



Diversity, Inclusion, and equal opportunities Policy

At Next Steps we believe in giving all children and adults in our setting the opportunity to reach their full potential through an anti-discriminative practice. No one person in our care/employment will be discriminated against in anyway, whether for their skin colour, culture, gender, ability, race, sexual orientation, or religion.

We follow the guidelines and legal responsibilities of The Equality Act 2010, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) every child matters to promote social, cultural diversity and value the economic society we live in. We strive to provide an anti-discriminatory setting and equality of opportunities for all children in our care. We are committed to ensure children feel valued and included, regardless of their background.

Whilst caring for the children we....

- Provide relevant care for children with any medical, cultural and dietary needs in a safe way allowing them to remain with the rest of their peers in these instances. *'Children develop in the context of relationships and the environment around them. This is unique to each family, and reflects individual communities and cultures.'* (Development Matters EYFS)
- Allow all children in our care are given the opportunity to play with all the toys (subject to health and safety with children under 3 years of age). No toys are gender specific and we try to ensure the toys reflect a positive image of children and people from different cultures and with different abilities. We have toys and resources that challenge stereotypical ideas such as gender specific jobs such as a fireman or postman etc. Sometimes this means adapting an activity to meet each child's ability and stage of development, providing additional resources or support such as one to one attention or giving more support to children who struggle with activities or routines.
- Encourage the children in our care to learn more about their own culture and to find out about the culture and religion of other children. We do this through sharing books, colouring sheets, cooking and eating food from around the world and celebrating festivals from all religions. To help with their understanding we provide dressing up clothes, multicultural skin colour crayons, pencils and dolls.
- Encourage the children to develop a healthy respect of each other's differences and value everyone as an individual.

- Assess any special needs whether they are physical, cognitive, educational or even language barriers. We would then make relevant adaptations to include children in activities, play areas and outings.
- We allocate every child immediately with a keyworker. This will always be the person they will see the most regardless of disabilities, race or culture allowing a bond to form.

Any child within the setting with an additional need will receive support from the staff to ensure that they are included and involved in all activities if they wish to be. Any child with an additional need will not be more or less favourable than any other child. Our practice fits with guidelines endorsed by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, which states that resources should be adapted accordingly to ensure the child is included. By adapting our resources or activities we are encouraging the children to develop at their own pace. As stated in the Admissions Policy, we will only accept a child with additional needs if we feel we are able to meet their needs (for example, if they are in a wheelchair we are not able to facilitate this).

We aim to build strong relationships with children's families, which helps the children in our care to learn and grow, 'value and respect all children and families equally' (Development Matters EYFS). We do this by...

- We encourage parent/carers to share with us any personal festival, special occasion, or artefacts, which may enhance the children's learning or understanding.
- When providing information to the parents regarding their child's day, development, assessments, and regular setting information we use verbal and written methods. If other methods are required such as; translations or print in other languages, we will do our best to meet the family's needs.
- We uphold a working relationship with parent/carers to ensure that we meet the needs of each child. This includes keeping up to date and meeting their religious beliefs, cultural rituals or dietary requirements.
- We also welcome any parent/carer who would like to be involved with widening our education about their religious beliefs or culture to the children.

Staff are equally important at Next Steps we,

- Ensure that applicants receive the same experiences during interviews and recruitment processes.
- Train new staff appropriately to ensure they understand this policy and how we operate to ensure equality is upheld throughout the setting.
- After training staff are required to follow our equal opportunity policy and report any misconduct regarding behaviours or speech that do not comply with this policy.

To ensure our setting is inclusive, we regularly review and evaluate our practice in order to make any improvements if necessary.

Reviewed Date: January 2020