

Equal Opportunities Policies

Updated 19-Jun-20



Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement:

Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Providers must follow their legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

Equal Opportunities

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care, including support for children with special educational needs or disabilities.

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5.1 Valuing diversity and promoting equality

Policy statement

We are committed to ensuring that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children.

We recognise that children and their families come from a wide range of backgrounds with individual needs, beliefs and values. They may grow up in family structures that include one or two parents of the same or different sex. Children may have close links or live with extended families of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins; while other children may be more removed from close kin, or may live with other relatives or foster carers. Some children come from families who experience social exclusion, severe hardship; discrimination and prejudice because of their ethnicity, disability and/or ability, the languages they speak, their religious or personal beliefs, their sexual orientation and marital status. Some individuals face discrimination linked to their gender and some women are discriminated against because of their pregnancy and maternity status. We understand that all these factors can affect the well-being of children within these families and may adversely impact on children's learning, attainment and life outcomes.

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families using our setting. We aim to:

- promote equality and value diversity within our service and foster good relations with the local community;
- actively include all families and value the positive contribution they make to our service;
- promote a positive non-stereotyping environment that promotes dignity, respect and understanding of difference in all forms;
- provide a secure and accessible environment in which every child feels safe and equally included;
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues relating to anti-discriminatory practice,
- challenge and eliminate discriminatory actions on the basis of a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act (2010) namely:
 - age;
 - gender;
 - gender reassignment;
 - marital status;
 - pregnancy and maternity;
 - race;
 - disability;
 - sexual orientation; and
 - religion or belief.
- where possible, take positive action to benefit groups or individuals with protected characteristics who are disadvantaged, have a disproportional representation within the service or need different things from the service.

Procedures

Admissions

Our setting is open and accessible to all members of the community.

- We base our Admissions Policy on a fair system.

- We do not discriminate against a child or their family in our service provision, including preventing their entry to our setting based on a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act (2010).
- We advertise our service widely.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form and provide information in other languages where ever possible.
- We reflect the diversity of our community and wider society in our publicity and promotional materials.
- We provide information on our offer of provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality Policy.
- We make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled children can participate successfully in the services and in the curriculum offered by the setting.
- We ensure, wherever possible, that we have a balanced intake of boys and girls in the setting.
- We take action against any discriminatory, harassing or victimising behaviour by our staff, volunteers or parents whether by:
 - direct discrimination – someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic e.g. preventing families of a specific ethnic group from using the service;
 - indirect discrimination – someone is affected unfavourably by a general policy e.g. children must only speak English in the setting;
 - discrimination arising from a disability – someone is treated less favourably because of something connected with their disability e.g. a child with a visual impairment is excluded from an activity;
 - association – discriminating against someone who is associated with a person with a protected characteristic e.g. behaving unfavourably to someone who is married to a person from a different cultural background; or
 - perception – discrimination on the basis that it is thought someone has a protected characteristic e.g. making assumptions about someone's sexual orientation.
- Displaying of openly discriminatory and possibly offensive or threatening materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on, or around, our premises and will be dealt with immediately and discreetly by asking the adult to stop using the unacceptable behaviour and inviting them to read and to act in accordance with the relevant policy statement and procedure. Failure to comply may lead to the adult being excluded from the premises.

Employment

- We advertise posts and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
- Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all.
- We may use the exemption clauses in relevant legislation to enable the service to best meet the needs of the community.
- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and suitability checks. This ensures fairness in the selection process.
- All our job descriptions include a commitment to promoting equality, and recognising and respecting 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 our staff and volunteers to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices.
- We ensure that our staff are confident and fully trained in administering relevant medicines and performing invasive care procedures on children when these are required.
- We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality.

Curriculum

The curriculum offered in our setting encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as about people who are different from themselves. It encourages development of confidence and self esteem, empathy, critical thinking and reflection.

We ensure that our practice is fully inclusive by:

- creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
- modelling desirable behaviour to children and helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable;
- positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities within resources;
- avoiding use of stereotypes or derogatory images within our books or any other visual materials;
- celebrating locally observed festivals and holy days;
- ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning;

- ensuring that disabled children with and without special educational needs are fully supported;
- ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages

We will ensure that our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. We do this by:

- undertaking an annual access audit to establish if the setting is accessible to all disabled children and adults. If access to the setting is found to treat disabled children or adults less favourably, then we make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled children and adults.
- fully differentiating the environment, resources and curriculum to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory needs.

Valuing diversity in families

- We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families.
- We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life to the setting.
- We encourage mothers, fathers and other carers to take part in the life of the setting and to contribute fully.
- For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to encourage their full inclusion.
- We offer a flexible payment system for families experiencing financial difficulties and offer information regarding sources of financial support.
- We take positive action to encourage disadvantaged and under-represented groups to use the setting.

