

Community Pre-schools Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedure

Community Pre-schools is committed to providing a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment where every child, family, member of staff, volunteer and visitor is respected, valued and treated with dignity. We believe that all children have the right to learn, play, develop and participate fully, regardless of their background, circumstances, abilities, culture, language, beliefs, family structure or individual needs.

We actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We recognise that treating everyone fairly does not always mean treating everyone the same; some children and families may need additional support, adaptations or reasonable adjustments so that they can access and enjoy the same opportunities as others.

Aims of this Policy

To ensure that every child is included, supported and able to reach their full potential.

To provide an environment that celebrates diversity and reflects the lives, cultures and experiences of the children and families who attend.

To remove or reduce barriers to learning, participation and belonging.

To challenge discrimination, stereotyping, prejudice, bullying, harassment and unfair treatment promptly and appropriately.

To ensure admissions, recruitment, employment, curriculum planning, resources and daily practice are fair, transparent and inclusive.

To work in partnership with parents, carers, professionals and the wider community to meet children's individual needs.

To meet our responsibilities under current legislation, statutory guidance and early years expectations.

Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by relevant legislation and guidance, including the Equality Act 2010, the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Children and Families Act 2014, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation, safeguarding guidance, and the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework.

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination relating to protected characteristics. These include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. In an early year's setting, our practice also takes account of children's family background, home language, social circumstances, looked-after status, medical needs, special educational needs and disabilities, and any other factor that may affect access, participation or wellbeing.

This policy applies to all children, parents, carers, staff, students, volunteers, committee members, agency staff, contractors and visitors connected with Community Pre-schools. It applies to all areas of provision, including admissions, settling in, curriculum planning, teaching and learning, care routines, behaviour support, SEND provision, recruitment, staff development, complaints, communication and partnership working.

Responsibilities

Community Pre-school managers are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented, monitored and reviewed. They will promote an inclusive culture, ensure staff understand their responsibilities, respond to concerns promptly, and make sure that reasonable adjustments and support arrangements are considered where needed.

All staff, students and volunteers are expected to model inclusive behaviour, use respectful language, challenge discriminatory comments or behaviour, support children to value similarities and differences, and follow this policy in their day-to-day practice.

Parents and carers are encouraged to share information about their child's needs, culture, language, religion, family circumstances, medical needs or any other matter that may help us to support their child effectively. We ask all families to work with us in promoting respectful relationships and inclusive practice.

Admissions and Access

Community Pre-schools welcomes children from all backgrounds and does not discriminate in relation to admissions. Places are offered fairly and in line with our admissions arrangements. We will discuss each child's individual needs with parents and carers before admission and during settling in, so that appropriate support, resources, routines or reasonable adjustments can be considered and planned.

Children with special educational needs, disabilities, medical needs or additional support requirements will not be refused a place because of those needs. Where further information or specialist advice is required, we will work with parents, carers and relevant professionals to consider how the child can be safely and appropriately included.

Inclusive Curriculum and Environment

We provide play, learning experiences, displays, books, songs, resources and activities that reflect a wide range of cultures, languages, religions, abilities, family structures, occupations and ways of life. We aim for children to see themselves, their families and others represented positively in the setting.

Staff plan from children's individual interests, experiences and developmental stages. Activities are adapted where needed so that all children can take part. We promote respect, kindness, empathy, cooperation and positive relationships through everyday routines, stories, role play, discussion and adult modelling.

Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Reasonable Adjustments

Community Pre-schools is committed to identifying and supporting children's individual needs as early as possible. We work in partnership with parents, carers, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator and external professionals where appropriate. We follow a graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review when children require support that is additional to, or different from, universal provision.

Reasonable adjustments may include changes to routines, additional visual support, adapted resources, communication aids, sensory support, environmental changes, additional adult support, flexible settling-in arrangements, or liaison with specialist services. Decisions will be made in the best interests of the child, taking account of safety, inclusion, development and wellbeing.

