



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

This policy was reviewed on:	2 nd November 2021
Date to be reviewed:	2 nd November 2023
Signature of person responsible:	M. Wittenberg
Name of signatory:	Michelle Wittenberg
Role of signatory:	Manager



POLICY STATEMENT

This equal opportunities policy covers both equal opportunities in employment and service delivery KEF KIDS aims to treat customers, staff and applicants for jobs fairly and equitably.

The policy complies with the Organisation's legal duties under the Equalities Act 2010, Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and with the provisions of the CRE Code of Practice.

KEF KIDS exists to redress inequalities and extend opportunities to children with challenging difficulties, both physical and educational. We recognize that because of significant cultural differences and religious requirements, these children do not enjoy equal access to services. The purpose of our organisation is to provide the same opportunities that other children in similar circumstances with no disabilities are able to enjoy.

We strive to provide the very highest quality of care and provision. We recognise that at times our provision may exceed that which is available to children and families, and we are attempting to address this need. Whilst our services will always be designed to be culturally appropriate and meet the needs of Orthodox Jewish users, KEF KIDS will open its doors to all children regardless of their background, religion or ethnic group. There is an open invitation for all cultures and beliefs to attend.

Our understanding of equal opportunities encompasses:

- Service provision
- Employment of staff
- Recruitment of management committee members
- Recruitment of volunteers

ACCESS TO SERVICES

Services are designed to meet the unique religious and cultural needs of our service users. Beyond this, we do not attempt to access individual need for services but allocate places on a first come first served basis. We strive to provide enough places to meet demand, and to open additional groups/places as need emerges. The policy of first come - first served is reviewed every six months to ensure that we are reaching people with the greatest need, and no opportunity is denied to any group to be excluded from what we can offer.

If additional places are available for any service, they are available to any child with disability, regardless of race, religion or background or any child, regardless of whether they have disabilities or not.

The Orthodox Jewish community is not homogenous but includes a wide range of backgrounds, beliefs, nationality and cultural practices. We will not discriminate barriers against any child who needs the service because his culture or religion creates barriers to mainstream services. We will try to reach all parts of the community.

Children have varying levels of disability, including physical and learning disabilities, ranging from mild to severe as long as a service is not inappropriate for



a particular child (e.g. would compromise their health), it is our policy not to turn away a child because they require a particularly high level of support. Support is arranged for children and young persons with a variety of educational, physical and social needs.

KEF KIDS has historically served children in the age group of 4-18 years. We are open to young persons beyond this age group if the service is appropriate for them. If appropriate, we will try to accommodate older children and young adults by creating roles of responsibility for them if this is deemed appropriate and does not compromise the welfare or safety of other participants. We are aware of a demand for group-based services for older children. In principle we are committed to providing services to children and young persons who need them.

ACCESS TO CHILDREN

KEF KIDS serves children from all areas. If funding is granted for geographically restricted work, we will endeavor to accommodate all children in need of the service by accessing equal funding from other sources, which is not geographically restrictive.

PUBLICISING THE SERVICE

KEF KIDS will strive to ensure that information about services is available to anyone who needs to use them. To this end we will work with

- Parents/carer networks
- Community nurseries and schools
- Other providers of services for children with special needs
- Community press
- Ministers of religion

EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

KEF KIDS aims to be an Equal Opportunities employer. The aim of this Equal Opportunities Policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favorable treatment on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, sex, marital status or disability or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. KEF KIDS will maintain records of the ethnic origin and gender of all staff and job applicants and is committed to regularly review these to ensure that the staff team is representative of all sections of the community it serves.

EQUAL PAY

KEF KIDS supports the principle of providing equal opportunities for all staff employed in its service. We are committed to ensuring that all staff are treated equitably regardless of their age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including staff who have undergone gender re-assignment), marital or parental status, religion or political belief, and that staff receive equal pay for the same or broadly similar work, for work rated as equivalent and for work of equal value.

Equal pay is an aspect of sex discrimination law and has been in force for over thirty years. It gives the right for men and women to be paid the same for the same, or equivalent, work.



KEF KIDS recognises that it is good practice that pay is awarded fairly and equitably and that this is in direct support of the organisation's Equal Opportunities Policy.

KEF KIDS will:

- implement an Equal Pay review in line with Equal Opportunities Commission guidance for all current staff,
- examine existing and future pay practices for all staff to ensure that they comply with best equal pay practice,
- inform staff of how these practices work and how their pay is arrived at,
- continue to utilise job evaluation initiatives and benchmarking, and to develop such initiatives throughout the organisation for all staff, where appropriate,
- provide training and guidance for managers and staff directly involved in making decisions about pay and benefits
- Listen carefully to any staff who feel that they are being discriminated against and take into full account and immediately investigate any complaints that they may have and attempt to answer promptly any queries that staff may have.

Pay differentials will only be permitted when they are based on seniority, merit, quantity or quality of production, or a factor other than sex. In correcting a pay differential, no employee's pay will be reduced. Instead, the pay of the lower paid employee(s) will be increased.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

A written job description and a written person specification shall be prepared in respect of every vacancy that arises and every new post that is created. These shall be agreed with due regard to the statement of policy above, before the recruitment procedures commence.

Short listing and interview panels shall, whenever possible, include representatives of the Management Committee who may chair to the panel, or an independent individual invited to take this role with the agreement of the Management Committee. Every appointment panel shall be suitably representative of the various sections of our community. Whenever desirable or appropriate, an external professional should be invited to join the panel. All vacancies and new posts should be externally advertised as widely as possible. At both the short listing and the appointment stage, brief notes shall be made on each application indicating clearly why the applicant has or has not been short listed or appointed.

TRAINING

New staff should be made aware of training opportunities and encouraged to take them up. Training opportunities are available to all staff to inform them of current legislation, professional procedures and to offer general advice.

GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The disciplinary and grievance procedures are operated in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission for Racial Equality and Equal Opportunities Commission, and current regulations by HM Government.



INTOLERANCE

Discriminatory behavior is not acceptable and will be immediately dealt with. Staff, volunteers, and the Management Committee will not tolerate abusive, offensive or discriminatory behavior and will use the complaints procedure to deal with it. We expect all our Committee members and volunteers to challenge discriminatory behavior and attitudes and to report any concerns immediately to Management and record such concerns in writing.

RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

As an organisation using the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, KEF KIDS complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

KEF KIDS is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/emotional disability or offending background.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records with the exception of applicants who have already signed or been requested to sign the Sex Offenders Register. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience, and abilities.

A disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

Where a disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details if they have a criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person with KEF KIDS, and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process, and kept secure and safe. This record will be deleted after the selection process if the employment does not take place.

Unless the nature of the position allows KEF KIDS asking questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about unspent convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. We make every subject of a DBS Disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and circumstances and background of your offences, and the security of the participants of our schemes.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

All staff will be inducted into the contents of this Policy.