

Equal Opportunities Policy

The legal framework for this policy includes the:

- Equality Act 2006, 2010
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995, 2005
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975, 1986
- Children Act 1989, 2004
- Special educational needs and Disability Act 2001

We believe that the group's activities should be open to all children and families, and to all adults committed to their welfare. We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with, our Nursery have an equal chance to do so.

We will ensure that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children, particularly those that arise from their ethnic heritage, social and economic background, gender, ability or disability. 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 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 and anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity and
- Make inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities in the Nursery

Admissions

- We advertise our setting widely
- We reflect the diversity of our society in our promotional materials
- We provide information in clear, concise language
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our Equality of Opportunity Policy
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion, social background
- We do not discriminate against a child with a disability and will endeavour to ensure that any disability is supported to the best of our ability
- We develop an action plan to ensure that people with a disability can participate successfully in the services we offer
- We ensure where possible that we have a balanced intake of boys and girls

- We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents
- Displaying of openly discriminatory and possibly offensive materials, name calling, 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 clause 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 Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS). 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 specification
- We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible
- Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability
- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated
- Breaches of the Nursery's Equality and Diversity Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings
- Commitment to implementing the group's Equality and Diversity Policy will form part of the job description for all workers

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which enable children to flourish
- We ensure that all 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

Environment

Our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. If access to the building is found to treat disabled children or adults less favourably, we will make reasonable adjustments to the setting to accommodate the needs of the 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 setting 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
- Positively reflecting the widest range of communities possible in the choice of resources
- Avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in visual material
- Celebrating a wide range of festival
- Creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance
- Differentiating the curriculum to meet children's special educational needs
- Ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning and in the maintenance of their own language

Valuing Diversity/British Values in families

The DFE have recently reinforced the need “to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.”

The government set out its definition of British values in the 2011 'Prevent Strategy', and these values have been reiterated by the Prime Minister in 2014 and added to Ofsted inspection guidance in July 2014.

Promoting British Values at Little Pumpkins

We are an inclusive setting and our ethos and curriculum enables children to be independent learners, to make choices and to build strong relationships with their peers and all adults. Our setting believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour. We would challenge pupils, staff or parents who expressed opinions contrary to fundamental British values.

Democracy

Children are involved in making class rules and they are expected to contribute and cooperate with them, taking into account the views of others.

The Rule of Law

We consistently reinforce our high expectations of children. Children are taught the value and reasons behind our expectations - that they are there to protect us, that everyone has a responsibility and that there are consequences when rules are broken. Our 'Behaviour Management Policy' aims to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to understand the rights and needs of others. We use positive strategies to handle any conflict and praise and acknowledge desirable behaviours.

Individual Liberty

At Little Pumpkins Nursery children are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. As a Nursery, we educate and provide boundaries for young children to make choices, to manage risks, through our provision of a safe environment and empowering teaching. Children are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are given opportunities to resolve conflicts effectively.

Mutual Respect

At Little Pumpkins Nursery, we value all of our children and families. We celebrate our rich cultural and religious diversity and promote mutual respect. Children are modelled respect through caring, sharing and listening to others. Adults help children to understand how actions and words affect others. All children, including those with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities are valued for their individuality and supported to achieve their best. Children are taught that life is not the same for everyone and we support charities such as 'Red Nose Day', 'Children in Need', 'Save the Children'.

Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs

We aim to enhance children's understanding of different faiths and beliefs by participating in a range of celebrations throughout the year. Children have the opportunity to dress-up in clothes and try different foods from other cultures and we encourage parents/carers to participate and support our multi-cultural events.

We ensure that posters, displays and messages of welcome reflect the wide range of languages and cultures that we are fortunate to have in our school family. We monitor all forms of bullying and harassment and actively promote courtesy and good manners towards all. At Little Pumpkins Nursery, embedded in everything we do, is our determination to develop skills of empathy and tolerance to make everyone at our setting feel valued and respected.

The 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. Appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Resources

These will be chosen with a view to showing children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multiracial society. Materials will be selected to help children develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and derogatory pictures and messages about any group of people.

The benefits of inclusion for children:

All children can experience diversity and know they are valued for who they are and not for what they can do or learn by a certain age. They can learn to accept people for who they are.

It teaches all children (Including those with SEN) that differences should be celebrated they are what make us unique. Being included in mainstream education teaches children the tools for life, how to cope with difficult situations and how to get through them.

Ability/Disability

Little Pumpkins Nursery understands that children have a wide range of needs which differ from time to time. In meeting these needs Little Pumpkins Nursery aims to:

- Ensure the environment and equipment is accessible to all children
- Provide places for all children, including children with Special Educational Needs
- Support every child and meet their individual needs (see Special Needs Policy)
- Provide each child with a Key Person to ensure their needs are being met
- Allow each child to progress at their own rate in all areas of development
- Provide positive images for all children
- Provide resources and activities that enable all children to reach their full potential
- Liaise with other professional organisations, where appropriate, for help, advice and support for both the Nursery staff and for the parent/carer

Social Group

Little Pumpkins Nursery recognises that there are many different types of family groups. It is our aim to:

- Offer support to all families
- Ensure that children and their families are not judged by their social circumstances
- Enable children to learn about the different make up of families
- Ensure children are not made to feel different by handling special days sensitively (e.g. Mother's Day/Father's Day)
- Encourage children to talk about their families and their home life
- Operate a flexible payment system for families with differing means

Gender

It is important for children to form a positive gender identity for their self-esteem to develop. To enable children to do this, Little Pumpkins Nursery aims to:

- Give both boys and girls equal consideration
- Ensure all children have equal access to play equipment and activities
- Challenge traditional stereotypes
- Ensure both men and women are shown in positive roles
- Challenge negative attitudes and dispositions sensitively
- Refrain from using terms such as 'big strong boys'

Discriminatory behaviour/remarks

These are unacceptable in the Nursery. The response will aim to be sensitive to the feelings of the victim(s) and to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices.

Language

Information, written and 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 languages will be recognised and respected in the Nursery.

Food

Medical, cultural and dietary needs will be 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

The time, place and conduct of meetings will ensure that all families have an equal opportunity to be involved in the running of the Nursery.

Cultural Capital

In September 2019, the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework added the term 'Cultural Capital'.

The Early Years Foundation Stage plays an important part here, as strong foundations are built that will make a real difference to a child's future. At Little Pumpkins Nursery, we believe that Cultural Capital is about giving our children the best possible start to their early education and future success. It is our intention to provide a curriculum which enhances and broadens experiences and opportunities for all children, particularly for our most vulnerable young learners. Our curriculum is pitched so that it offers a range of experiences which engage, enthuse and enlighten. Our intention is to provide a culture of curiosity through magical moments: to widen horizons, tap into potential and instill ambition.

The Nursery Practitioners have a wealth of experience and rely on their knowledge of the children to plan activities and learning opportunities across the EYFS curriculum to stimulate positive development for each child.

These may include:

- Finding books on a child's favorite topic
- Creating role-play activities that further their interest in a particular idea
- Taking trips to the park
- Organizing visits from the community, such as the police, Fire Brigade etc

What is important is that Nursery Practitioners feel confident explaining why they have chosen a particular activity and how it will benefit the child's learning and development.

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