



LITTLE ACORNS PRE-SCHOOL POLICIES

VARYING DIVERSITY, PROMOTING EQUALITY, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND INCLUSION

Policy statement

Little Acorns believes that no child, individual or family should be excluded from Pre-school's activities on grounds of age, gender, sexuality, class, family status, means, disability, colour, ethnic origin, culture, religion or belief.

We also aim to ensure that all who wish to work in or volunteer to help within our Pre-school have an equal opportunity to do so.

We will ensure that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children. We recognise that children and their families come from diverse backgrounds. All families have needs and values that arise from their social and economic, ethnic and cultural or religious backgrounds. Children grow up in diverse family structures that include two parent and one parent families. Some children have two parents of the same sex. Some children have close links with extended families of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins while others may be more removed from close kin or may live with other relatives or foster carers. Some children have needs that arise from disability or impairment or may have parents that are affected by disability or impairment.

Some children come from families who experience social exclusion or severe hardship. Some have to face discrimination and prejudice because of their ethnicity, the languages they speak, their religious beliefs, their gender or their impairment.

We understand that these factors affect the well-being of children and can impact on their learning and attainment.

Our setting is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families. We aim to:

- 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 and diverse family structures, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people;
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity;
- challenge and eliminate discriminatory actions;
- make inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities in the setting;
- foster good relations between all communities.

Procedures

Admissions

Our setting is open to all families and members of the community. Families joining the Pre-school are made aware of our Equal Opportunities Policy and Ethos.

- We advertise our services widely.
- We reflect the diversity of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form. We will provide information where/when needed in as many languages as possible.
- We endeavour to make all parents aware of our equal opportunities policy.
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of a protected characteristic as defined by the Equalities Act 2010. These are:
 - disability;
 - race;
 - gender reassignment;
 - religion or belief;
 - sex;
 - sexual orientation;
 - age;
 - pregnancy and maternity; and
 - marriage and civil partnership.
- We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our setting for reason relating to disability.
- We ensure wherever possible that we have a balanced intake of boys and girls in the setting.
- We develop an action plan to ensure that people with impairments can participate successfully in the services offered by the setting and in the curriculum offered.
- 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;
- perception - discrimination on the basis that it is thought someone has a protected characteristic e.g. assuming someone is gay because of their mannerisms or how they speak.
- 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.

Employment

- Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
- Applicants are welcomed from all backgrounds and posts are open to all. No applicant will be rejected on the grounds of age, gender, sexuality, class, means, family status, disability, colour, ethnic origin, culture or belief.
- We may use the exemption clauses in relevant legislation to enable the service to best meet the needs of the community.
- All applicants are treated fairly and the applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service. 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.
- 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 anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which enable all children to flourish.
- We ensure that staff are confident and fully trained in administering relevant medicines and performing invasive care procedures when these are required.
- We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for promoting equality, valuing diversity and inclusion.

Curriculum

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

The curriculum offered in the setting encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as 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.

Our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. If access to the setting is found to treat disabled children or adults less favourably then we make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled children and adults. We do this by:

- making children feel valued and good about themselves and others;
- ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
- undertaking an access audit to establish if the setting is accessible to all children;
- making adjustments to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairments;
- actively incorporating visuals into our setting which portray positive inclusive images, signing and multilingual script. Makaton is consistently modelled, supported and encouraged by all staff and volunteers enabling all children to be inclusive, feel included and learn to communicate in meaningful content.
- making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities, e.g. recognising the different learning styles of girls and boys;
- positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources;
- avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of books or other visual materials;
- celebrating a wide range of festivals;
- creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
- differentiating the curriculum to meet children's special educational needs;
- helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable;
- ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities;
- ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning;
- ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages.

Valuing diversity in families

The Pre-school recognises that many types of family successfully love and care for children and we support all families and parenting styles free from judgement. The Pre-school is run by a committee of volunteers made up of parents, grandparents and carers. We arrange formal partnership meetings twice a year between key workers and parents/carers and we welcome informal/formal meetings with key workers or Manager throughout the year as issues, concerns, changes of circumstance or celebrations arise.

- We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families.
- We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life to the setting.
- We encourage mothers, fathers and other carers to take part in the life of the setting and to contribute fully.
- For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion.
- We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means and offer information regarding sources of financial support.
- We take positive action to encourage disadvantaged and under-represented groups to use the setting.
- We have a rota of voluntary helpers should parents/carers wish to join us for a session.
- Discriminatory behaviour and remarks will not be accepted at Little Acorns. Our response will aim to be sensitive to the feelings of the victim(s) and to help those responsible to understand stereotypes and overcome their prejudices.

Food

- We work in partnership with parents to ensure that dietary requirements of children that arise from their medical, religious or cultural needs are met.
- All dietary requirements are recorded and are made aware to all staff/volunteers preparing and supervising snack or cooking activities.
- We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them.
- We have a café style snack system that enables children to make choices of when, where and what food to choose.

Festivals

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all the major events in the lives of the children and families in the Pre-school and in our society by welcoming diversity from all backgrounds.

Special Needs

The Pre-school recognises the wide range of special needs and disability of children and families in their community and will consider/have awareness of what part we need to play in meeting these needs.

When there is a concern about a child an SEN Support plan (SSP) will be set up after consultation and in partnership with the child's parents/carers, the child's key worker and Special Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCO). This is a graduated response with the SSP being set with certain attainable SMART targets and the progress made by the child is monitored and reviewed on a six to eight week basis.

We start the SSP process in partnership with parents and other professionals. Professionals that could be involved at varying stages are local Early Years Advisory Team, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Paediatricians.

For children with complex needs a health plan or Common Assessment Framework (CAF) or a Single Assessment Framework (SAF) is set up after consultation with parents and any other professionals involved, such as a Health Visitor.

Language

Information, written or spoken, will be clearly communicated in as many languages as necessary. Bilingual/ Multilingual children and adults are an asset. They will be valued and their language(s) recognised and respected in pre-school. Should information need to be presented in Braille or large print, or be translated or taped for parents/carers then we will make every effort to provide these resources.

Meetings

- Meetings are arranged to ensure that all families who wish to may be involved in the running of the setting. The time, place and conduct of the meetings will ensure all families have an equal opportunity to be involved.
- We positively encourage fathers to be involved in the setting especially those fathers who do not live with the child.
- Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways: written, by email, verbal and in translation, to ensure that all mothers and fathers have information about and access to the meetings.

Monitoring and reviewing

- To ensure our policies and procedures remain effective we will monitor and review them annually to ensure our strategies meet the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and valuing diversity.
- We provide a complaint's procedure and a complaint's summary record for parents to see.

Complaints

We have a complaint's policy and procedure which is available in Pre-school.

Legal framework

- The Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989, 2004
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986 Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications
- Embracing Equality (2007)
- All Together Now (2009)

- Where's Dad? (2009)

SIGNED

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