

St Matthew's Preschool Policy

6.1 Valuing diversity and promoting equal opportunities

Policy statement

We will ensure that the setting is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children. We recognise that children and their families come from diverse backgrounds. All families have needs and values that arise from their social and economic, ethnic and cultural or religious backgrounds. Children grow up in diverse family structures that include two parent and one parent families; some children have two parents of the same sex. Some children have close links with extended families of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins while others may be more removed from close kin or may live with other relatives or foster carers. Some children have needs that arise from disability or impairment or may have parents that are affected by disability or impairment.

Some children come from families who experience social exclusion or severe hardship; some have to face discrimination and prejudice because of their ethnicity, the languages they speak, their religious or belief background, their gender or their impairment.

We understand that these factors affect the well-being of children and can impact on their learning and attainment.

Our setting is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families. We aim to:

- provide a secure and accessible environment in which all our children can flourish and in which contributions from all families are considered and valued;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles and diverse family structures, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people;
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity;
- challenge and eliminate discriminatory actions;
- make inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities of the setting; and
- develop good relations between all communities.

Procedures

Admissions

Our setting is open to all members of the community.

- We aim to provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.

- We provide information in as many languages as possible when requested.
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy.
- 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 setting for reason relating to disability unless we feel this would be detrimental to the child or the other children within the setting.
- We develop an action plan to ensure that people with impairments can participate successfully within the setting and in the curriculum offered. Please inform us if we are not aware of the impairment.
- We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff 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 setting;
 - indirect discrimination - someone is affected unfavourably by a general policy e.g. children must only speak English in the setting;
 - 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. assuming someone is bisexual/ transgender/ homosexual because of their mannerism or how they speak.
- The action taken will be: a verbal warning to staff and/or parents involved, if this behaviour continues staff will be given a written warning and the parents would be asked to remove their child permanently from the setting.
- Displaying of openly discriminatory and possibly offensive materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable and will be dealt with in the strongest manner.

Employment

- Vacancies are advertised and all applicants are judged against fair criteria.
- Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and vacancies are open to all.
- We may use the exemption clauses in relevant legislation to enable the setting to best meet the needs of the community.

- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the position, subject to references and checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service. This ensures fairness in the selection process.
- We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for staff to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which enable all children to flourish.
- We ensure that staff are fully trained in administering relevant medicines and performing invasive care procedures when these are required. This training may need to be provided by the parents concerned.
- 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 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. 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 and others;
- ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
- making adjustments to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairments where possible;
- making appropriate provision where possible within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities.
- 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 setting.

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

Food

- We work in partnership with parents to ensure that dietary requirements of children that arise from their medical, religious or cultural needs are met.
- We help children to learn about a range of food and to respect the differences among them.

Meetings

- Meetings are arranged on an individual basis to ensure that all who wish to may be involved.
- Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways - written, verbal and in translation if requested - to ensure that all involved have information about and access to the meetings.

Monitoring and reviewing

- To ensure our policies and procedures remain effective we will monitor and review them when necessary to ensure our strategies meets the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and valuing diversity.
- We provide complaints procedure information for parents to see on the noticeboard.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

St Matthew's Preschool

Held on

_____ (date)

Date to be reviewed

_____ (date)

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

Role of signatory
