**Tring Stepping Stones Pre-school**

**Promoting Inclusion, equality and valuing diversity**

We actively promote inclusion, equality of opportunity and value diversity. All early years settings have legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Those in receipt of public funding must eliminate discrimination including indirect, direct discrimination, discrimination and harassment based on association and perception and discrimination for reason relating to a disability or failing to make a reasonable adjustment to any provision, criterion or practice. This duty is anticipatory. Settings must advance quality of opportunity and foster good relations with individuals and groups with protected characteristics namely disability, race (ethnicity), religion and belief, sexual orientation, sex (gender), gender reassignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership. Settings also have obligations under the Prevent Duty (2015) which highlights the need to foster equality and prevent children from being drawn into harm and radicalisation.

**Aim**

Our provision actively promotes inclusion, equality of opportunity and the valuing of diversity.

**Objectives**

We support the definition of inclusion as stated by the Early Childhood Forum:

“Inclusion is the process of identifying, understanding and breaking down the barriers to participation and belonging”

We interpret this as consisting of several tasks and processes in relation not only to children but also to parents and visitors in the setting. These include awareness and knowledge of relevant barriers to inclusion for those with a protected characteristic.

This includes unlawful behaviour towards people with protected characteristics, unlawful behaviour being direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, associative discrimination, discrimination by perception, harassment and victimisation (in addition, we are aware of the inequality that users facing socio-economic disadvantages may also encounter). We will not tolerate behaviour from an adult whish demonstrates dislike and prejudice towards groups and individuals living outside the UK (xenophobia). This also applies to the same behaviour towards specific groups of people and individuals who are British Citizens residing in the UK.

We promote understanding of discrimination through training and staff development - the causes and effects of discrimination on both adults and children and the long-term impact of discrimination, the need to protect children from discrimination and ensure that early years practice is both accessible and inclusive; the need for relevant support to allow children to develop into confident adults with a strong positive self-identity.

Developing practice that includes

* Developing an environment which reflects the ‘kaleidoscope’ of factors that can provide settings with a myriad of influences and ideas for exploring and celebrating difference.
* Ensuring that barriers to inclusion are identified and removed or minimised wherever possible.
* Understanding, supporting and promoting the importance of identity for all children and recognising that this comprises multiple facets which are shaped by a ‘kaleidoscope’ of factors including British values, race/ethnicity and culture, gender, difference of ability, social class, language, religion and belief, and family form and lifestyle, which combine uniquely in the identity of each individual, for example we welcome and promote bi/multi- lingualism and the use of alternative communication formats such as sign language, and wee promote gender equality while at the same time recognising the differences in play preferences and developmental timetables of boys and girls.
* Recognising that this ‘kaleidoscope’ also reflects negative images which may be internalised and negatively affect the development of self-concept, self-esteem and confidence.
* Promoting a welcoming atmosphere that genuinely appreciates British Values, different cultural and personal perspectives without stereotyping and prejudicing cultures and traditions on raising children by always involving parents.
* Promoting community cohesion and creating an environment that pre-empts acts of discrimination so that they do not arise.
* Recruitment of staff to reflect cultural and language diversity, disabled staff and staff of both genders.
* Addressing discrimination as it occurs from children in a sensitive, age-appropriate manner to ensure that everyone involved understands the situation and are offered reassurance and support to achieve resolution.
* Challenging discriminatory behaviour from parents, staff or outside agencies or individuals that affect the well-being of children and the early years community.
* Creating an ethos within which staff work confidently within a culturally complex environment, learning when to change or adapt practice in the setting and having the confidence top challenge practice (include parental) that is not in the child’s best interest, seeking support and intervention from agencies where appropriate.
* Ensuring that educators work closely with Special Educational Needs Coordinator to make sure that the additional needs of all children are identified and met.
* We are aware of anti-discriminatory legislation and are able to use it to shape the service and support parents and children against discrimination in the local community for example against asylum seekers, same sex parents and the travelling community.
* We regularly monitor and review our practice including long term preventative measures to ensure equality such as auditing of provision. In addition, short term measures such as recognition and assessment of children additional support needs (e.g., impairment, home language, family hardship, specific family beliefs and practices), day-to-day activities, provision of suitable support and resources, activity programme and curriculum, assessment, recognition of special educational needs and developing inclusive relationships.

