

# Equality and Inclusion



At Grass Roots Day Nursery we are committed to providing positive and loving learning environment, free from prejudice, discrimination and fear, in which all children and their families feel accepted, respected, valued, nurtured and all our children can flourish and everyone's contributions are valued.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure equality of access and opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and adults with whom they have contact on a day-to-day basis. This includes the staff in the nursery, the children and families attending, volunteers and students. We ensure that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children, particularly those defined in The Equality Act 2010 - age, disability, sex or gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race or ethnic background, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, social and economic background.

A commitment to implementing our inclusion and equality policy will form part of each employee's job description. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the nursery manager at the earliest opportunity. The legal framework for this policy is based on:

- Equality Act 2010
- Children's Act 2004
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Childcare Act 2006
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

Equality of opportunity requires that everyone has an equal chance to develop themselves to their full potential and be safe and free from harm. The Early Years Foundation Stage states that "Children should be treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities", it includes,

- Equality of access for all
- Social Inclusion for all
- Life choices are widened, not restricted
- Talents are fostered, not suppressed
- No one experiences disadvantage or discrimination
- Stereotypes are challenged by staff
- All forms of bullying and harassment are condemned and challenged
- Individual and community needs are responded to in a sympathetic and imaginative manner
- Individuals and groups are allocated appropriate levels of support to ensure that their potential is fulfilled
- The principle of equity applies

We aim to provide consistent implementation of the policy which will therefore ensure that the nursery provides, for children, families, staff and volunteers, a non-discriminatory environment where individual differences are acknowledged and valued. The policy will identify for parents and the wider community the nurseries approach to equal opportunities, making clear that discrimination against individuals on the grounds of difference will not be tolerated and will be challenged in a constructive manner.

Staff must:

- Provide a secure and accessible environment in which all children can flourish and in which all contributions are considered and valued
- Include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity
- Provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people

- Improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity
- We make inclusion a thread, which runs through the entirety of the nursery, for example, by encouraging positive role models through the use of toys, imaginary play and activities, promoting non-stereotypical images and language and challenging all discriminatory behaviour.
- Celebrate a wide range of festivals
- Making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure that each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities; eg. recognising the different learning styles of girls and boys
- Nursery equipment and play materials will also be provided to extend the children's knowledge and development skills. The equipment will be used in such a way that will not stereotype according to gender, disability, social status, and will reflect the multicultural/multilingual community in a positive way.
- Encouraging children through play equipment and activities to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

To implement these:

- We are open to all members of the community and further afield
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system \*See Admissions Policy
- We ensure all of our parents are aware of our equal opportunities policy and all other relevant policies
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion or social background
- We do not discriminate against a disabled child or refuse a child entry to the nursery for reasons relating to disability
- We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents. Displaying of openly discriminatory and possibly offensive materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner
- We are striving to promote equal access to services and projects by taking practical steps, (wherever possible and reasonable) such as ensuring access for people with additional needs and by producing materials in relevant languages and media for all children and their families
- We are continually improving our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality, inclusion and diversity
- We regularly review, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive practices to ensure they promote and value diversity and difference and that the policy is effective and practices are non-discriminatory
- Recruiting, selecting, training and promoting individuals on the basis of occupational skills requirements.
- In this respect, the nursery will ensure that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, sex, gender reassignment, disability, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and pregnancy or maternity which cannot be justified as being necessary for the safe and effective performance of their work or training

### **Early Years framework**

The curriculum offered at Grass Roots Day Nursery encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as a well as to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

Early learning opportunities offered in the nursery to encourage children to develop positive attitudes towards people who are different from them. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking. We do this by:

- Making children feel valued and good about themselves
- Ensuring that all children have equal access to early play and learning opportunities
- Reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources

- Avoiding stereotypical or derogatory images in the selection of materials
- Acknowledging and celebrating a wide range of religions, beliefs and festivals
- Creating an environment of mutual respect and empathy
- Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable
- Ensuring that all early learning opportunities offered are inclusive of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Ensuring that children whose first language is not English have full access to the early learning opportunities and are supported in their learning.

Where applicable, an Individual Learning and Development Plan (ILDP) will also be completed for 3-5 year olds in partnership with the social worker and/or care manager and carers. We will also attend all appropriate meetings and contribute to reviews.

