Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

We are an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no person receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.

The terms equality, inclusion, diversity and equity are at the heart of this policy. **'Equality'** means ensuring everyone has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential free from discrimination. **'Inclusion'** means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves at work and feels the worth of their contribution. **'Diversity'** means the celebration of individual differences amongst the workforces. **'Equity'** means recognising barriers and that some groups are more advantaged than others, and putting measures in place to eliminate these barriers, ensuring equal opportunities for all. We will actively support diversity, equity and inclusion and ensure that our workforce is valued and treated with dignity and respect. We want to encourage everyone in our business to reach their potential.

We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. This policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and agency workers and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, career development, and promotion. These areas are monitored, and policies and practices are amended if necessary to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.

All employees must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities.

The Nursery Manager has particular responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality and Diversity policy and, as part of this process, all personnel policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.

All employees, workers or self-employed contractors whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment,

promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Preschools.

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in our Preschools, as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with manager and Trustees, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of everyone to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality and equity throughout our Preschools.

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal without notice.

If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure.

Our commitment as an employer

The Preschool is committed to:

- creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our staff are recognised and valued
- everyone is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated
- providing training, development and progression opportunities to all staff
- understanding equality and inclusion in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- reviewing all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness and inclusion for all
- taking steps to ensure equity amongst our workforce such as ensuring that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse range of potential candidates and, where relevant, to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented in our Preschool, taking positive action to recruit disabled people and ensuring there are no unlawful barriers to accessing our employment opportunities, training, progression opportunities, benefits and facilities
- diversity in our workforce will be regularly monitored to ensure equal opportunities throughout the Preschool. Where appropriate, measures will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary obstacles and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups
- monitoring and reviewing this policy annually.

Our commitment as a service provider

The Preschool is committed to:

- providing services to which all our children are entitled regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
- making sure our services are delivered equally and meet the diverse needs of our service users
- taking steps to ensure equity by removing any unlawful obstacles to accessing our services or facilities. Where appropriate, measures will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary barriers and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups
- monitoring and reviewing this policy annually
- having clear procedures that enable our service users, candidates for jobs and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated.

Equal opportunity policy statements

Age

We will:

- ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that people are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities and
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

Disability

We will:

- provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities. If we feel that a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will discuss this with you and try to find an alternative solution where possible
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people and
- seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting and sign language interpretation
- If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate

- We will keep the physical features of our premises under review to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.

Race
We will:

- challenge racism wherever it occurs
- respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents and
- actively promote race equality and inclusion in the Preschool
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same.

Gender
We will:

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about gender
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same and
- provide support to prevent discrimination against transgender people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.

Sexual orientation
We will:

- ensure that we take account of the needs of everyone, including the LGBTQ+ communities
- promote positive images of the LGBTQ+ communities
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the LGBTQ+ communities
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone and
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same.

Religion or belief
We will:

- ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible and
- respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

Pregnancy or maternity
We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity during pregnancy or maternity leave
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about pregnancy or maternity and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged during pregnancy or maternity leave and that we take account of the needs of our employees' during pregnancy or maternity leave.

Marriage or civil partnership
We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity regardless of marriage or civil partnership status
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged as a result of their marriage or civil partnership status.

Part time and fixed term work
Part time and fixed term staff should be treated the same as comparable full time or permanent staff and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

Equal pay
We will ensure that all employees have the right to similar contractual pay and benefits for carrying out work rated as equivalent work or work of equal value. We consider pay for staff based on their responsibilities and job role.