of reasons including: age, gender, the way they look, the way they speak, their difficulties, or their interests. Many people who are accused of harassment claim that they only meant it as a joke - this is no excuse. Harassment is never a joke or harmless fun.

Bullying is a form of harassment. The difference is that bullying is:

- Bullying is being deliberately hurtful
- Bullying is repeated often over a period of time
- It is difficult for victims to defend themselves against bullying

Bullying can take many forms, but three main types are:

1. Physical Bullying: hitting, kicking, taking belongings
2. Verbal: name calling, insults, making upsetting and hurtful remarks
3. Indirect: spreading stories, being left out from group activities

Discrimination means treating a person or group less favourably than another in the same situation, usually on account of their cultural background, gender, abilities, disabilities, age, interests or religion.

It is important to remember that many victims of discrimination, harassment and bullying do not complain. The most common reasons for not complaining are because the offender has more power, is stronger, is older, has more friends. Many victims fear that the degrading treatment may become worse if they tell an adult about it.

Other reasons for the victim suffering in silence could be:

- They hope it will go away
- They are embarrassed
- They don't want to be seen as a troublemaker
- They fear they will be told it was self-provoked
- They fear they won't be believed
- Many victims fear that the degrading treatment will become worse if they tell an adult about it.



Categories and actions

Physical assault

1. Victim or witness to report to staff or head teacher.
2. Staff record initial details of incident.
3. Consider the involvement of external agencies including the police or social service.

Verbal abuse:

1. Staff must not ignore any form of verbal abuse
2. Indicate fully to perpetrator that verbal abuse will not be tolerated.
3. Persistent perpetrators must be dealt with and their parents notified that their child's behaviour is in serious breach of our equal opportunities policy.

Wearing offending (racist) badges, clothes or accessories.

1. Nursery should not allow the wearing of badges or insignia.
2. Offenders should be referred to the head teacher.
3. Consider the involvement of external agencies including the police or social service.

Bringing offending materials, e.g. magazines, leaflets, comics, posters, etc.

1. All forms of offending material/literature should be removed.
2. Consider the involvement of external agencies including the police or social service.

Refusal to co-operate with other people

1. Every child should have the right to feel safe and be included in nursery activities in a fair way.
2. Grouping for educational purposes should ideally be made by the staff
3. Offenders must be referred to the head teacher.

Bringing of sharp object or weapons

1. The law on the prohibition on knives and other objects regulate any occurrence of objects that may threaten the safety of a nursery.
2. It is a police matter, not a school matter to confiscate these items.

Harassment

1. All types of harassment will be recorded
2. The concerned parents/guardians will be informed.



Actions to be taken by the head teacher when dealing with harassment:

1. Take the incident seriously.
2. Take action as quickly as possible.
3. Keep your actions and thoughts private.
4. Remain calm and professional when speaking to staff about the allegations/incident
5. Interview victim/informant and make initial factual record of the incident.
6. Make it plain to the offender that you disapprove and that at Tanto and The English Nursery we operate an equal opportunities and harassment policy where staff have rights to be treated fairly and respectfully in their workplace. Encourage the offender to see the victim's point of view
7. Consider whether the police need to be contacted.
8. Support must be given to both offender and victim.
9. Inform the Board of Directors
10. If allegations are going to involve police. Principal should leave investigation to them if they are starting a criminal investigation or child protection procedures are initiated.
11. Deal with the impact of the harassment in the whole school and consider any implications for school policies and practice.
12. The complainant should be kept informed of progress regarding outcomes and actions taken.
13. Set a date for a follow up review to ensure the issue has been tackled effectively.
14. Review the effectiveness of the school's Equal Opportunity Policy and procedures in the light of the incident.

Victim support

- The victim should receive immediate support, assistance and reassurance.
- Be aware that the victim often feels guilt and shame over what has happened.
- The student's parents/guardians must be informed immediately.
- A nominated and sympathetic member of staff should explain the action taken or to be taken by the school, or other agencies, and offer victim the opportunity to express any concerns and feelings.
- The police should be notified immediately of any serious incidents or breaches of the law and the victim offered counselling support within the school or from specialist agencies.
- The victim should be kept informed of the outcome of actions taken against the perpetrator.
- The victim's closest friends could be asked to support and help the victim, by reporting future incidents to an adult, or by informing the perpetrator that his/her actions are unjust and hurtful.



Parent, Staff and child participation

Together with the head teacher the staff have created and formed the equal opportunities policy. It is based on their observations of the nursery, the results from the annual review and the staff's own reflections. The parents/guardians are informed of the plan and its content on a yearly basis. Parents get an opportunity to participate in developing the plan through the parent questionnaires that are sent out twice a year, the parent conferences and the parent breakfasts. The equal treatment plan has been created and developed with support from "Förebygga diskriminering och kränkande behandling i förskolan" (DO, BEO, Skolinspektionen, 2009).

Follow-up and evaluation

In connection with the systematic quality control, the equal treatment plan is also evaluated. Changes to formulations are made directly in the document. Targets for the nursery, its progress as well as concrete actions that are to be taken are described in the The English Nursery's annual review. The equal opportunities policy is revised annually.