EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY COHESION

At Little Holcombe and Tower View Nursery, we are committed to creating inclusive environments where every child, regardless of their background, identity, ability, or family structure, feels safe, respected, and valued. We believe that equality is not just a principle—it's how we practise every day.

Our Equality Commitment

We comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Early Years Foundation Stage 2026 (EYFS) statutory framework, which requires us to promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that all children have genuine access to learning and development opportunities.

We recognise that families in our community have diverse cultures, religions, languages, abilities, family structures, and identities. We are committed to:

- Treating every child and adult with equal rights, dignity, and respect
- Creating environments and curricula that reflect the diversity of the world children will grow up in
- Actively challenging discrimination in all its forms—including discrimination based on race, disability, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, and family structure
- Supporting children whose home language is not English to develop and use their home language in play and learning, whilst ensuring they have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English
- Ensuring that children with SEND have an equal right to access the full curriculum and all nursery experiences, with appropriate adjustments and support

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Discrimination, harassment, or victimisation based on these characteristics has no place in this nursery. We also recognise and respect the diverse family structures and backgrounds of all the children and families we serve.

How We Practise Equality

In our learning environment: We actively select and rotate resources, books, and displays that reflect positive images of people with different ethnicities, abilities, family structures, genders, and religions. We challenge stereotyping in play—for example, offering all children opportunities to explore a full range of roles and activities, regardless of gender. We audit our curriculum to ensure we are not unintentionally

teaching narrow or biased perspectives. Our activities help children to understand and celebrate different cultures, religions, and ways of life, with special attention to the cultures and religions represented in our local community.

In home language support: For children whose home language is not English, we take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for them to develop and use their home language in play and learning. We work with families to understand what language support would be most helpful, and we use visual supports, multilingual resources, dual-language books, and regular communication with parents about language development. We ensure that interpreters are available for important meetings and that key information is translated into families' home languages where needed.

In how we respond to concerns: If a child uses discriminatory language or behaviour, we respond promptly and calmly. We help the child understand why that language or behaviour is unkind or unfair, and we use it as an opportunity to teach about respect and equality. We record and monitor these incidents. If a parent or staff member raises a concern about equality or discriminatory practice, we take it seriously and investigate thoroughly. We do not tolerate discrimination from any member of our community.

In recruitment and staffing: Our recruitment and staffing practices are designed to ensure fair and equal treatment at all stages. We are committed to building a diverse team that reflects the communities we serve.

In admissions and booking: Our admissions process ensures we gather information about families' cultural, religious, dietary, and other needs, so that we can respect and accommodate those wishes from day one. We communicate our equality commitment clearly in all parent-facing materials.

Our inclusive estate: We are aware of and work in accordance with the Department for Education's Inclusive Estate document, which sets out expectations for creating physically and socially inclusive environments for all children. We have completed an audit of our physical environment, resources, and practices to ensure we are meeting our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and creating genuinely accessible spaces where children with disabilities and additional needs can participate fully alongside their peers. This audit is reviewed regularly, and we use the findings to plan improvements and investment in accessibility when and where reasonably possible.

We view accessibility as a design principle, not an afterthought. When we plan environments, activities, and routines, we consider access for all children from the start.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-education-estates

Being Inclusive - Going Above and Beyond

We believe that true inclusion means going beyond minimum compliance. We actively invest in creating nurseries where all children belong and thrive.

Proactive representation: We ensure that children see themselves and their families reflected in our spaces, resources, and storytelling. This isn't about occasional celebration—it's a continuous process. We regularly review and refresh our books, images, and materials to ensure they show diverse families, abilities, professions, and cultures in everyday, positive contexts. Children with disabilities are represented not as exceptions, but as ordinary members of the community.

Meaningful family partnerships: We go beyond collecting information about families' cultures and backgrounds—we actively involve families in shaping our provision. We invite parents to share their languages, traditions, skills, and knowledge with the children. We celebrate festivals and significant days from the cultures represented in our nursery.

Language and communication: We actively support bilingualism and multilingualism. Staff learn key words and phrases from the languages spoken by the children in our care. We create visual communication systems that support all children, including those learning English as an additional language and those with communication needs. We understand that children's home language is valuable and worth maintaining.

Staff capability and culture: We invest in training and development so that all staff understand unconscious bias, inclusion, and how to support children with additional needs. We create a culture where challenging discrimination or raising concerns about inclusion is seen as part of good practice, not as criticism. We model inclusive language and behaviour in everything we do.

Proactive identification of need: We don't wait for parents or professionals to flag concerns. Our key people are trained to notice when a child might benefit from additional support—whether that's because they're developing differently, because they're quieter and might be overlooked, or because they're struggling emotionally. We act early.

Celebrating difference: We actively teach children that difference is normal and interesting. We read stories about children with disabilities, children in same-sex families, children from different religions and cultures, and children who don't fit gender stereotypes. We talk openly and positively about difference. We help children develop empathy and curiosity about the world.

The Prevent Duty

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, we have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into extremism. We take a whole-setting approach to this, embedding British values (democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs) throughout our daily practice. We actively teach children about respect, fairness, and understanding of different beliefs and cultures. If any member of staff has concerns about a child being at risk of radicalisation, they must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

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 woven throughout our nursery ethos. Children experience democracy through having choices in their play and learning. We model and teach respect for others' beliefs and differences. We help children understand that rules exist to keep everyone safe and fair.

