

Stepping Stones Childcare

Inclusion and Equality Policy

EYFS: 1.6, 1.7, 2.3, 3.20, 3.27,
3.28, 3.67, 3.73

All children are as flowers in our garden, if they are to fruit they must be tended, trained and nurtured whilst they learn and start to experience life. Stepping Stones needs and welcomes a truly diverse community to provide the pollen to bring forth the fruit.

Statement of intent

At Stepping Stones Childcare we take great care to treat each individual 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 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 nursery.

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 **nursery manager/ owner** 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 nursery's disciplinary policy.

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.

The nursery and staff are committed to:

- Recruiting, selecting, training and promoting individuals on the basis of occupational skills requirements. In this respect, the nursery 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
- Providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are deemed disadvantaged according to their individual circumstances or Looked after children and the nursery 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 nursery, 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 policy).

Admissions/service provision

The nursery is accessible to all children and families in the local community and further a field through a comprehensive and inclusive admissions policy.

The nursery 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.

Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2015

‘A child or young person has Special Educational Needs if they have a learning or disability which calls for special provision.’

As stated in our SEN Policy at Stepping Stones we will ensure the special educational needs of each child are identified, assessed, provided for and reviewed regularly.

We listen to and respond to the child’s voice, including their interests, learning styles, motivations, responses and behaviour.

Our nursery Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Aisha Patel and Lauren Christou who work closely with staff, parents, other agencies and our SENO Advisor Mary Arthur.

Further information can be found in our Special Educational Needs Policy.

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.

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

Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.

At interview, no questions will be posed which potentially discriminate on the grounds specified in the statement of intent. All candidates will be asked the same questions and assessed equally against the criteria which ensures a fair and impartial procedure and to establish: -

- Whether the candidate will be able to comply with a requirement to undergo an assessment ie spending time in the nursery with the children and work alongside staff as a part of the interview process.
- Whether the candidate will be able to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the work concerned.

Candidates will be given the opportunity to receive feedback on the reasons why they were not successful.

The national College for Teaching and Leadership provides further guidance specific to working with children:

Providers 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. Providers 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. Providers should not ask all-encompassing health questions but should ensure that they only ask targeted and relevant health-related questions, which are necessary to ensure that a person is able to teach.

Staff

It is the policy of Stepping Stones not to discriminate in the treatment of individuals. All staff are expected to co-operate with the implementation, monitoring and improvement of this and other policies. All staff are expected to challenge language, actions, behaviours and attitudes which are oppressive or discriminatory on the grounds specified in this policy and recognise and celebrate other cultures and traditions. All staff are expected to participate in equality and inclusion training.

Staff will follow the 'Dealing with Discriminatory Behaviour' policy where applicable to report any discriminatory behaviours observed.

Training

The nursery 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 nursery will strive towards the provision of inclusion, equality and diversity training for all staff on a yearly basis.

Early learning framework

Early learning opportunities offered in the nursery 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
- Welcoming each child and parent on arrival using their names
- 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.

SEND and EYPP Funding

If Local Authority funding is giving to the nursery to help us support children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are deemed disadvantaged according to their individual circumstances or are Looked After Children then the nursery will use that funding to access appropriate resources to benefit the child/children.

Information and meetings

Information about the nursery, 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.

Wherever possible, meetings will be arranged or feedback sheets given out to give all families options to attend and contribute their ideas about the running of the nursery.

This policy was rewritten on	12.12.2017
Signed on behalf of the nursery by	<i>Susan Perkins</i>
Renewal date	12.12.2018
This policy was rewritten on	07.04.2018
Renewal date	07.04.2019 <i>Susan Perkins</i>

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