Transition to school will be handled sensitively with the key person and designated 'looked after' person, working together with the child to ensure that this is as smooth a transition as possible and all necessary information is shared. The child's individual file, including observations, photographs and pieces of artwork and mark making will be passed on to the carer at this stage.

## **Food**

- We work in partnership with parent/carer(s) to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met
- We will help children to learn about a range of food and cultural approaches to mealtimes and to respect the differences among them.

*See also Food and Drink Policy*

## **Dealing with discriminatory behaviour**

We have a duty to create and implement strategies in the pre-school to prevent and address all discriminatory behaviour. Such strategies include:

- The nursery records all incidents relating to discrimination on any grounds
- All recorded incidents are reported to the children's parent/carer(s), and when appropriate to the registering authority. Parent/carer(s) have a right to know if discrimination occurs and what actions the nursery will take to tackle it.

## **Types of discrimination**

- Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic
- Discrimination by association occurs when there is a direct discrimination against a person because they associate with a person who has a protected characteristic
- Discrimination by perception occurs when there is a direct discrimination against a person because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic
- Indirect discrimination can occur where a provision or criterion is in place which applies to everyone in the organisation but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic
- Harassment is defined as 'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual'
- Third party harassment is the harassment of employees by a third party not employed by the pre-school, e.g. visitors or parent/carer(s)
- Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly or put to detriment because they have made or supported a complaint or raised grievance under the Equality Act 2010 or have been suspected of doing so.

Incidents may involve a small or large number of people, they may vary in their degree of offence and may not even recognise the incident has discriminatory implications; or at the other extreme their behaviour may be quite deliberate and blatant.

Examples of discriminatory behaviour are:

- Physical assault against a person or group of people
- Derogatory name calling, insults and discriminatory jokes
- Graffiti and other written insults
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing badges and insignia and the distribution of discriminatory literature
- Threats against a person or group of people because of the nine protected characteristics listed above
- Discriminatory comments including ridicule made in the course of discussions
- Patronising words or actions.

Discriminatory behaviour or bullying needs to be recorded to ensure that:

- Strategies are developed to prevent future incidents
- Patterns of behaviour are identified
- Persistent offenders are identified
- Effectiveness of pre-school policies are monitored
- A secure information base is provided to enable the pre-school to respond to any discriminatory behaviour or bullying.

## Exclusion

There are however certain occasions when it may be necessary to ask a parent to not bring their child to nursery for a short period of time. These reasons include:

- If a child is ill (see the Sickness and illness policy for more detailed information)
- If a child has a highly infectious condition e.g. impetigo, Conjunctivitis, Hand, foot and mouth, Oral Thrush and chicken pox
- If the child has a notifiable disease
- If a child has had a bout of sickness or diarrhoea within the last 48 hours.
- If a child is on antibiotics that they haven't taken before (48hrs in case of an allergic reaction)

The management of the nursery reserves the right to terminate a contract with immediate effect and exclude a child permanently if they:

- Continually demonstrates aggressive behaviour to the other children in the setting
- Continually uses inappropriate language (swearing)
- Continually makes inappropriate remarks, such as racist comments
- Is likely to cause harm to other children in the setting
- Is found to be stealing from staff or the setting

Nursery staff will already have discussed their concerns with you and work with you over a period of time to address your child's behaviour. Nursery staff would have used a variety of different strategies and with parental permission sought support from outside agencies.

Exclusion of a child would only occur if their behaviour was very severe and having a continued negative impact on the other children in the nursery.

## Looked after children

Grass Roots Private Day nursery is committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive quality environment for all children and families. The description 'looked after' is generally used to describe a child who is looked after by the Local Authority. This includes children who are subject to a care order or temporarily classed as looked after on a planned basis for short breaks or respite care.

Most looked after children will be cared for by foster carers with a very small minority in children's homes, looked after by family members or even placed back within the family home. The legal framework for this policy is underpinned by or supported through:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Children Act (1989 & 2004)
- Adoption & Children Act (2002)
- Children & Young Person Act (2002)

The term 'Looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; but this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others or referred to using acronyms such as LAC.

