

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

Our setting is committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families.

We aim to:

- provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued;
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about different ethnic groups and people with disabilities;
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality and diversity; and
- make inclusion a thread which runs through all of the activities of the setting.

The legal framework for this policy is:

- Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006
- Autism Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
- The Northern Ireland Equality Commission for Children and Young People
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1996
- The Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulation (Northern Ireland) 2006

### **ADMISSIONS**

Our setting is open to all members of the community.

- We advertise our service widely.
- We reflect the diversity of members of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
- We provide information in other languages if required.
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system.
- We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our setting because of any disability.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy.
- We develop an action plan to ensure that people with disabilities can participate successfully in the services offered by the setting and in the curriculum offered.

### **Employment**

- Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.

- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by Access NI. This ensures fairness in the selection process. All job descriptions include a commitment to equality and 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 staff and volunteers to enable them to develop practices which enable all children to flourish.
- We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for equality and diversity.

### **CURRICULUM**

The curriculum offered in the setting encourages children to develop positive attitudes to people who are different from themselves. 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 children have equality of access to learning;
- reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources;
- avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of materials;
- celebrating a wide range of festivals;
- creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
- helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable;
- ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with educational learning needs and children with disabilities; and
- ensuring that children who are English Language Learners have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning.

### **VALUING DIVERSITY IN FAMILIES**

- We welcome the diversity of family life and work with all families.
- We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life into the setting.
- We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of the setting and to contribute fully.
- For families who have a first language other than English, we value the contribution their culture and language offer.

### **FOOD**

- We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met.
- We help children to learn about a range of food, cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating and to respect the differences among them.

## **MEETINGS**

- We invite all families who wish to, may be involved in the Management Committee as a Parent Representative/s, we require maximum three families to fulfil this role and attend 1 meeting per term.
- Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways - written, verbal and in translation (if required), to ensure that all parents have information about the Management Committee meetings.
- We are Committed to working in partnership with parents and other agencies.