



NOAH'S ARK NURSERY SCHOOLS

Equal Opportunities Policy

Rationale

In Noah's Ark we believe in valuing and celebrating the diversity within our community. We aim to develop good practice and positive attitudes in the early years, and encourage an anti-discriminatory approach to the world in general and other human beings in particular. We believe that all people should have equal opportunities to learn, develop and grow with dignity in a community of mutual respect.

Noah's Ark has a strong Christian ethos and believes that no child, individual, family or member of staff should be discriminated against on the grounds of age, gender, sexuality, class, family status, means, disability, colour, ethnic origin, culture, religion or belief.

All children are respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured.

Implementation of the policy in Noah's Ark

The senior leadership team must ensure that:

- new members of staff, including students and volunteers, receive copies of the Equal Opportunities Policy, and that this is discussed with them during their induction period.
- the Equal Opportunities Policy is made available to all parents and carers.
- staff, parents and children are involved in the planning and implementation of the policy.
- every effort is made to translate the policy into the languages commonly used in the school community.
- parents who are experiencing problems with the English language, either spoken or written, are offered support.
- every effort is made to use the child's first language. When this is not feasible Noah's Ark involves other agencies for advice and assistance wherever possible.
- every effort is made to obtain suitable specialist equipment, aids or resources.

- reasonable adjustments are made to the premises to cater for anyone with any form of disability.
- volunteers, local speakers or personalities who reflect the diversity of the local community are invited to visit Noah's Ark.

Our practice

- The Equal Opportunities Policy applies to every staff member, parent, carer and child. Each person is valued as an individual, with differing social, intellectual and cultural backgrounds. Different needs, likes, dislikes, similarities and differences are respected and accounted for.
- Nobody in Noah's Ark is subjected to discrimination, racist comments or gender bias. Cultural or religious diversity is respected.
- We hold a discussion with parents before their child starts Noah's Ark, to establish their concerns about their child's specific emotional, medical, cultural or religious needs. This takes place during the induction process. The parents' contribution is recorded and relayed to other members of staff at the relevant staff meeting.
- We value parents as their children's first educators, and staff work closely with parents to share information, experiences, conversation and quality time, thus promoting positive role models for their children.
- We cater for cultural, religious and medical differences at all snack and mealtimes.
- We celebrate a variety of festivals and special events each year from cultures represented within our community and outside.
- Our curriculum plan takes into account each child's individual route to learning.
- We give the children equal opportunities and equal access to the full range of activities available, including visits and trips outside Noah's Ark.
- We monitor activities on a regular basis to ensure that every child has freedom of choice, time for discovery, and support, when it is necessary.
- During play we encourage the children to respect and value each other. We discourage them from making hurtful and unkind remarks. Staff ensure that children are helped towards understanding that it is wrong to judge someone because of their gender, colour, beliefs, disability or social background. We explain why, talk things through and praise positive behaviour.
- We challenge and deal with inappropriate practices and attitudes promptly.
- We record any seriously inappropriate racist or sexist comments made by children and staff, including volunteers and students.

Staff training

- We take great care to apply the Equal Opportunities Policy when advertising for, interviewing and appointing staff.
- We keep staff informed and updated on new legislation, and train them accordingly. We display information on new national initiatives and Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (EYDCP) courses.
- We give the opportunity to attend courses to staff who:

have identified an area in which they wish to improve their own knowledge and expertise

have been identified through an inspection or an in-house appraisal as having a training need

want to further their own personal development.

- We expect all staff to behave in a professional manner, follow the above policy and try to be consistent, sensitive and fair. We expect them to challenge others who make inadvertent racist, sexist or insensitive remarks.
- One member of staff is responsible for co-ordinating, advising on and reporting back to senior management on how successfully the Equal Opportunities Policy has been implemented.

Equipment

- We purchase, organise and monitor equipment, toys, books and resources to reflect diversity in the immediate and wider society. We display positive images of differing races, cultures, religions, social groups, physical abilities and disabilities and gender in and around Noah's Ark.

Reference to EYFS General Welfare Requirements

- Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare
- Suitable People
- Suitable Premises, Environment and Equipment
- Organisation
- Documentation

Annette Miller

Reviewed and Updated January 2005

Reviewed and Updated January 2009

Reviewed and updated January 2011

CONCLUSION

The Governors and Staff of the School are committed to keeping this policy under regular review and the Governor responsible will ensure that the matters contained herein are regularly discussed and further developed to the benefit of all users.

Signed :

Mr Charlie Colchester
Chairman of the Board of Governors