Inclusion, Equality and Discrimination Policy

Statement of intent

At Little Stars Pre-school we take great care to treat everyone as a person in their own right, with equal rights and responsibilities to any other individual, whether they are an adult or a child. We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in or volunteer to help with the Preschool, in the knowledge that it is a Church affiliated group with a Christian ethos, have an equal chance to do so. We are 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 or belief, marriage or civil partnership, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, ethnic or national origin, or political belief has no place within our Pre-school.

A commitment to implementing our inclusion and equality 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 Pre-school manager at the earliest opportunity. Appropriate steps will then be taken to investigate the matter and if such concerns are well-founded, disciplinary action will be invoked under the Pre-school's disciplinary policy.

We aim to create an atmosphere where the victims of any form of discrimination have confidence to report such behaviour, and that subsequently they feel positively supported by the staff and management of the Pre-school.

Legal Framework

The legal framework for this policy is based on:

- Special Education Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 2015
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Childcare Act 2006
- Children Act 2004
- Care Standards Act 2002
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

Our commitment

The Pre-school and staff are committed to:

- Recruiting, selecting, training, and promoting individuals on the basis of occupational skills requirements. In this respect, the Pre-school will ensure that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment because of age, sex, gender reassignment, disability, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy or

maternity/paternity which cannot be justified as being necessary for the safe and effective performance of their work or training

- Providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or are deemed disadvantaged according to their individual circumstances, and the Pre-school's ability to provide the necessary standard of care
- Making reasonable adjustments for children with special educational needs and disabilities
- Striving to promote equal access to services and projects by taking practical steps (wherever possible and reasonable), such as ensuring access to people with additional needs and by producing materials in relevant languages and media for all children and their families
- Providing a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and all contributions are valued
- Including and valuing the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality, inclusion and diversity
- Providing positive non-stereotypical information
- Continually improving our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality, inclusion and diversity
- Regularly reviewing, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive practices to ensure they promote and value diversity and difference and that the policy is effective and practices are non-discriminatory
- Making inclusion a thread which runs through the entirety of the Pre-school, for example, by encouraging positive role models through the use of toys, imaginary play and activities, promoting non-stereotypical images and language and challenging all discriminatory behaviour (see dealing with discriminatory behaviour below).

Admissions/service provision

The Pre-school is accessible to all children and families in the local community and further afield through a comprehensive and inclusive admissions policy.

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

Information about the Pre-school, its activities and their children's development will be given in a variety of ways according to individual needs (written, verbal and translated), to ensure that all parents can access the information they need and be able to contribute their ideas about the running of the Pre-school.

Early Learning Framework

Early learning opportunities offered in the Pre-school encourage 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:

- Making children feel valued and good about themselves
- Ensuring that all children have equal access to early learning and play opportunities

- Reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources
- Avoiding stereotypical or derogatory images in the selection of materials
- Acknowledging and celebrating a wide range of religions, beliefs and festivals
- Creating an environment of mutual respect and empathy
- Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable
- Ensuring that all early learning opportunities offered are inclusive of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Ensuring that children whose first language is not English have full access to early learning opportunities and are supported in their learning
- Working in partnership with all families to ensure they understand the policy and challenge any discriminatory comments made
- Ensuring the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met
- Identifying a key person to each child who will continuously observe, assess and plan for children's learning and development
- Helping children to learn about a range of food and cultural approaches to meal times and to respect the differences among them.

Dealing with Discriminatory Behaviour

At Little Stars Pre-school we do not tolerate discriminatory behaviour and take action to tackle discrimination whether against children, parents or carers, staff, or any other helper. We believe that parents have a right to know if discrimination occurs and what actions the Pre-school will take to tackle it.

- We follow our legal duties in relation to discrimination and record all incidents any perceived or actual relating to discrimination on any grounds
- We report incidents where relevant to children's parents and the registering authority.
- We recognise that there are many types of discrimination including:
    - Direct discrimination - when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic
    - Discrimination by association - when there is a direct discrimination against a person because they associate with a person who has a protected characteristic
    - Discrimination by perception - when there is a direct discrimination against a person because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic
    - Indirect discrimination - where a provision, criterion or practice is in place which applies to everyone in the organisation but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic
    - Harassment - where unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic occurs, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual
    - Victimisation - when an employee is treated badly or put to detriment because they have made or supported a complaint or raised grievance under the Equality Act 2010 or have been suspected of doing so.
- The nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:
    - Age
    - Disability

    - Gender reassignment
    - Race
    - Religion or belief
    - Sex
    - Sexual orientation
    - Marriage and civil partnership
    - Pregnancy and maternity.

- We recognise that:
    - incidents may involve a small or large number of persons
    - they may vary in their degree of offence; in some cases the perpetrator may not even recognise the incident has discriminatory implications or, at the other extreme, their behaviour may be quite deliberate and blatant.

- Examples of discriminatory behaviour are:
    - Physical assault against a person or group of people
    - Derogatory name calling, insults and discriminatory jokes
    - Graffiti and other written insults (depending on the nature of what is written)
    - Provocative behaviour such as wearing badges and insignia and the distribution of discriminatory literature
    - Threats against a person or group of people pertaining to the nine protected characteristics listed above
    - Discriminatory comments including ridicule made in the course of discussions
    - Patronising words or actions.