**Promoting identity, positive self-concept and self-esteem for all children through treating each child as an individual and with equal concern, ensuring each child’s developmental and emotional needs are recognised and met.**

The curriculum offered in the pre-school encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to 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 will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled children and adults.

We do this by:

* Promoting inclusive practice to ensure every child is welcomed and value
* Making children feel valued and good about themselves and others;
* Ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
* We form good relationships with parents, carers and children, spend time with our key children and observing them in order to find out about their needs, interests and stage of development.
* Discussing aspects of family/child identity with parents when settling in a new child.
* We plan activities to meet and support each child’s individual interests, needs and learning development.
* We plan our curriculum to be accessible to all children in the setting through differentiation and where necessary making adjustments to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairments;
* Positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources;
* Avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of materials;
* Celebrating festivals and beliefs of the families in our settings
* Creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
* Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable;
* Ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities. We do have an appointed SENCO in the setting, Lucy Brittain, who attends regular clusters and training to ensure our setting is reviewing and updating our inclusive practice.
* We aim to identify the need for additional support as early as possible. We work in partnership with parents, carers, children and other agencies to give children consistent care and support.
* Ensuring that children whose first language is not English have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning.
* Maintaining a positive non-judgemental attitude and use of language with children to talk about topics such as family composition/background, eye and skin colour, hair texture, sex, gender, physical attributes and languages spoken (including signing).
* Becoming knowledgeable about different cultures, and individual subjective perceptions of these and being able to reflect them imaginatively and creatively in the setting to create pride, interest and positive self-identity.
* Discussing similarities and differences positively without bias and judgement.
* Celebrating festivals, holy days and special days authentically through involving parents, staff or the wider community to provide a positive experience for all.
* Providing books with positive images of children and families from all backgrounds and abilities. Avoiding caricatures or cartoon-like depictions, and ensuring individual differences are portrayed with sensitive accuracy. The central characters in individual stories should provide a positive, broad representation of diversity e.g. disability, ethnicity, sex and gender, age and social backgrounds. Individual storylines should contain a range of situations which are easily identifiable by children such as those that include disabled children/adults, different ethnic groups, mixed heritage families, gender diversity, single sex/same and different sex families, multi-generational households and cultural diversity.
* Providing visual materials, such as posters and pictures that provide non-stereotypical images of people, places and cultures and roles that are within children’s range of experience. This includes photographs taken by staff of the local and wider community, of parents and families and local events.
* Ensuring toys, learning materials and resources reflect diversity and provide relevant materials for exploring aspects of difference, such as skin tone paints and pens.
* Developing a range of activities through which children can explore aspects of their identity, explore similarities, differences and develop empathy including:
* self-portraits, photograph albums and displays showing a range of families
* books about ‘me’ or my family
* persona doll stories which sympathetically and authentically represent diversity
* food activities, such as tasting and cooking, creating real menu additions
* activities about real celebrations such as new babies, weddings, cultural and religious events
* provide mirrors at different heights for babies and other non-ambulant children
* developing a music area with a variety of musical instruments for babies and children to use to create a range of music.
* home corner play which encourages all children to equally participate and provides domestic articles from diverse cultures
* ‘dressing up’ materials which promote non-gendered roles and enable children to explore different gender identities/gender neutrality
* providing dolls that sensitively and accurately portray difference such as disability and ethnicity
* use of a variety of music to play to children of different genres and cultural styles with a variety of musical instruments for children to access
* a language and literacy area with a variety of books, some with dual language texts and signs, involving parents in the translation where possible
* conversations with young children which explore unfamiliar objects and subjects to help foster an understanding of diversity and identity such as spectacles or hearing aids, religious and cultural practices
* Record keeping that refers to children’s emerging bilingual skills or their use of sign language as achievements in positive terms.
* Record keeping that refers to children’s differing abilities and identities in positive terms.
* Records that show the relevant involvement of all children, especially children with special educational needs and disabilities, those using English as an additional language and those who are ‘more abled’ in the planning of their care and education.

