

17. Equality and Diversity Policy

Our Group is committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families. We have a named Equal Opportunities representative (Gina Prescott, Group Leader).

We aim to:

1. Provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued;
2. Include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
3. Provide positive, non-stereotyping, information about different ethnic groups and people with disabilities;
4. Improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality and diversity; and
5. Make inclusion a thread, which runs through all of the activities of the Group.

The legal framework for this policy is:

- Race Relations Act 1976;
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000;
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986;
- The Children Act 2004; and
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Disability and Discrimination Act 2005
- SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years 2014

Methods

Admissions

Our Group is open to all members of the community.

1. We advertise our service widely.
2. We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
3. We base our admissions policy on a fair system.
4. We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our Group on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion or social background, such as being a member of a travelling community or an asylum seeker.
5. We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our Group because of any disability.
6. We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy.
7. We develop an action plan to ensure that people with disabilities can participate successfully in the services offered by the Group and in the activities offered.
8. We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents. Displaying of openly racist insignia, distribution of racist material, name calling or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner.

Employment

Holy Apostles' Pavilion Group

1. Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
2. Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all.
3. 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 equality and diversity as part of their specifications.
4. We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.
5. The Group Leader holds a current Safer Recruitment Certificate.

Training

1. We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop practices which enable all children to flourish.
2. We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for equality and diversity.

Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) delivered in the Group encourages children to develop positive attitudes to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

We do this by:

- making children feel valued and good about themselves;
- ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
- reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources;
- avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of materials;
- celebrating a wide range of festivals;
- 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;
- and ensuring that children whose first language is not English have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning.

Valuing Diversity in Families

- We welcome the diversity of family life and work with all families.
- We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life into the Group.
- We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of the Group and to contribute fully.
- For families who have a first language other than English, we value the contribution their culture and language offers.
- We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means, as explained in our payment policy.

Food

Holy Apostles' Pavilion Group

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

Meetings

1. Meetings are arranged to ensure as far as is practical that all families who wish to may be involved in the running of the Group.
2. Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways – printed, by email and verbal, and in translation if possible - to ensure that all parents have information about access to the meetings.

Racism

It is our Group policy:-

- that no child or adult should be treated in any way differently, or in a derogatory manner, because of their race
- to challenge racism in the context of a caring Group community

In order to fulfil the above, the following types of behaviour will not be tolerated:-

- provocative behaviour, i.e. the wearing of any racist badges or insignias,
- the use of verbal abuse or name calling of a racist nature
- the encouragement of others to behave in a racist way
- the ridiculing of an individual for cultural differences, eg food, dress, music etc.
- the telling of racist jokes or stories

Section 71 of the Race Relations Act 1976 states:-

Without prejudice to their obligation to comply with any other provision of this Act, it shall be the duty of every local authority to make appropriate arrangements with a view to securing that their various functions are carried out with due regard for the need:-

- to eliminate unlawful racist discrimination, and
- to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different "racial groups"

What is classed as racist behaviour?

Racist behaviour is defined by the Commission for Racial Equality as:-

"any hostile or offensive act by a person of one racial and ethnic origin against a person of another racial group of ethnic origin, or any incitement to commit such an act in:-

- such a manner that interferes with the peace and comfort of the aggrieved person
- that the person aggrieved fear for their safety".

Last reviewed: November 2023

Due for review: biennial
