



Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Equal Opportunities

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care, including support for children with special educational needs or disabilities.

Equal Opportunities

9.1 Valuing diversity and promoting inclusion and equality

Policy statement

We are committed to ensuring that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children.

We recognise that children and their families come from a wide range of backgrounds with individual needs, beliefs and values. They may grow up in family structures that include one or two parents of the same or different sex. Children may have close links or live with extended families of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins; while other children may be more removed from close kin, or may live with other relatives or foster carers. Some children come from families who experience social exclusion, severe hardship; discrimination and prejudice because of their ethnicity, disability and/or ability, the languages they speak, their religious or personal beliefs, their sexual orientation and marital status. Some individuals face discrimination linked to their gender and some women are discriminated against because of their pregnancy and maternity status. We understand that all these factors can affect the well-being of children within these families and may adversely impact on children's learning, attainment and life outcomes.

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

- promote equality and value diversity within our service and foster good relations with the local community;
- actively include all families and value the positive contribution they make to our service;
- promote a positive non-stereotyping environment that promotes dignity, respect and understanding of difference in all forms;
- provide a secure and accessible environment in which every child feels safe and equally included;
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues relating to anti-discriminatory practice,
- challenge and eliminate discriminatory actions on the basis of a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act (2010) namely:
 - age;
 - gender;
 - gender reassignment;
 - marital status;
 - pregnancy and maternity;
 - race;
 - disability;
 - sexual orientation; and
 - religion or belief.
- where possible, take positive action to benefit groups or individuals with protected characteristics who are disadvantaged, have a disproportional representation within the service or need different things from the service.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.2 Inclusive practice 1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners 2.3 Support learning 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child 3.4 The wider context	4.4 Areas of learning and development

Procedures

Admissions

Our setting is open and accessible to all members of the community.

- We base our Admissions Policy on a fair system.
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family in our service provision, including preventing their entry to our setting based on a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act (2010).
- We advertise our service widely.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form and provide information in other languages (where ever possible).
- We reflect the diversity of our community and wider society in our publicity and promotional materials.
- We provide information on our offer of provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Inclusion and Equality Policy.
- We make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled children can participate successfully in the services and in the curriculum offered by the setting.
- We ensure, wherever possible, that we have a balanced intake of boys and girls in the setting.
- We take action against any discriminatory, prejudice, harassing or victimising behaviour by our staff, volunteers or parents whether by:
 - direct discrimination – someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic e.g. preventing families of a specific ethnic group from using the service;
 - indirect discrimination – someone is affected unfavourably by a general policy e.g. children must only speak English in the setting;
 - discrimination arising from a disability – someone is treated less favourably because of something connected with their disability e.g. a child with a visual impairment is excluded from an activity;
 - 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. making assumptions about someone's sexual orientation.
- We will not tolerate behaviour from an adult who demonstrates dislike or prejudice towards individuals who are perceived to be from another country (xenophobia).
- Displaying of openly discriminatory xenophobic and possibly offensive or threatening materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on, or around, our premises and will be dealt with immediately and discreetly by asking the adult to stop using the unacceptable behaviour and inviting them to read and to act in accordance with the relevant policy statement and procedure. Failure to comply may lead to the adult being excluded from the premises.

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 suitability checks. 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 the 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 equality, diversity and inclusion.

Curriculum

The curriculum offered in the pre-school encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of confidence and self esteem, empathy, critical thinking and reflection.

We ensure that our practice is fully inclusive by:

- creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
- modelling desirable behaviour to children and helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable;
- positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities within resources;
- avoiding use of stereotypes or derogatory images within our books or any other visual materials;
- celebrating locally observed festivals and holy days;
- ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning;
- ensuring that disabled children with and without special educational needs are fully supported;
- ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages

We will ensure that our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. We do this by:

- undertaking an access audit to establish if the setting is accessible to all disabled children and adults. 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.
- fully differentiating the environment, resources and curriculum to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory needs.

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 pre-school.
- We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of the pre-school and to contribute fully.
- For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to encourage 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.

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 where ever possible.

- We help children to learn about a range of food, 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 pre-school.
- 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, verbal and where resources allow in translation – to ensure that all parents have information about and access to the meetings.

Monitoring and reviewing

- So that our policies and procedures remain effective we 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 use.