### **Admissions**

* We advertise our service widely.
* Our pre-school is open to all members of the community.
* 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 different languages wherever possible and as requested.
* We base our admissions policy on a fair system.
* We ensure that all parents are made aware of our Promoting inclusion, equality and valuing diversity. We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting on the basis of a protected characteristic as defined by the Equalities Act (2010). These are: disability; race; gender reassignment; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; age; pregnancy and maternity; and marriage and civil partnership.
* We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our pre-school for reason relating to disability. We provide information on our offer of provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
* We develop 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, prejudice, harassing or victimising behaviour by staff/volunteers or parents whether by:
* -          direct discrimination – someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic e.g. preventing families of some racial groups 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 because of their mannerisms or how they speak.

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 xenophobia and possibly offensive 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.

**Ensuring that barriers to equality and inclusion are identified and removed or minimised wherever possible.**

* Barriers may include:
* lack of understanding - where the language spoken at the setting is not that which is spoken at a child’s home
* perceived barriers – affordability where parents are not aware of financial support available or assume that a service is not available to them. Perceived barriers may also be physical barriers for those children or parents with a disability or additional needs where they assume, they will not be able to access the service
* physical barriers – where there are environmental features which stop a disabled child or disabled parent accessing the setting such as stairs
* negative attitudes – stereotypes and prejudices or commitment by staff and managers to the time and energy required to identify and remove barriers to accessibility
* unconscious and conscious bias of staff towards some families such as those from other backgrounds, disabled parents, same sex parents and families with specific religious beliefs
* gendered views of staff which limit children’s aspirations and choices
* misconceptions such as disabled children should not attend settings during a pandemic due to heightened risk
* lack of effective Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the homes of families who are vulnerable or at risk and therefore unable to keep in close contact with the childcare provider
* Staff are aware of the different barriers to inclusion and equality and consider the wider implications for children and their families.

**Supporting children to become considerate adults**

* Children’s social and emotional development is shaped by early experiences and relationships and incorporates elements of equality and British and Universal values. The EYFS supports children’s earliest skills in an age appropriate way to become social citizens, namely listen and attend to instructions; know the difference between right and wrong; recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others; make and maintain friendships; develop empathy and consideration of other people; take turns in play and conversation; risk taking behaviours, rules and boundaries; not to hurt/upset other people with words and actions; consequences of hurtful/discriminatory behaviour and regulating behaviour.

## Employment

* Posts are advertised as necessary 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 checks by the Criminal Records Bureau. 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.
* It is recognised that members of staff in diverse teams bring a range of views and opinions to the setting regarding a range of issues to do with the job. It is important that a range of views and perspectives are shared and respected in staff meetings and that decisions are made on which way of looking at the situation will result in the best outcomes for the child.
* Members of staff make the best use of different perspectives in the team to find solutions to difficult problems that arise in socially/culturally complex situations.
* Members of staff support each other to highlight similarities and respect differences.

### **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 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 Promoting inclusion, equality and valuing diversity

### **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 pre-school.
* We encourage mothers, fathers and other carers to take part in the life of pre-school and to contribute fully.
* For families who have a first language other than English, we value the contribution their culture and language offers pre-school.
* 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 disadvantages and under-represented groups to use the setting.

### **Food**

* We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, religious, cultural and dietary needs of children are 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**

* Meetings are advertised and arranged to ensure that all families who wish to be involved in the running of pre-school have the opportunity to do so.
* 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 to ensure that all parents have information about and access to the meetings.
* We vary the days and times of committee meetings, events and pre-school open days and evenings to give the opportunity for everyone to be able to attend at some time.

**Monitoring and reviewing**

* To ensure 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; it is filed in the parent’s policy log file which is kept on display in the foyer during pre-school sessions.

