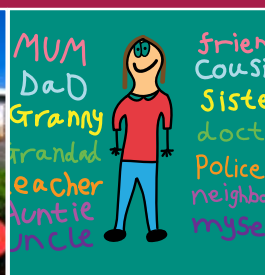




2011

Inclusion & Equality Policy Statement



Inclusion and Equality

Part A – Rationale

Being inclusive means taking action to build a fair and equal society.

This policy statement takes forward Education & Children's Services (ECS) vision of inclusion and equality which is inherent in all policies, procedures and practices and which promotes the values of:

- ❑ *openness, honesty and integrity;*
- ❑ *fairness, understanding and compassion;*
- ❑ *mutual trust, tolerance and respect.*

Everyone has a responsibility to promote equality and implement inclusive practices, and to ensure that all legislative duties are fully implemented.

Being inclusive means thinking and planning to take account of the circumstances of individuals, groups and communities in relation to the opportunities in which they should expect to participate. This applies to the universal services as well as specialised services and resources that may be targeted according to individual need.

ECS will ensure that opportunities are distributed in a fair manner and that services reflect the range and diversity of needs of individuals, groups and communities so that they can be accessed by all in order to achieve their potential.

Barriers to participation will be removed and this will involve improvements to the physical environment, enhanced opportunities for learning throughout the life span, and more effective communication between Services and service users.

Communications need to be clear and in a form people can access. Information and knowledge provide opportunities for participation. The full range of media as well as range of languages require to become an inherent part of the work of Services. Partnership working and integrated service delivery are the means to making these a reality. It is our responsibility to ensure that individuals, groups and communities are not excluded and marginalised from opportunities. We seek to find ways of making participation possible for marginalised individuals, groups and communities. This would include Looked After Children (LAC), young carers, gypsy travellers, people with a range of identified learning, cultural, social and mental health needs.

Part B – Policy Principles

The Key Principles upon which this policy statement is based are as follows:

- ❑ *Countering conscious and unconscious discrimination that may prevent individuals or groups from thriving.*
- ❑ *Actively promoting understanding and an appreciation of the diversity of individuals and groups within society.*

- ❑ *Intervening at crucial stages and times to ensure that barriers which prevent inclusion are lessened or removed.*
- ❑ *Creating an ethos of achievement for all within a climate of high expectations.*
- ❑ *Valuing a broad range of talents, abilities and skills.*
- ❑ *Promoting success, resilience and self-esteem by taking action to remove barriers to participation and achievement.*

Part C – Policy Outcomes

The main outcomes arising from this policy statement are as follows:

Inclusion

- ❑ *Universal services and targeted measures are in place to enable children, young people and adults to become successful, responsible and confident citizens.*
- ❑ *Children, young people and adults have access to appropriate lifelong learning opportunities.*
- ❑ *Participation and achievement are valued, recognised and celebrated.*

Equality of opportunity enables service users, employees and other members of the community to:

- ❑ *be involved in consultation and planning for individuals, groups and communities;*
- ❑ *inform and participate in service delivery to meet identified need;*
- ❑ *promote positive actions for developing good relations between individuals and groups;*
- ❑ *be valued for the contribution everyone can make to the communities within Perth and Kinross.*

Accessibility

Employees, service users and other members of the community are able to access:

- ❑ *facilities and buildings;*
- ❑ *information for a range of purposes;*
- ❑ *services and learning opportunities;*
- ❑ *planning and improvement processes.*

Part D – Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of individuals and groups at all levels of the Service to ensure that this policy is implemented effectively.

Employees will:

- have an understanding of their legal duties and related policy guidance on Equalities and Inclusion;*
- promote equality of opportunity and good relations between individuals and groups;*
- participate in a dynamic process of planning, reflection, monitoring and evaluation to meet the diverse range of needs;*
- participate in integrated service delivery and partnership working.*

Leaders and Managers will:

- lead a dynamic process of planning, reflection, monitoring and evaluation;*
- optimise resources through priority based planning;*
- gather and analyse data to ensure effective responses are taken in support of inclusion and equality of opportunity;*
- monitor service provision - at a range of levels - planning, employment, consultation, providing information, incident reporting;*
- ensure appropriate employee development and training;*
- actively promoting integrated service delivery and partnerships;*
- implement appropriate policy guidance and legal duties;*
- promote equality of opportunity and good relations between individuals and groups.*