We tackle discrimination by:

- Expecting all staff in the Pre-school to be aware of and alert to any discriminatory behaviour or bullying taking place
- Expecting all staff to intervene firmly and quickly to prevent any discriminatory behaviour or bullying, this may include behaviour from parents and other staff members
- Expecting all staff to treat any allegation seriously and report it to the Pre-school manager.
- Investigating and recording each incident in detail as accurately as possible and making this record available for inspection by staff, inspectors and parents where appropriate, on request.
    - The Pre-school manager is responsible for ensuring that incidents are handled appropriately and sensitively and entered in the record book. Any pattern of behaviour should be indicated. Perpetrator/victim's initials may be used in the record book as information on individuals is confidential to the Pre-school

- Where an allegation is substantiated following an investigation, informing the parents of the child(ren) who are perpetrators and/or victims of the incident and of the outcome.
- Excluding or dismissing any individuals who display continued discriminatory behaviour or bullying, but such steps will only be taken when other strategies have failed to modify behaviour. This includes any employees where any substantiated allegation after investigation will incur our disciplinary procedures (please see the policy on disciplinary procedures).

We record any incidents of discriminatory behaviour or bullying to ensure that:

- Strategies are developed to prevent future incidents
- Patterns of behaviour are identified
- Persistent offenders are identified

- Effectiveness of Pre-school policies are monitored
- A secure information base is provided to enable the Pre-school to respond to any discriminatory behaviour or bullying.

If the behaviour shown by an individual is deemed to be radicalised, we will follow our procedure as detailed in our Safeguarding Policy in order to safeguard children and families concerned.

Recruitment

Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than one person if possible.

All members of the selection group will be committed to the inclusive practice set out in this policy and will have received appropriate training in this regard.

Candidates for posts will be sourced internally, through prior contacts or through advertising for the specific post.

Where vacancies are advertised, this will be to a diverse section of the labour market. Our advertisements will avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.

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

At interview, no questions will be posed which potentially discriminate on the grounds specified in the statement of intent. Members of the selection group will not introduce nor use any personal knowledge of candidates acquired outside the selection process. Candidates will be given the opportunity to receive feedback on the reasons why they were not successful.

Although we will not ask any health-related questions prior to offering someone work in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the Pre-school will apply the following guidance specific to working with children, namely that:

- We have a responsibility to ensure that practitioners have the health and physical capacity to teach and will not put children and young people at risk of harm.
    - The activities that a practitioner must be able to perform are set out in the Education (Health Standards England) Regulations 2003.
    - We are responsible for ensuring that only practitioners who have the capacity to teach remain on the staff team.
- People with disabilities or chronic illnesses may have the capacity to teach, just as those without disabilities or medical conditions may be unsuitable to teach. Further information on training to teach with a disability is available from the DfE website.

Successful applicants offered a position may be asked to complete a fitness questionnaire prior to commencing the programme. We will only ask targeted and relevant health-related questions, which are necessary to ensure that a person is able to teach.

Special Consideration for Employees

At Little Stars Pre-school we recognise that certain employees such as young persons, new and expectant mothers and persons with a disability may require special consideration.

The Pre-school follows the legal requirements set out in The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 and the Equality Act 2010. We will have regard to any employees requiring special consideration at the commencement of employment and during the course of it. The following procedure is followed by the Pre-school manager:

- Carry out an assessment required special considerations for the employee in conjunction with the individual on induction to the Pre-school or when their condition or disablement comes to light
- Carry out risk assessments relating to the occupation of the employee
- Agree with the employee any necessary special measures such as training and supervision, arrangements, modifications and medical surveillance
- Carry out further assessments and reviews at least annually, or when any changes to the special circumstances or environment occur.

All staff are encouraged to inform the Pre-school about their condition if they are disabled or become disabled so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.

Staff Responsibilities

- All staff are expected to co-operate with the implementation, monitoring and improvement of this and other policies.
- All staff are expected to recognise and celebrate other cultures and traditions.
- All staff are expected to challenge language, actions, behaviours and attitudes which are oppressive or discriminatory on the grounds specified in this policy
    - We expect all staff to be alert and seek to overcome any ignorant or offensive behaviour based on fear or dislike of distinctions that children, staff or parents may express in Pre-school.
- It is incumbent upon all members of staff to ensure that they do not express any views or comments that are discriminatory; or appear to endorse such views by failing to counter behaviour, which is prejudicial in a direct manner. We expect all staff to use a sensitive and informed approach to counter any harassment perpetrated out of ignorance.
- Where staff observe any discriminatory behaviours, they should follow the procedures set out in the section 'Dealing with Discriminatory Behaviours' above.
- The Pre-school recognises the importance of training as a key factor in the implementation of an effective inclusion and equality policy. All new staff receive induction training including specific reference to the inclusion and equality policy. The Pre-school will strive towards the provision of inclusion, equality and diversity training for all staff.
- All staff are expected to participate in equality and inclusion training.

Review / Version Control				
Review period - 3 years				
Version	Created	Reviewed	Initials	Changes
Inclusion, Equality and Discrimination Policy (v1.0)	03/2020		DH / AP	
Inclusion, Equality and Discrimination Policy (v2.0)	03/2022		DH AP	Reworded, and Discrimination added to Title
Inclusion, Equality and Discrimination Policy - Oct24 – v2.1	10/2024		DH AP	Changed template and added version control. No changes to wording