

## **Equal Opportunities**

### **Statement of Intent**

The nursery is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all persons and works in accordance with the following legislation;

- 1 Disabled Persons Act 1958, 1986
- 2 Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- 3 Sex Discrimination Act 1986
- 4 Childrens Act 1989
- 5 Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- 6 Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

The nursery takes great care to treat each individual as a person in their own right, with equal rights and responsibilities to any other individual, whether they be adult or child. The nursery is committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families according to their individual needs. Discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, race, religion/belief, colour, creed, marital status, ethic or national origin, or political belief, has no place within this nursery.

We believe that the nursery's activities should be open to all children and families, and to all adults committed to their welfare.

A commitment to implementing our equal opportunities policy will form part of each employee's job description. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the nursery owner at the earliest opportunity.

The nursery and staff are committed to;

- 1 recruiting, selecting, training and promoting individuals on the basis of occupational skills requirements. In this respect, the nursery will ensure that no job application or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, marital status, race, religion/belief, colour, cultural or national origin, or sexuality, which cannot be justified as being necessary for the safe and effective performance of their work or training
- 2 providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who are designated disabled or disadvantaged according to their individual circumstances, and the nursery's ability to provide the necessary standard of care
- 3 striving to promote equal access to services and projects by taking practical steps, (where possible) such as ensuring access to people with additional needs and by producing materials in relevant languages and media and providing disabled facilities, such as a suitable bathroom and access ramps to buildings
- 4 providing a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and all contributions are valued
- 5 including and valuing the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity
- 6 providing positive non-stereotype information about different ethnic groups and people with disabilities
- 7 improving our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality and diversity
- 8 recognising that many different types of families successfully love and care for children
- 9 regularly reviewing childcare practice to ensure the policy is effective and to identify and change any practices which are discriminatory
- 10 making inclusion a thread, which runs through all of the activities of the

nursery, including encouraging positive role models through the use of toys, imaginary play and activities that promote non-stereotyped images.

#### Admissions/service provision

The group is open to every family in the community. Families joining the group are made aware of its equal opportunities policy.

The nursery will strive to ensure that all services and projects are accessible to all groups and individuals in the community within targeted age groups.

#### Recruitment

The nursery will strive in its recruitment to ensure that the staffing levels reflect the community it serves. All vacancies will be advertised as widely as budget allows. Adverts will include the following statement:

***'The Old School House (Headcorn) Ltd – striving towards equal opportunity'***

Every effort will be made to ensure there is a representative balance on the selection group and all members of the group will be committed to equal opportunities practice as set out in this policy and will have received appropriate training in this regard.

Application forms will be sent out along with a copy of the equal opportunities policy. Application forms will not include questions that potentially discriminate against the grounds specified in the statement of intent.

At interview no questions will be posed which potentially discriminate against the grounds specified in the statement of intent. At interview, all candidates will be

asked the same questions, and members of the selection group will not introduce or use any personal knowledge of the candidates acquired outside the selection process. The group will appoint the best person for the job, based on occupational skills. Candidates will be given the opportunity to receive feedback on the reasons why they were not successful.

### Staff

It is the policy of The Old School House (Headcorn) Ltd not to discriminate, whether directly, or indirectly in the treatment of others. All staff are expected to co-operate with the implementation, monitoring and improvement of this and other policies. All staff are expected to challenge language, actions, behaviours and attitudes which are oppressive or discriminatory on the grounds that are specified in this policy. Staff participate in equal opportunities training.

### Training

The nursery recognises the importance of training as a key factor in the implementation of an effective equal opportunity policy. The nursery will strive towards the provision of regular equal opportunities training for staff .

### Curriculum

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment will offer children the opportunity to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others. The curriculum offered in the nursery encourages children to develop positive attitudes to people who are different from them. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

We do this by:

- 1 making children feel valued and good about themselves
- 2 ensuring that children have equality of access to learning
- 3 reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources
- 4 avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of materials
- 5 celebrating a wide range of appropriate festivals
- 6 creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance
- 7 helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable
- 8 ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities
- 9 ensuring that children whose first language is not English have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning

### Festivals

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all 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.

In order to achieve this, we aim to acknowledge festivals which are celebrated in our area and/or by families involved in the group:

Without indoctrination in any specific faith, children will be made aware of the festivals which are being celebrated by their own families or others, and will be introduced where appropriate to the stories behind the festivals.

Children and families who celebrate at home festivals with which the rest of the group are not familiar will be invited to share their festival with the rest of the

group, if they themselves wish to do so.

Children will be encouraged to welcome a range of different festivals, together with the stories, celebrations and special foods and clothing involved, as part of the diversity of life.

### Resources

These will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multi-cultural society. Materials will be selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and derogatory pictures or messages about any group of people.

### Food

We will work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met. We will help children to learn about a range of food, cultural approaches to meal times and eating, and to respect the differences among them

### Discriminatory behaviour/remarks – staff or children

These are unacceptable. The response will aim to be sensitive to the feelings of the victim(s) and to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices. Further action may be taken if necessary.

### Language

Bilingual/multilingual children and adults are an asset. They will be valued and their languages recognised and respected.

## Policy 05

### **Personnel**

The nursery's policies in respect of personnel are governed by the following:

- 1 the best interests of the children, their welfare and development
- 2 the requirements of the National Standards and Ofsted's Early Years Directorate
- 3 compatibility between all members of staff and building a good team spirit
- 4 consideration of the advancement of each member of staff by both internal and external training to help them achieve their maximum potential
- 5 equal pay for work of equal value
- 6 compliance with the current legislation
- 7 the provision of a personnel specification and job description for each member of staff
- 8 the provision of a statement of terms and conditions for each member of staff
- 9 when recruiting members of staff, the applicant should be made aware of the policies and procedures, especially those relating to discrimination and equal opportunities
- 10 prior to the commencement of employment the successful applicant shall be provided with an offer letter (conditional on Criminal Record Bureau clearance) with the job description and induction procedure
- 11 harassment of any member of staff that can be classed as sexual, racial, age, religious, or political belief related will not be acceptable. This includes unwanted verbal or physical advances – the key factor in assessing harassment is whether it is unwanted.