

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY.

Policy Statement

We will ensure that our setting 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. Box Pre-School Playgroup believes that no child, individual or family should be excluded from the Pre-School's activities on the grounds of:

- Age
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Gender reassignment
- Disability
- Race
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Religion or Belief

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:

- provide a secure and accessible environment in which all 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; and
- make an inclusion thread that runs through all of the activities of the setting.

Procedures Admissions

- Playgroup is open to every family in the community.
- Children can start immediately after their second birthday.
- Session waiting lists are based on who asked for the session first.
- Families joining playgroup are made aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy
- 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 provide information in as many languages as possible.
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system.
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion or social background, such as being a member of a travelling community or an asylum seeker.
- We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our setting for reason relating to disability.
- We ensure that wherever possible that we have a balanced intake of boys and girls in the setting.
- We have developed an action plan to ensure that people with disabilities can participate successfully in the services offered by the setting and in the curriculum offered.
- We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents. 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 meet the needs of the community.
- The applicant who 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 as part of their specifications a commitment to promoting equality and recognising and respecting diversity.
- We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.
- Commitment to implementing the setting's Equal Opportunities Policy will form part of the job description for all employees and volunteers.
- A designated member of staff and a committee member will have particular responsibility for ensuring that our Equal Opportunities Policy is implemented.

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 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 setting encourage 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 critical thinking.

Our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. 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. 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 an 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 that each child receives the widest opportunity to develop their skills and 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;
- ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages; and
- ensure that a child's preferred format for communicating such as Makaton is recognised and measures are taken to understand and use that format.

Resources

These will be chosen 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 and derogatory pictures or messages about any group of people.

- **Special Needs**

Playgroup recognises the wide range of special needs of children and families in the community, and will carefully consider what part it can play in meeting those needs.

- Planning for Playgroup meetings and events will take into account the needs of people with disabilities of all kinds.

- **Discriminatory Behaviour/Remarks**

Discriminatory behaviour/remarks are unacceptable at Playgroup.

- The response will be to aim to be sensitive to the feelings of those discriminated against and to help those responsible to understand and try to overcome their prejudices.

- **Language**

Information, written and spoken will be clearly communicated in as many languages as necessary.

Food

- We work in partnership with parents to ensure that 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.

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 setting.
- We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of the setting and to contribute fully.
- We will develop the means to ensure their full inclusion of families who speak languages in addition to English.
- We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means and offer information regarding sources of financial support.

- **Meetings**

Meetings are arranged to ensure that all families who wish to may be involved in the running of the setting.

- 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 that our policies and procedures remain effective we will monitor and review them annually to ensure that our strategies meet the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and valuing diversity.
- We provide a complaints procedure and a complaints summary records for parents to see.

Legal Framework

The Equality Act 2010

Childrens Acts 1989 and 2004