For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled appropriately with their carer. At Grass Roots Private Day Nursery we treat each child as an individual. Discussions will take place regarding the length of time the child has been with their carer before they start nursery to distinguish if they have secured a relationship and are ready to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them. We are aware that there are a number of reasons why a child may go in to care and these reasons may or may not include traumatic experiences or abuse. All practitioners are committed to doing all they can to support all children to achieve their full potential. The nursery staff team are all trained to understand our safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures and additional training to support children's individual needs will be planned for where appropriate. Practitioners are supported by management at all times and we have an open door policy if they need to discuss any sensitive issues regarding the child.

The designated person for 'Looked after children' is **Lucy Pottinger**

### **Nursery Staff**

All staff at Grass Roots Day Nursery will ensure that the children are given relevant opportunities to appreciate and respect cultures other than their own. Children entering the nursery speaking English as an additional language or bilingual will receive relevant support with resources appropriate to their needs, such as books and play equipment, acquired and used.

Staff in the nursery recognise that different combinations of adults and children constitute a family and that parenting styles may vary between families. Staff will respect parents' different approaches and will be non-judgemental in their attitudes. Resources chosen and used in the nursery will offer non stereotypical images, reflective of various social backgrounds of the children attending the setting.

The nursery staff team are all trained to understand our safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures and additional training to support children's individual needs will be planned for where appropriate. Practitioners are supported by management at all times and we have an open door policy if they need to discuss any sensitive issues regarding the child.

All staff should be alert and seek to overcome any ignorant or offensive behaviour based on fear or dislike of distinctions that children, staff or parent/carer(s) may express in nursery. An atmosphere must be created where the victims of any form of discrimination have confidence to report such behaviour, and that subsequently they feel positively supported by the staff and management of the nursery. It is incumbent upon all members of staff to ensure that they do not express any views or comments that are discriminatory. Nor must staff appear to endorse such views by failing to counter behaviour, which is prejudicial in a direct manner. A sensitive and informed approach must be used to counter any harassment perpetrated out of ignorance.

It is the policy of the nursery not to discriminate in the treatment of individuals. All staff are expected to cooperate with the implementation, monitoring and improvement of this and other policies. All staff are expected to challenge language, actions, behaviours and attitudes which are oppressive or discriminatory on the grounds as specified in this policy and recognise and celebrate other cultures and traditions. All staff are expected to participate in equality and inclusion training.



## **Training**

The nursery recognises the importance of training as a key factor in the implementation of an effective inclusion and equality policy. The nursery will strive towards the provision of inclusion, equality and diversity training for all staff on a regular basis.

## **Recruitment**

All members of the selection panel will be committed to the inclusive practice set out in this policy and will have received appropriate training in this regard. Application forms will not include questions that potentially discriminate against the grounds specified in the statement of intent.

At interview, no questions will be posed which potentially discriminate against the grounds specified in the statement of intent. All candidates will be asked the same questions, and members of the selection group will not introduce nor use any personal knowledge of candidates acquired outside the selection process. Candidates will be given the opportunity to receive feedback on the reasons why they were not successful. All job descriptions include a commitment to valuing equality, inclusion and respecting diversity as part of their specifications. The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references, checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service and Health declaration clearance.

# Procedure

- All staff in the nursery should be constantly aware of and alert to any discriminatory behaviour or bullying taking place
- They must intervene firmly and quickly to prevent any discriminatory behaviour or bullying, this may include behaviour from parent/carer(s). Any allegation should be taken seriously and reported to the nursery manager
- Each incident should be investigated and recorded in detail as accurately as possible. This record should be available for inspection by staff, inspectors and parent/carer(s) where appropriate, on request
- The nursery manager is responsible for ensuring that incidents are handled appropriately and sensitively and entered in the record book. Any pattern of behaviour should be indicated. Perpetrator/victim's initials may be used in the record book as information on individuals is confidential to the nursery
- Where an allegation is substantiated following an investigation, the parent/carer(s) of the child(ren) who are perpetrators and/or victims should be informed of the incident and of the outcome
- Continued discriminatory behaviour or bullying may lead to exclusion but such steps should only be taken when other strategies have failed to modify behaviour
- Adults found to be perpetrators must be reported immediately to the manager and where such adults are employees and such allegations are substantiated after investigation, appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken which can include dismissal.