

Equality & Diversity Policy & Procedure

See also Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy (CC3.2)

The EYFS seeks to provide: Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported (EYFS 2021)

It is the company's aim to ensure that all children and adults feel valued, respected and free from discrimination. We celebrate and embrace the individual; respecting differences, valuing diversity and taking account of relevant factors, with respect, to meet the needs of all children and adults.

We acknowledge the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act of 2010 and will always adhere to them. (See annex 1)

We achieve this by:

- Valuing each child and adult and recognise their differences so that they feel supported and respected for their own abilities, needs and background.
- Providing an environment for children and adults where equality and diversity is embedded and celebrated in an unprejudiced manner throughout the setting.
- Ensuring every child has equal access to the full range of educational and care aspects offered at the setting and is not at a disadvantage.
- Employing staff who receive training and support to ensure their understanding of equality and diversity is reflected in their positive practice in line with current government legislation.
- Practitioners being positive role models who, without exception, treat all adults and children with equal respect.
- Ensuring a zero-tolerance approach with regards to discrimination within the setting, and we acting quickly to address any matters that are raised by children, staff, parents or visitors.

The following will be implemented/adhered to ensure equal opportunities:

Resources

- Resources and the use of them, can be used/adapted to meet the needs of all children within the setting and are relevant to the child's learning
- Staff endeavour to be 'positive role models' and reflect positive/inclusive attitudes through displays, toys/resources, imaginative/role play and books
- When sourcing/ordering new resources the needs of all children will be taken into account. On occasion it may be necessary to purchase/source specific resources to meet individual needs and all reasonable effort will be undertaken to ensure this. Where relevant, additional funding will be sought to help finance this.

Meeting the Needs of the Children

- We welcome children and families from all backgrounds and cultures and will never discriminate against a child or their family. We do not discriminate against children with a disability or refuse them entry to the setting as long as we have the facilities to meet their needs and would make reasonable adjustments for the individual.
- The company has a Key Person Policy & Key Person Procedure that ensures children are settled into their new environment sensitively and that their individual needs are met
- 'All About Me' fact sheets are completed with parents for each new child, to support practitioners in best meeting their individual needs
- All practitioners regularly observe the children to monitor their development and to recognise any areas that they need extra support in. Procedures are in place to ensure these needs continue to be met and gaps in learning close e.g.; Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy, Self-Regulation Policy, EAL Policy etc
- Making connections between the child's experiences at home, in the community and the setting
- We listen to children and value their voice, encouraging them to talk about their experiences.
- Cultural Capital plays an important role when identifying individual needs and/or differences, and establishing the correct approach for each child
- Staff provide opportunities for parents to talk about the needs and development of their child through daily feed-back, online journals, parents evening and SEND Meetings.
- Staff liaise with outside agencies and professionals to help support the individual children and form a Team Around the Child where necessary
- Support children who have English as an additional language.

The curriculum

The curriculum and learning opportunities for children encourage them to have a strong sense of themselves as an individual and to have positive attitudes to people who are different from themselves.

This includes:

- Promoting self-esteem
- Encouraging self-regulation
- Ensuring equal access to learning
- Individualised provision within the curriculum to meet the needs, skills, abilities and interests of all children
- Avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images or equipment when selecting resources
- When planning activities including those in relation to festivals and celebrations, practitioners will take into account the ethnicity, nationality, religion, beliefs and familial circumstances of the children and their families, and ensure that learning remains relevant and contextual, to all children and reinforce the celebrations of the children in the setting.

Environment and Organisation

- Creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance
- Open communication is encouraged at all times between parents, staff and children
- The environment is welcoming, secure and stimulating, encouraging the child to explore and extend their learning.
- Reasonable adjustments to the environment will be made to meet the needs of individual children and staff
- Quiet areas/sensory areas are provided at the setting
- Staff areas are provided for practitioners.
- Dietary requirements, allergies, disabilities and religious beliefs of all children and staff are respected in all areas of the setting

Staffing and Recruitment

The Company aims to ensure that individuals are recruited, selected, trained and promoted on the basis of a fair process and with occupational skill criteria. In this respect, the Company will ensure that the 9 protected characteristics are adhered to during the recruitment process, which cannot be justified as being necessary for the safe and effective performance of the work or training for the work. Applicants are offered the relevant post when they have met the criteria and been through the selection process, subject to satisfactory references and Disclosure and Barring Service checks, in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and may disregard the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

The Company has a Flexible Working Policy in order to ensure that we are able to employ individuals with diverse needs. This comprehensive document outlines the various working practices that are available to new or existing employees.

All staff are expected to adhere to the implementation, practice and improvement of the requirements attributed to the Equality and Diversity Policy, as specified in all job descriptions. All staff are expected to challenge language, actions, behaviours and attitudes which are or can be interpreted as discriminatory; and never present or promote stereotypes.

The company further supports employees through:

- Seeking and providing training for all staff to develop their professional practices.
- Acknowledging that individual training needs and expertise are recognised through regular staff meetings, supervisions, appraisals and informal/formal discussions
- In-house and external training being offered to all staff to enhance their development

- Undertaking a thorough induction for all new employees, and ensuring they are issued with a 'Staff Handbook'
- Providing information and support to fully understand the backgrounds of others.

1. Legal Duties

We accept our obligations to fulfil the statutory requirements laid down by the following:

- The Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations Act 2000)
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 & 1986
- The Equal Pay Act 1970 (repealed 2010 by Equality Act)
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 & 2005
- The Special Educational Needs & Disability Act 2001
- The Children Act 2004
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exemption clause)
- The Employment Act 2002 & 2008
- The Employment Equality Regulations 2003 & 2006
- Childcare Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- Bribery Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

This legislative list is not exhaustive.

Annex 1

9 protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed annually.

Review date – August 2023