Community Cohesion

We actively build relationships with families and the wider community. We celebrate cultural events and festivals that are important to the families we serve, and we invite parents and community members to share their cultures, knowledge, and experiences with the children. We recognise that by understanding diverse communities, children develop empathy, curiosity, and respect for people different from themselves.

Roles and Responsibilities

The management team is responsible for ensuring that this policy is embedded in all areas of nursery practice. All staff are responsible for understanding and upholding this commitment in their day-to-day work. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for investigating any concerns about equality or discriminatory practice.

Complaints

If any parent, visitor, or staff member believes this policy is not being upheld, they should discuss this with the management team at the earliest opportunity. For formal complaints, please see the nursery Complaints Procedure in Section 3.

Reviewed annually

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES

At Little Holcombe and Tower View Nursery, we are committed to the principle that all children have the right to learn together, with appropriate support. We recognise that some children will have additional needs or disabilities, and we are committed to early identification, effective support, and creating genuinely inclusive environments where children with SEND can thrive.

Our Commitment

We comply with the DfE Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 0–25 years and the Equality Act 2010. We operate on the principle that children with SEND have an equal right to access the full curriculum and all nursery experiences, with reasonable adjustments and support as needed.

The SEND Coordinator (SENCO) at Little Holcombe Nursery is **Jamie Gallagher** and at Tower View Nursery is **Zoe Walsh-Lancaster**. They are responsible for overseeing the identification, assessment, planning, and support of children with SEND.

Early Identification

We monitor the progress of every child from their first day at nursery. Early identification of additional needs is critical—identifying need at the earliest point and then making effective provision improves long-term outcomes for children.

Every child is allocated a key person who is responsible for observing, monitoring, and recording their progress against the EYFS areas of learning and development. If a child is progressing differently from typical development expectations, or if a parent or other professional raises a concern, we respond quickly. This may involve:

- Gathering additional observations and information from the key person and other staff
- Seeking information from parents about the child's development at home
- Liaising with external professionals (speech and language therapist, educational psychologist, health visitor, etc.) if appropriate
- Discussing findings with parents and agreeing a plan forward

We do not wait for formal diagnosis before offering support.

The Graduated Approach

If a child is identified as having additional needs or a disability, we implement a cycle of support using the graduated approach: **Assess—Plan—Do—Review**. This cycle is continuous and tailored to each child:

Assess: We gather detailed information about the child's strengths, needs, and progress. This includes observations, parent input, and advice from specialists.

Plan: We agree on specific, achievable targets with parents and other professionals. We identify the support and strategies that will help the child make progress.

Do: We implement the planned support consistently across the nursery, working closely with parents. We may use additional resources, strategies, or one-to-one support as needed.

Review: We regularly review progress against the targets we set. If the child is making good progress, we may adjust or reduce support. If progress is slower, we may increase or change support, or seek additional specialist advice.

We keep clear records of each cycle and share these with parents regularly.

Reasonable Adjustments

Under the Equality Act 2010, we have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for children with disabilities. This might include:

- Adapting the physical environment (ramps, accessible toilets, quiet spaces)
- Modifying activities or routines to ensure the child can participate
- Providing specialist equipment or resources
- Adjusting staffing or supervision
- Using visual supports or communication aids

We work with parents and specialists to identify what adjustments are needed and implement them promptly.

Children with Diagnosed SEND or Disability

If a child arrives at nursery with a diagnosed special need or disability, we:

- Request and review all relevant information from parents, health professionals, and previous settings
- Meet with parents to understand the child's needs, strengths, and any support they are currently receiving
- Assess how we can best meet those needs within our setting
- Put reasonable adjustments and support in place from the outset
- Establish a graduated approach cycle if appropriate

Record Keeping and Progress

The SENCO maintains detailed records of all children with identified SEND, including:

- Observations and progress notes
- Details of assessments and specialist advice
- Copies of all graduated approach cycles, targets, and reviews
- Records of meetings with parents and other professionals
- Details of any training or professional development undertaken by staff

These records are confidential and stored securely. Records are shared with parents at regular intervals and at review meetings. When a child leaves the nursery (to start school or move to another setting), we ensure that relevant records and information are passed to the receiving setting or school.

Staff Development

We ensure that all staff have training on SEND awareness, and that the SENCO has access to specialist training and professional development. We keep a record of all training attended by staff in this area.

Jamie has achieved a Level 3 Qualification in Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators in Early Years Settings.

Working with Specialists and External Agencies

If a child requires additional assessment or specialist support, we work collaboratively with:

- Educational psychologists
- Speech and language therapists
- Occupational therapists
- Health visitors and paediatricians
- Local authority SEND services
- Other specialists as appropriate

Parents are always kept informed and are involved in decisions about involving external agencies.

Children Transitioning to School

When a child with identified SEND is preparing to move to school, we work closely with the school and parents to ensure a smooth transition. We provide detailed information

about the child's needs, progress, and support strategies. We arrange transition visits and meetings with school staff.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is implemented for every child from the day they are admitted to the nursery. The effectiveness of our SEND provision is reviewed annually and updated as needed. We monitor patterns in identification and support to ensure we are identifying and responding to need fairly across all groups of children.

Complaints

Complaints relating to SEND provision should first be discussed with the SENCO. If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, please refer to the nursery Complaints Procedure in Section 3.

SENCO contacts:

- Little Holcombe Nursery: Jamie Gallagher
- Tower View Nursery: Zoe Walsh-Lancaster

Reviewed annually