

**Maple Grove Community Group**  
**Early Years Childcare Equality Policy**

The named person for Equal Opportunity is: **Miss Eleanor Ward**

Maple Grove Community Group works in accordance with all relevant legislation, included in:

- The Equality Act 2010 – protected characteristics covered by this act are: disability, pregnancy and maternity, race religion of belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (2002). This is now the single Equality Bill 2010.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA 2001).
- Race Relations Act 2000.
- Human Rights Act (1989).
- Equality Pay Act (1970).
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986.
- Children Act 1989 and 2004 (Care Standards Act 2000).
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

**Policy statement**

We believe that our settings activities should be open to all children and families, and to all adults committed to their education and care. We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with our Group have an equal chance to do so. We seek to challenge prejudice and discrimination and to create an anti-bias environment in which all children have a sense of belonging. We recognise that each child is unique and aim to meet their individual needs in order for them to achieve their full potential.

We promote and encourage positive attitudes and relationships between all our children, families and the wider community.

**The Diversity of families in our setting**

Our setting is located in the North of a busy market town, in the beautiful grounds of a large primary school, which we access regularly for a range of events. The setting offers the local community full day care provision (8am to 6pm) for children aged 2 years to 11 years of age, all year round. We are registered to provide care for up to 72 children at any one.

See the attached cohort for the full range of diversity and backgrounds of our families. The cohort is published on our website once a year. By publishing this information, we demonstrate our commitment to the specific duty within the Equality Act 2010.

The Group offers a flexible payment system to families who meet criteria of financial hardship.

**Recognising and respecting differences and diversity**

Our setting commits to valuing diversity. Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same. Our policies, procedures and activities promote equality and we challenge discriminatory behaviour and language. We take into account differences of life experience, background and individual needs and different types of barriers and disadvantages that people may face.

We respect the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, children and families, and will comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

**Admissions and transitions**

The Group is open to every family in the community.

We base our admissions policy on a fair system; children are admitted in date of birth order with a number of places being available to funded 2-year-olds. We will make reasonable adjustment to facilitate places for all children. We aim to fully support all transition phases and understand that different children and their families will need different levels of support to achieve smooth transitions.

**Festivals**

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all the major events in the lives of the children and families in the Group, and in our society as a whole, and to welcome the diversity of backgrounds from which they come.

## **Pre-school Day Care**

We use the following system for accepting children from the contact list:

- Children's names are placed on the contact list in date of birth order.
- When a place becomes available parents will be contacted to discuss sessions and start the induction process.

In any given place in pre-school priority is given to:

- Children in their pre-school year.
- Children who live in our primary school catchment area.
- Children who live outside catchment area with a sibling in Westwood Primary School.
- Children out of catchment area with no siblings in school.
- Any other children.

## **Out of School/Care for Pre-school and school age children**

This waiting list operates on a first come first served basis.

In order for Pre-school children to access the After School Club they must be registered and attending daycare during term time. School age children must attend Westwood Primary School.

Holiday Club is open to all children in the community aged (rising) 3 years to 11 years old including children from other local schools.

Families joining the Group are made aware of its Equality and Diversity policy, which is regularly reviewed.

## **Staff development and training**

We ensure that all staff, (including support staff and those involved in governance), receives appropriate training and opportunities for professional development to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices. All staff have completed 'Prevent' and FGM training and this will be updated every 3 years.

We ensure that staff are confident and fully trained to meet the individual needs of the children e.g. in administering medicines and performing intimate care procedures when these are needed through a vigorous induction process.

## **Employment and staffing**

Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against a fair criteria.

Applicants are welcomed from all backgrounds and we aim for staffing to represent the diversity of the community.

All job descriptions include the promotion of equality as part of their specifications.

All interviews include at least one equality and one SEND question.

## **Communication and Information**

We value and respect all communication, with children, parents/carers, staff and other professionals. We endeavour to listen and schedule meetings at accessible and convenient times. We aim to make information accessible to families using a range of formats including verbal and visual information, clear written information (including electronic) and translated materials where appropriate.

We aim to ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff, parents, carers and children where appropriate.

We will share the names of our setting's SENCo and ENCo with families.

We will provide a complaints procedure and a complaints summary record for parents.

## **Setting ethos, positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging**

Our policies, procedures and activities will promote positive interaction, good relationships and respect between individuals, groups and communities.

## **Resources, activities and the environment**

We aim to promote an inclusive ethos and offer children a range of relevant resources that positively reflect diversity, as well as suitable activities that reflect their interests. We make reasonable adjustments to ensure planning reflects equality of access to resources and activities for all children, including those with SEND and those that speak English as an additional language. We encourage children who speak English as an additional language to also speak their native language and understand the value that this has in contributing to a positive sense of identity, learning and general linguistic development.

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. Management of resources within the Group will ensure that all children have full access to all kinds of activities and equipment and are equally encouraged to enjoy and learn from them.

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

Resources will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an application of the rich diversity of our society.

Materials will be selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and by using images and words which reflect positively the contribution of all members of society.

## **Dietary Needs**

Working in partnership with parents/carers, children's medical, cultural and dietary needs will be met.

## **Special Educational Needs**

The Group recognises that children have a wide range of additional needs which differ from time to time, and will consider what part it can play in meeting these needs as they arise.

Whenever possible, the Group will be proactive in finding ways to make the setting more inclusive so that all children feel a sense of belonging from their first visit.

Planning for Group meetings and events will take into account the needs of people with special educational needs, religious and cultural needs, and disabilities.

## **Addressing prejudice – related incidents**

Any discriminatory language, behaviour or remarks by children, parents or any other adults are unacceptable in the Group.

Our response will aim to demonstrate support for the victim(s), to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices and to make it clear that such behaviour/remarks will not be tolerated. A prejudice related incident form will be completed, logged and filed. We will feedback anonymous data to the local authority.

## **Language**

Basic information, written and spoken, will be clearly communicated in as many languages as possible.

Bilingual and multilingual children and adults are an asset to the whole group. Parents will be encouraged to speak to children in their native language at home.

Children and parents who have English as a second or additional language will be valued and their languages recognised and respected in the Group.

**Narrowing the gap**

We aim to identify the vulnerable and underachieving groups within our setting and include strategies to close the gap in achievement between underachieving groups of children and others.

SEND is a recognised vulnerable group – in our setting we understand the need for early identification and assessment, we work closely with parents, and offer a differentiated curriculum, targeted learning and development to improve our outcomes for children with SEND.

We adhere to the Code of Practice for SEN 2014 (Graduated Approach to SEN – in four stages: Assess, Plan, Do, Review) or the Education Health and Care Plan. We seek further support via a Early help assessment (EHA).

Parents **MUST** be informed of each step and consent gained.

**Monitoring and review**

We continually review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policies.

We review our equalities policy regularly, at least on an annual basis, in consultation with staff, and the management committee.

**Committee meetings/AGM**

The Group will make every effort to ensure that the time, place and conduct of meetings enable the majority of parents to attend so that all families have an equal opportunity to be involved in and informed about the Group.

**This policy was adopted at a meeting of the Group on .....**

**Signed on behalf of the Group by.....**