**British values**

The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are already implicitly embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are further clarified here based on *Fundamental British values in the Early Years* (<https://foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Fundamental-British-Values-in-the-Early-Years-2017.pdf>)

*Democracy*: making decisions together

* For self-confidence and self-awareness (PSED), practitioners encourage children to see the bigger picture, children know their views count, value each other’s views and values and talk about feelings e.g. when they do or do not need help.
* Supporting the decisions children make and providing activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration. Children are given opportunities to develop enquiring minds, where questions are valued and prejudice attitudes less likely.

*Rule of law***:** understanding rules matter (PSED)

* Practitioners ensure children understand their and others’ behaviour and consequence.
* Practitioners collaborate with children to create rules and codes of behaviour, e.g. rules about tidying up and ensure all children understand that rules apply to everyone.

*Individual liberty***:** freedom for all (PSED & UW)

* Children should develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, for example through allowing children to take risks on an obstacle course, mixing colours, exploring facets of their own identity, talking about their experiences and learning. **Logo, icon, company name

  Description automatically generated**Practitioners encourage a range of experiences, allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on differences and understand we are free to have different opinions, for example in a small group discuss what they feel about transferring into Reception Class.

*Mutual respect and tolerance*: treat others as you want to be treated (PSED & UW)

* Staff create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures and races are valued and children are engaged with the wider community.
* Children should acquire tolerance, appreciation and respect for their own and other cultures; know about similarities and differences between themselves, others and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions.
* Staff encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours such as sharing and respecting other’s opinions.
* Staff promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example, sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children’s experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural/racial stereotyping.

It is not acceptable to:

* actively promote intolerance of other faiths, cultures and races
* fail to challenge gender stereotypes and routinely segregate girls and boys
* isolate children from their wider community
* fail to challenge behaviours (whether of staff, children, or parents) that are not in line with the fundamental values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

**Legal References**

The Equality Act (2010)

General Data Regulation 2018

Children and Families Act Part 3 (2014)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2014)

Disability Equality Duty 2011

Prevent Strategy 2010

**Further Guidance**

Guide to the Equality Act and Good Practice (Alliance 2015)

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| This policy was adopted at a meeting of | Tring Stepping Stones Pre-school |  |
| Held on | September 2023 |  |
| Date to be reviewed | September 2024 |  |
| Signed on behalf of the management committee |  | |
| Name of signatory |  | |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) |  | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Staff name | Date | signature |
| Lucy Brittain |  |  |
| Nicola Poulton |  |  |
| Nicola Reynolds |  |  |
| Kim Smith |  |  |
| Jo Davis |  |  |
|  |  |  |
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Changes September 2014

Changed the header at the top of the page.

* We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff, volunteers or parents. Etc. all added in
* 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 will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled children and adults.

September 2015

Added line about providing information on our offer for provision for children with SEND.

Added section about discrimination arising from disability. Updated legal framework and useful publications.

October 2016- added Inclusion into the title and a sentence “We will not tolerate behaviour from an adult who demonstrates dislike or prejudice towards individuals who are perceived to be from another country (xenophobia).”

October 2017 –changed from celebrate a range of festivals to “celebrate the festivals and beliefs of families in our setting

November 2018- no changes

November 2019- no changes

December 2020-no changes

June 2022 New EYA Promoting Inclusion Diversity and Equality Policy

New section added to curriculum.

Removed: Making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities, e.g. recognising the different learning styles of girls and boys.

Added Ensuring That barriers to equality & inclusion …

Supporting Children to become considerate adults and British Values sections #(to replace British Values policy)

September 2023 – Changed title of policy from “Valuing diversity and promoting equality” to “Promoting Inclusion, equality and valuing diversity”. Change of wording in the first paragraph from settings “have public equality duties to eliminate” to “settings must eliminate”. Added large amount of new content headed Aims and Objectives sections. Updated legal framework to legal references and added General Date Regulations 2018, Disability Equality Duty 2011 and Prevent Strategy 2010. Updated further guidance section. Changed staff names to reflect staff that have left/joined since last policy update.