Language, Culture, Religion and Belief

We value children's home languages, cultures, religions and beliefs. Parents and carers are invited to share information that will help us understand and support their child's identity and experiences. Where possible, we will use familiar words, visual supports, books, resources, celebrations and activities that help children feel recognised and included.

We will respect dietary, cultural and religious requirements wherever these can be safely met within the setting. We will not require children to take part in activities that conflict with a family's beliefs, and we will work with parents and carers to provide suitable alternatives where appropriate.

Challenging Discrimination and Promoting Positive Behaviour

Discriminatory language, behaviour, bullying, harassment or exclusion will not be ignored. Staff will respond calmly and promptly, making clear that the behaviour or words are unacceptable while supporting children in a developmentally appropriate way to understand respect, fairness and kindness.

Where discriminatory incidents involve adults, the Manager will address the matter directly and sensitively, following relevant procedures such as the complaints procedure, staff conduct procedures, safeguarding procedures or disciplinary procedures as appropriate. Any serious or repeated concerns will be recorded, monitored and reviewed.

Procedure for Responding to Equality or Diversity Concerns

Any concern, incident or allegation relating to discrimination, unfair treatment, exclusion, harassment or prejudice should be reported to the Manager

The concern will be listened to seriously, recorded factually and handled sensitively and confidentially.

Community Pre-schools will consider the immediate needs of any child or adult affected and will take action to ensure safety, reassurance and support.

The Managers will gather relevant information from those involved, taking account of the age and understanding of children.

Appropriate action will be agreed. This may include speaking with parents or carers, supporting a child through discussion or activities, reviewing practice, adapting provision, arranging training, implementing support plans, using the complaints procedure, or taking staff conduct action.

Where the concern may indicate a safeguarding issue, the safeguarding policy and procedures will be followed without delay and if deemed necessary Ofsted will be notified

The outcome and any follow-up actions will be recorded and reviewed to ensure the issue has been addressed and to identify any learning for the setting.

Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise parents and carers as children's first and most important educators. We will work in partnership with families to understand each child's background, experiences, strengths, needs and interests. We will communicate respectfully, provide opportunities for families to share information, and seek consent before involving outside agencies unless there is a safeguarding reason to act without delay.

Information shared by families will be treated confidentially and used only to support the child's welfare, learning, development and inclusion, in line with data protection requirements and our confidentiality procedures.

Recruitment, Employment and Staff Development

Community Pre-schools aims to ensure that recruitment, selection, induction, supervision, training and promotion are fair, transparent and non-discriminatory. Safer recruitment requirements will always be followed for roles involving work with children. Staff will be supported to understand equality, diversity, inclusion, safeguarding, SEND and anti-discriminatory practice through induction, supervision, meetings and training.

Resources, Displays and Celebrations

Resources and displays will be reviewed regularly to ensure they are inclusive, positive and free from stereotypes. We will celebrate similarities and differences in ways that are meaningful, respectful and appropriate for young children. Celebrations and topics will be planned thoughtfully so that they broaden children's understanding without tokenism or assumptions about individual families.

Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Records relating to equality, diversity, inclusion, support needs, complaints or incidents will be stored securely and shared only with those who need the information to support the child, manage the concern, meet legal duties or protect welfare. Records will be retained in line with Community Pre-schools policies and statutory requirements.

Complaints

If a parent, carer, member of staff, volunteer or visitor has a concern about equality, diversity, inclusion or discrimination, they should raise it with the Manager or designated senior member of staff. Concerns will be taken seriously and handled through the relevant procedure, including the complaints policy where appropriate. Parents and carers may contact Ofsted or the Local Authority if they believe the concern relates to statutory requirements or safeguarding.

Monitoring and Review

The Managers of Community Pre-schools will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through observations of practice, supervision, feedback from families, review of incidents or complaints, staff discussion, resource audits and reflection on children's access, participation and progress. This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance, setting practice or identified need.