Food

- We work in partnership with parents to ensure that dietary requirements of children that arise from their medical, religious or cultural needs are met where ever possible.
- We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them.

Meetings

- Meetings are arranged to ensure that all families who wish to may be involved in the running of the setting.
- We positively encourage both parents to be involved in the setting, especially those parents who do not live with the child.
- Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways - written, verbal and where resources allow in translation - to ensure that all mothers and fathers have information about, and access to, the meetings.

Monitoring and reviewing

- So that our policies and procedures remain effective, we monitor and review them annually to ensure our strategies meet our overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and to value diversity.
- We provide a complaints procedure and a complaints summary record for parents to see.

Public Sector Equality Duty

- We have regard to the Duty to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Legal framework

The Equality Act (2010)

Children Act (1989) & (2004)

Children and Families Act (2014)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2014)

5.2 Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Policy statement

- We provide an environment in which all children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are supported to reach their full potential.
- We have in place a clear approach for identifying, responding to, and meeting children's individual needs.
- We support and involve parents (and where relevant children), in all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's special education including all decision-making processes
- actively listening to and acting on their wishes and concerns.
- We work in partnership with the local authority and other external agencies to ensure the best outcomes for children with SEND and their families.

- We regularly monitor and review our policy, practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.

Procedures

Planning to support children with additional needs;

- We designate a member of staff to be the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and publish her name to parents. Our SENCO is: Sarah Campbell
- The SENCO works closely with our other colleagues and has responsibility for the day-to-day operation of this policy and for co-ordinating provision for children with SEN.
- We ensure that the provision for children with SEN is the responsibility of all members of the setting.
- We ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity.
- We complete an access audit, at least annually, as part of our risk assessments to ensure our setting is fully accessible.
 - We have a level surface entrance and garden.
 - We have a removable slope which can be put out to provide access to the rest of the setting.
 - Disabled toilet facilities are available.
- We provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum for all children. We work in a mixed age group, with self-selected activities available to all children, to match their interests and development level rather than their age.
- We use in the moment planning, assessing, planning and teaching in the moment, with skilled practitioners following children's interests to ensure that they make good progress.
- We, where appropriate, consider children's views and wishes in decisions being made about them, relevant to their level understanding.
- We provide parents with information on local sources of support and advice e.g. Local Offer, Information, Advice and Support Service.
- We liaise and work with other external agencies to help improve outcomes for children with SEN.
- We have systems in place for referring children for further assessment e.g. Common Assessment Framework/Early Help Assessment and Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment.
- We ensure that all our staff are aware of this policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for children with SEND.
- We provide in-service training for parents, practitioners and volunteers.
- We ensure the effectiveness of our special educational needs provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. action plan reviews, staff and management meetings, parental and external agency's views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually.
- We provide a complaints procedure.
- We monitor and review our policy annually.
- We provide resources (human and financial) to implement our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs Policy.
- We provide training to all our staff to include the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014) 'Positive Behaviour Management', basic Makaton, PECs and other visual aids.
- All our staff have the opportunity to access further training such as, but not limited to, Portage and iCan certified training 'Supporting Behaviour', 'Visual Support and Small Group Work' and 'Understanding Autism'
- We have a fully trained and very experienced SENCO and deputy.

Practically supporting children with additional needs;

Before your child starts with us, we will:

- Invite you and your child to visit us at a convenient time, to meet the staff and see our setting.
- Ask for information about your child before they start, to support us in settling them and planning suitable activities for them. We also agree with you the individual approach to settling that you feel will suit your child best.
- Contact any professionals involved with your child (if appropriate & with your permission) to gather further information, carry out a risk assessment, and ensure all relevant training is completed before your child starts with us.
- Offer you a home visit and settling sessions shortly before your child starts with your child's key person and the SENCO to aid familiarisation and support.
- Develop an Individual Education Plan or Care Plan with you if this is appropriate for your child.
- Give you information about how we plan, involve you and feedback about your child's learning and development.
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While your child is with us we will:

- Observe and assess your child continuously, against the stages of development from the 'Development Matters' document within the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage),
- Provide you with updates on your child's progress, verbally, through observations on Tapestry and in regular progress checks.
- Discuss with you promptly the need for additional support if identified, explaining how children's individual needs can be met by planning support using a written Individual Education Plan or a Health Care Plan. This may include additional professional support from external agencies.
- Develop your child's Individual Education Plan or Care Plan with you (if this is appropriate for your child).
- Agree with you how best we can communicate between preschool and home and develop this system.
- Communicate with you at the start and end of every session and always be available during the session to discuss what has happened during the session and your child's wellbeing, needs and development.
- Ensure you can access Tapestry (our online learning journal) that you will be able to log in to, so you will get regular updates about your child's learning and development.
- Regularly review your child's IEP or CP, with you to update and adapt it, providing progress updates for your child, including plans for the next term and ideas of how you can support your child's learning at home.
- Include other professional's opinions, suggestions and feedback in your child's learning and development plans.
- Regularly liaise with local specialist services and professionals including Speech and language therapists, local nursing teams, portage support workers and Local Authority Special Educational Needs Inclusion team.
- Strive to access additional funding whenever possible, to help support your child whether through a higher staff ratio or 1-2-1 support or providing specialist equipment if appropriate e.g. visual timetables, PECs or other visual aids.
- Invite you to be involved in some of our sessions as a volunteer, making this as flexible as possible to enable you to join your child at pre-school if you wish to.

