

General Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: 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.



Little 1 Nursery

9.1 Inclusion, equality and diversity

Policy statement

At Little 1 Nursery we take great care to treat each individual as a person in their own right, with equal rights and responsibilities to any other individual, whether they are an adult or a child. We are committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all staff, children and families according to their individual needs. Discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation has no place within our nursery.

At Little 1 Nursery we are committed to:

- Creating a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
- 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 because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- Providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities or are deemed disadvantaged according to their individual circumstances.
- Making reasonable adjustments for children with special educational needs and disabilities to remove barriers and improve access for all.
- Providing a secure environment in which all our families are listened to, children can flourish and all contributions are valued.
- Continually improving our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality, inclusion and diversity and training all staff about their rights and responsibilities under the inclusion and equality policy.
- Making 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.

Recruitment

Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoids discrimination. Shortlisting will be done by more than one person, where possible.

- Vacancies are generally advertised to a diverse section. Advertisements avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.

- At interviews, no questions are posed which potentially discriminate on the grounds specified in the statement of intent. All candidates are 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 are given the opportunity to receive feedback on the reasons why they were not successful.
- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and DBS check. This ensures fairness in the selection process.
- All job descriptions include a commitment to promoting equality and recognising and respecting diversity as part of their specifications.

Staff

It is our policy not to discriminate in the treatment of individuals. All staff are expected to co-operate with the implementation, monitoring and improvement of this and other policies. They are expected to challenge language, actions, behaviours and attitudes which are oppressive or discriminatory on the grounds 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. All new staff receive induction training including specific reference to the Inclusion and equality policy.

Early learning framework

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory requirements and ensure that all learning opportunities offered in the nursery encourage children to develop positive attitudes to people who are different from them. Our curriculum encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

We do this by:

- Identifying a key person to each child who will ensure that each child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and continuously observe, assess and plan for their learning and development.
- Listening to children's verbal and non-verbal communication and making children feel included, valued and good about themselves.
- Ensuring that we know what each child knows and "can do" and has equal access to tailored early learning and play 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.
- Supporting children to talk about their feelings and those of others, manage emotions and develop empathy.
- Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable.
- Knowing children well, being able to meet their needs and know when they require further support.
- Ensuring that all early learning opportunities offered are inclusive of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- Ensuring that children whose first language is not English have full access to our early learning opportunities and are supported in their learning.
- Working in partnership with all families to ensure they understand the policy and challenge any discriminatory comments made
- Ensuring the medical, cultural and dietary needs of all children are met and help children to learn about a range of food and cultural approaches to meal times and to respect the differences among them.
- We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents whether by:
 - direct discrimination – someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic e.g. preventing families of some racial groups from using the service;
 - indirect discrimination - someone is affected unfavourably by a general policy e.g. children must only speak English in the setting;
 - 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. assuming someone is gay because of their mannerism or how they speak.

Parent information and meetings

Information about the nursery, its activities, experiences and resources are shared with parents as well as information about their child's development. This is given in a variety of ways according to individual needs (written, verbal and translated), to ensure that all parents can access the information they need.

Wherever possible, meetings are arranged to give all families opportunities to attend and share information about their child.

The legal framework for this policy is based on:

- Special Education Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 2015
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Childcare Act 2006
- Children Act 2004
- Care Standards Act 2002
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.