

Valuing diversity and promoting equality and Inclusion Policy

Policy statement

Staff at Pickering Pre-school Playgroup believe in promoting equal opportunities for everyone and value diversity in children, parents, carers, staff and visitors. We believe that all children have an entitlement to have equal access to a broad balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum. Staff strive to ensure that all children develop self-confidence and high esteem whilst recognising and valuing differences between themselves and others. All children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability will have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

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 or belief background, 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 Pre-school 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 our 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, 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 of the Preschool; and
- foster good relations between all communities.

Procedures

Admissions

- Our Pre-school is open to all members of the community.
- Past parents and families promote the Pre-school widely and we advertise in features in the local newspapers.
- 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 would endeavour to provide information in as many languages as possible if necessary.
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy.
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our Preschool, 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 Preschool for reason relating to disability.
- We develop an action plan to ensure that people with disabilities can participate successfully in the services offered by the Preschool 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 Pre-school;
 - 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.
- 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 welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all.
- We may use the exemption clauses in relevant legislation to enable the service to best meet the needs of the community.
- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Criminal Records Bureau. 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.
- We will employ the best person for the job and treat all applications fairly.

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

The curriculum offered in the Preschool 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.

We aim to show respectful awareness of all the major events in the lives of children and their families. In order to achieve this, we aim to acknowledge all the customs and beliefs which are celebrated in our area and by the families involved in the Preschool.

Our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. If access to the Preschools 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;
- ♣ ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
- ♣ undertaking an access audit to establish if the Preschool is accessible to all children;
- ♣ making adjustments to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairments;
- ♣ 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; and
- ♣ ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages.

Resources - These are selected to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our society. Materials will be selected to help children develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes.

Additional Needs - The staff at Preschool are committed to providing equal opportunities for all children and the children benefit from inclusion and learn a great deal from each other. The staff have a wide range of skills and experience with children who have individual needs and promote their inclusion in a positive way, creating a happy atmosphere for all children. Children with additional needs have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum based on the EYFS. Staff access training when it is necessary.

Valuing diversity in families

- ♣ We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families.
- ♣ We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life to the Preschool.
- ♣ We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of the Preschool 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 Preschool.

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, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them.

Meetings

- ♣ Meetings are arranged to ensure that all families who wish to may be involved in the running of the Preschool.
- ♣ We positively encourage fathers to be involved in the Preschool especially those fathers who do not live with the child.
- ♣ Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways - written, verbal and in translation - to ensure that all parents 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 meets the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and valuing diversity.
- ♣ We provide a complaints procedure and a complaints summary record for parents to see.

Legal framework The Equality Act 2010, Children Act 1989, 2004, Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

**This policy was adopted at a meeting of Pickering Pre-School Playgroup held on 31st August 2023.
Date to be reviewed – Before end of August 2024.**

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory – Richard Allenby (Chairperson).