If you identify that your child may have a specific need, you are welcome to speak confidentially to your child's key person, Sarah (Manager and SENCO) or Rosie (Deputy) who are all usually available at the beginning and end of our sessions or will be happy to make time for you during a session by arrangement.

When your child leaves us to move on to school (or another setting), we will:

- Before your child moves on to school, we will plan with you how best to support their transition, this may include;
 - Continuing our daily routine, which matches the broad routine of a school day.
 - introducing stories about moving on to school
 - introducing school uniform into our continuous provision
 - introducing activities to the children to help prepare them for this move.
- We complete transition reports, attend transition meetings and invite Reception teachers to visit us in order to support your child when they begin at their new school.

Further guidance

- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (DfE 2014)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2015)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DfE & DoH 2014)
- **Bromley Local Offer:** a source of information and advice to help support children and young people with disabilities or learning needs and their families <https://bromley.mylifeportal.co.uk/localoffer/>

9.3 British values

Policy statement

We actively promote inclusion, equality of opportunity, the valuing of diversity and British values.

Under the Equality Act 2010, which underpins standards of behaviour and incorporates both British and universal values, we have a legal obligation not to directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise those with protected characteristics. We make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not at a substantial disadvantage. As we are in receipt of public funding we also have a public sector equality duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations and publish information to show compliance with the duty.

Social and emotional development is shaped by early experiences and relationships and incorporates elements of equality and British and universal values. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) supports children's earliest

skills so that they can become social citizens in an age-appropriate way, that is, so that they are able to listen and attend to instructions; know the difference between right and wrong; recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others; make and maintain friendships; develop empathy and consideration of other people; take turns in play and conversation; avoid risk and take notice of rules and boundaries; learn not to hurt/upset other people with words and actions; understand the consequences of hurtful/discriminatory behaviour.

Procedures

British Values

The fundamental British values of *democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs* are already implicitly embedded in the 2014 EYFS and are further clarified below, based on the *Fundamental British Values in the Early Years* guidance (Foundation Years 2015):

- *Democracy*, or making decisions together (through the prime area of Personal, Social and Emotional Development)
 - As part of the focus on self-confidence and self-awareness, practitioners encourage children to see their role in the bigger picture, encouraging them to know that their views count, to value each other's views and values, and talk about their feelings, for example, recognising when they do or do not need help.
 - Practitioners support the decisions that children make and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration. Children are given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.
- *Rule of law*, or understanding that rules matter (through the prime area of Personal, Social and Emotional Development)
 - Practitioners ensure that children understand their own and others' behaviour and its consequence.
 - Practitioners collaborate with children to create rules and the codes of behaviour, for example, the rules about tidying up, and ensure that all children understand rules apply to everyone.
- *Individual liberty*, or freedom for all (through the prime areas of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Understanding the World)
 - Children should develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, for example through allowing children to take risks on an obstacle course, mixing colours, talking about their experiences and learning.
 - Practitioners encourage a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand we are free to have different opinions, for example discussing in a small group what they feel about transferring into Reception Class.
- *Mutual respect and tolerance*, or treating others as you want to be treated (through the prime areas of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Understanding the World)
 - Practitioners create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures and races are valued and children are engaged with the wider community.
 - Children should acquire tolerance, appreciation and respect for their own and other cultures; know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions.
 - Practitioners encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours, such as sharing and respecting other's opinions.
 - Practitioners promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example, sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural or racial stereotyping.
- *In our setting it is not acceptable to:*
 - actively promote intolerance of other faiths, cultures and races
 - fail to challenge gender stereotypes and routinely segregate girls and boys
 - isolate children from their wider community
 - fail to challenge behaviours (whether of staff, children or parents) that are not in line with the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

Prevent Strategy

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we also have a duty "to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"

Legal framework

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Further guidance

Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty – What Do I Need to Know? A Quick Start Guide for Public Sector Organisations (Government Equalities Office 2011)
Fundamental British Values in the Early Years (Foundation Years 2015)
Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (HMG 2015)
The Prevent Duty: Departmental Advice for Schools and Childcare Providers (DfE 2015)