Public Sector Equality Duty

- We have regard to the Duty to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Legal framework

Primary Legislation

- The Equality Act (2010)
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (1989) & (2004)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2014)

Secondary Legislation

- Childcare Act (2006)
- The Children Act (2004)
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Human Rights Acts (1998)
- Children, Schools and Families Act (2010)

Further guidance:

- Guide to the Equality Act and Good Practice (2011)
- All Together Now (2009)
- Where’s Dad? (2009)
- The Prevent Duty – Department of Education (June 2015)
- Guidance for early year’s providers showing the pathway for additional support
- SEND Code of Practice 2014 for the Early Years (2014)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Acorns Community Pre-School held on

Date to be reviewed:.....

Signed on behalf of the management team:.....

Name of signatory:

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner):.....



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Equality of opportunities

9.2 Supporting children with special educational needs

Policy statement

We provide an environment in which all the children, including those with special educational needs, are supported to reach their full potential.

- We have regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014).
- We have in place a clear approach for identifying, responding to, and meeting children's SEN.
- We support and involve parents (and where relevant children), actively listening to, and acting on their wishes and concerns.
- We work in partnership with the local authority and other external agencies to ensure the best outcomes for children with SEN and their families.
- We regularly monitor and review [our/my] policy, practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.1 Child development 1.2 Inclusive practice 1.4 Health and well-being	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners 2.3 Supporting learning 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child 3.3 The learning environment 3.4 The wider context	4.1 Play and exploration 4.2 Active learning 4.3 Creativity and critical thinking

Procedures

- We have a designate a member of staff to be the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and give his/her name to parents.
 Our SENCO is: **Heather Page**
 Our Deputy SENCO is: **Anita Ridley**

The SENCO works closely with supervisors, manager and staff and has the responsibility for the day-to-day operation of our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs Policy and for co-ordinating provision for children with SEN.

- We ensure that the provision for children with special educational needs is the responsibility of all members of the setting.

- We ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity.
- We provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum for all children.
- We apply SEN support to ensure early identification of children with SEN.
- We use the graduated response system for identifying, assessing and responding to children's special educational needs.
- We ensure that parents are involved at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's special education including all decision making processes
- We where appropriate, take into account children's views and wishes in decisions being made about them, relevant to their level understanding.
- We provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
- We liaise and work with other external agencies to help improve outcomes for children with SEN.
- We have systems in place for referring children for further assessment e.g. Common Assessment Framework/Early Help Assessment and Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment.
- We provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children with special educational needs.
- We use a system of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing individual educational plans (IEPs) for children with special educational needs.
- We ensure that children with special educational needs are appropriately involved at all stages of the graduated response, taking into account their levels of ability.
- We work with and can access help, support and guidance from outside agencies through the Early Help Hub.
- We have systems in place for supporting children using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Early Help Assessment process:
 - Identified as Level 2 - Early Help – Single Agency
 - Identified as Level 3 – Targeted Early Help – Multi Agency
 - Identified as Level 4 – Children's Social Care
- We use a system for keeping records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for the children with special educational needs.
- We provide resources (human and financial) to implement our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs Policy.
- We ensure that all [our/my] staff are aware of our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs Policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for children with SEN. We provide in-service training for parents, practitioners and volunteers.
- We raise awareness of our special education provision via our website and or promotional materials.
- We ensure the effectiveness of our special educational needs provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. Individual Education Plan reviews, staff and management meetings, parental and external agency's views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually.
- We provide a complaints procedure.
- We monitor and review our policy annually.

We understand that it is our responsibility to identify persons who may need additional help in evacuating from the preschool in the event of an emergency. This is supported by a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) ensuring that we are able to offer suitable practical assistance appropriate to the individual.

Legislation Framework

Primary Legislation

- Equalities Act (2010)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Childcare Act (2006)
- The Children Act (2004)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001)
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (1989) & (2004)

Secondary Legislation

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Human Rights Acts (1998)
- Children, Schools and Families Act (2010)

Further guidance

- Issues in Earlier Intervention: Identifying and Supporting Children with Additional Needs (DCSF 2010)
- Early Years Foundation Stage and the Disability Discrimination Act (DCSF 2010)
- The Team Around the Child (TAC) and the Lead Professional: A Guide for Managers (CWDC 2009)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Managers (CWDC 2009)
- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (DfE 2017)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2015)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DfE & DoH 2014)

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications:

- The Role of the Early Years Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) (2006)

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Date to be reviewed:.....

Signed on behalf of the management team:.....

Name of signatory:

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner):.....