

**Stepping Stones Pre School**

**Equal Opportunities Policy**

Stepping stones has regard to its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. We are committed to providing high quality learning opportunities for all children in a safe, enjoyable environment. We will work with all parents and children to ensure that they have a good experience while in the group.

Stepping Stones Preschool will work in accordance with all relevant legislation. We will work to include all children and their parents in the group where ever possible.

We believe that the Group’s activities should be open to all children and their families, and to all adults committed to their welfare. We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with our preschool have an equal chance to do so.

**Admissions**

It is our intention to make our Preschool genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. In order to accomplish this we will:-

Ensure that the existence of the Preschool is widely known in all local communities. We will place notices advertising the Preschool in places where all sections of the community can see them, in more than one language if appropriate.

Describe the Preschool and its practices in terms which make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including childminders and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups, with and without disabilities.

Monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the Group to ensure that no accidental discrimination is taking place.

Make our Equal opportunities policy widely known.

Be flexible about attendance patterns so as to accommodate the needs of individual children and families.

The waiting list is not operated on a first come first served basis, but on a fairer system of order of birth. Families joining the preschool will be made aware of the equal opportunities policy and all other policies. We will encourage parents to spend a taster session in Preschool prior to starting in the group to allow us to discuss their needs and concerns and meet the practitioners.

**Inclusion**

We are committed to meeting all children’s needs in an inclusive environment where it is reasonably possible.

All children are equally welcome.

We will discuss with parents/carers the best way to meet a child’s needs, their medical requirements and do a risk assessment and personal plan where appropriate.

All parents are given time to discuss their child’s progress and achievements.

All parents are encouraged to help on the committee.

We access support and advice from colleagues and other professionals to ensure inclusive practice and the best outcomes for all children.

When staff are employed to support a child one to one, the child will be supported and included in the group.

All members of staff are treated as members of our team, including any one to one workers.

We have regular staff meeting to review the effectiveness of our inclusive practice.

**Employment**

The Preschool will appoint the best person for each job, and will treat fairly all those who apply for jobs, and those who are appointed.

Commitment to implementing the Equal Opportunities Policy will form part of the job description for all employees.

**Families**

The Preschool is open to every family in the community. The Preschool recognises that many different types of family successfully love and care for children.

**Festivals**

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all major events in the lives of the children and families in the preschool, and in our society as a whole while also welcoming the diversity of backgrounds from which they come.

In order to achieve this we aim to acknowledge all the festivals which are celebrated in our area and/or by the families within the preschool.

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

Before introducing a festival which the adults in the preschool are not themselves familiar, appropriate advice will be sought from people to whom that festival is familiar.

Children and their families who celebrate festivals at home which the rest of the preschool is not familiar with, will be invited to share their festival with the group, if they wish to.

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

**The Curriculum**

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities 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.

Within the group, all children are supported in developing their potential at their own pace. Our key worker system enables us to ensure a planned curriculum tailored to the needs and interests of each individual child. By means of developmentally appropriate play activities and a high level of individual adult input, we offer a curriculum which leads to the Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals and prepares children to progress with confidence to their reception class.

**Resources**

These will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and appreciation of the rich diversity of our multi-racial society.

Materials will be selected to help the children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and derogatory pictures or messages about any group of people.

**Additional Needs**

The preschool recognises the wide range of special needs of children and families in the community and will consider what part it can play in meeting these needs. Planning for preschool meetings and events will take into account the needs of people with disabilities.

**Discriminatory behaviour/remarks**

These are unacceptable at preschool.

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.

**Language**

Information, written and spoken, will be communicated in as many languages as necessary.

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

**Food**

Medical, cultural and dietary needs will be met.

**Meetings**

The time, place and conduct of meetings will ensure that all families have an equal opportunity to be involved in the running of the preschool.

**The Equality Named Coordinator for the group is Val Cuff**

**THIS POLICY WAS ADOPTED AT A MEETING OF**

**THE PRESCHOOL HELD ON (DATE) ....................................................**

**SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE PRESCHOOL...........................................**