

St. Mary's Community Nursery School

Policy Documents

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Statement of intent

Equality, diversity and inclusion are the breath of Early Years Education and have been a standard and ingrained part of our school experience from its foundation as a Nursery School. Nursery Schools across the country have been at the forefront of the inclusion agenda to benefit the whole of our community. It is standard practice in Early Years to be inclusive and to treat all as equals and to value the diversity in our community. The close daily contact we have with parents and children in the Early Years is hugely beneficial in working with the community to ensure all are welcomed and all are valued. Respect, tolerance and care are expected behaviours in our school from all.

The Governing Body, Headteacher and Staff all believe that no child, family or staff member should suffer discrimination, direct or indirect, while at our school.

All will ensure that this is a wholly inclusive school, where the learning, achievements, attitudes and wellbeing of every learner matters. We want to ensure that all children and adults are encouraged and able to achieve their full potential.

Since the Equality Act of 2010 came into effect in April 2011 there has no longer been a requirement that school should draw up and publish equality schemes or policies. It is still good practice, however, for a school to make a statement about the principles according to which it review the impact on equalities of its policies, practices and according to which it fulfils the specific duties to publish information and evidence, and to decide on specific and measurable objectives.

Legal Framework

As a maintained Nursery School we are maintained by the Local Education Authority and are bound by the general and specific duties for a public authority.

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote Community Cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and the Human Rights Act 1998.

In meeting the legal obligations laid out above we are guided by an agreed set of principles:

Agreed Principles

Using Inclusive Language

For Example: We use the word 'parent' to describe those who perform the role of 'parent'. This is intended to be inclusive as we believe that the word describes the love, care and protection offered to a child among a host of other practices rather than a simple biological function. Families are informed of this policy at the pre-entry meeting, on our notice boards and in our literature. Those who would prefer not to use this term for any reason need only inform their Key Worker or the Office of their request and it will be complied with.

All children using our school are of equal value and are valued equally

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender and gender identity whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual identity

Recognising, respecting and valuing differences

We must not discriminate in our policies, practices or activities but they must take into account the differences in the experiences, outlook, background of our school community and take into account the kinds of barriers or disadvantage which people may face in relation to:

- Disability; so that reasonable adjustments can be made
- Ethnicity, so that different cultural background and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- Gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys and women and men are recognised
- Religion
- Sexual identity

We must prepare children for life in a diverse society. We must also acknowledge the existence of prejudice and take steps to prevent it.

Creating a shared sense of cohesion and belonging by fostering positive attitudes and relationships promoting:

- Positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- Positive interaction, good relations communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Promoting equality in staff recruitment, retention and CPD.

As a Nursery School the Local Authority is the actual employer of staff. As a Governing Body we implement the policies of the LA in recruitment and we ensure that policies and procedures benefit all in recruitment, promotion and continuing professional development (training) regardless of:

- Their age
- Their disability
- Their ethnicity, religion or nationality
- Their gender and sexual identity

The headteacher and three Governors are also trained in safer recruitment

Benefitting Society

We intend for our policies and activities to benefit the whole of society locally by fostering greater social cohesion and the greater participation in public life of:

- Disabled and non-disabled people
- People with a wide range of ethnic , cultural and religious backgrounds
- People of all sexes
- Gay people as well as straight

Practice

We will turn principles into practice by:

Admissions

Ours setting is open to all members of our community.

- We welcome all families equally.
- We advertise our service in the community and support families for whom English is an additional language.
- 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.
- Where possible we provide information in languages of our community.
- We do not discriminate against any children, parents or carers on any grounds.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our policy

Employment:

- The Local Authority is the Employer
- The governing Body ensure that posts are advertised and all participants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
- All job descriptions include a commitment to equality and diversity as part of their specifications.
- We will consider positive action when recruiting to posts, to attract people from under-represented groups into our workforce.

Training:

- We seek out opportunities for staff to enable them to develop practices which enable all children to flourish.
- We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our equalities policy.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding and knowledge of equality and diversity, and the characteristics of protected groups.

General:

- Every member of staff is responsible for diversity; however we will have a named member of staff responsible for leading on equality.
- We encourage parents to share skills with staff and children.
- We handle questions about difference honestly, sensitively and openly.
- We develop an equality action plan to ensure that everyone is included.
- We treat everyone with respect and with consideration of their diversity.
- We provide a welcoming atmosphere with approachable staff.
- We offer children a secure environment in which to explore their own culture and that of their peers.
- We actively seek ways to counter the learning of negative attitudes and behaviour towards differences.
- We check that our resources reflect diversity and do not promote negative stereotypes.

We aim for the following steps to become an integrated part of our everyday routine and practice:

- Take advice and support from the local authority and attend all relevant training.
- Ensure that all your practitioners understand the law and its importance.
- Examine all your policies, practices and procedures to ensure there is no discrimination on any grounds.
- Ensure that everyone in your setting is equally valued, treated with equal respect and concern, and that the needs of each individual are addressed.
- Ensure that each child and family has equal access and entitlement to all available opportunities for learning, experiences and resources.
- Develop positive attitudes and behaviour to all people, whether they are different from or similar to themselves.
- Value aspects of other people's lives equally.
- Ensure the needs of every child and adult are identified and addressed and that everyone shares an ethos to
- Have a commitment to equality and a named member of staff responsible for equality.
- Handle questions about difference honestly, sensitively and openly.
- Recognise the need for training in equality whatever the demographic make-up of our setting and its surrounding area.
- Have a commitment to promoting good relations between different groups.
- Have a commitment to challenging and eradicating prejudice.
- Ensure that all adults are good role models for the children.
- Have wall displays that show people from diverse backgrounds doing everyday things.
- Check that our resources reflect diversity and do not promote negative stereotypes e.g. ensure dolls and puppets have accurate and realistic skin tones, facial features and hair textures.

We aim for the following steps to become an integrated part of our everyday routine and practice (continued):

- Ensure all practitioners have access to equalities training.
- Ensure all practitioners have an understanding of equality and diversity.
- Acknowledge or celebrate festivals to develop an awareness of similarities and differences between individuals.
- Invite visitors from all parts of the community into your setting.

Addressing Prejudice

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice including (not an exhaustive list):

- SEN(D)
- Racism
- Xenophobia
- Anti-Semitism
- Islamophobia
- Sexism
- Homophobia

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for all policies, their implication and ensuring that the school complies with all legislation.

In respect to this policy the GB has delegated the Curriculum Committee responsible for updating, monitoring and ensuring the efficacy of the policy.

The headteacher has day to day responsibility for the implementation of the policy and ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities.