

NEWCASTLE NURSERY SCHOOLS FEDERATION

EQUALITY POLICY

Statement of Intent:

Our Federation is committed to anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families. We respect and value the diversity which exists in the wider community. We are committed to challenging attitudes that promote discrimination, ensuring respect for all and preparing all children for life in a diverse society.

Our Federation will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation or abuse of members of staff or any people using our service.

We aim to:

- Ensure that all children and adults are encouraged and able to achieve their full potential.
- Respect and value differences between people.
- Prepare children for life in a diverse society.
- Acknowledge the existence of prejudice and take steps to prevent it.
- Make our environment a place where everyone feels welcomed and valued.
- Improve our knowledge and understanding of beliefs, cultures and disabilities.
- Access staff training when the opportunities arise.
- Challenge any offensive behaviour, language or attitudes with regard to race, ethnicity, nationality, class, religion, culture, language, sexual orientation and disability.

The legal framework for this policy is:

- The Equalities Act 2010 (which came into force 2011)
- Sex discrimination Act 1975
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child -1989
- Children Act 1989, 2004

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Public Sector Equality Duties 2010

This Legislation is used to provide protection against discrimination for people who share the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Admissions:

Our Federation is open to all members of the community:

- We welcome all families equally.
- We advertise our service in the community and support all families with protected characteristics.
- We reflect the diversity of members of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
- Where possible we provide information in languages of our community.
- We do not discriminate against any children, parents or carers on any grounds.
- We ensure that all parents and carers are made aware of our equalities policy.

Employment:

- We are an equal opportunity employer; posts are advertised and all participants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
- All job descriptions include a commitment to equality and diversity as part of their specifications.

Training:

- We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop practices which enable all children to flourish.
- We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our equalities policy.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding and knowledge of equality and diversity, and the characteristics of protected groups.

General:

- Every member of staff is responsible for diversity; however we will have a named member of staff in the Federation responsible for leading on equality across the federation.
- We encourage parents to share skills with staff and children.
- We handle questions about difference honestly, sensitively and openly (age appropriate)
- We treat everyone with respect and with consideration of their diversity.
- We provide a welcoming atmosphere with approachable staff.
- We offer children a secure environment in which to explore their own culture and that of their peers.
- We actively seek ways to counter the learning of negative attitudes and behaviour towards differences.
- We check that our resources reflect diversity and do not promote negative stereotypes.

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EQUALITY PROCEDURES

Working with parents/carers:

Federation staff will work in close partnership with parents/carers to ensure that all children's needs are supported with regard to their developmental progress.

- Regular observations and assessments will be made on all children to assist staff in planning to meet a child's individual needs and interests.
- We will facilitate regular opportunities for consultation with parents/carers about the service as a means of monitoring the effectiveness of inclusive practice, as detailed in the Equality Policy.
- Staff will work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure that medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met.

Staffing:

- Staff are recruited in line with Newcastle City Council's equal opportunities policies.
- Newcastle City Council's Grievance and Disciplinary policies will be used to deal with any complaints about discrimination, harassment or bullying involving staff.

Working with children:

- Staff are committed to displaying themselves as positive role models for children and will encourage children to value and respect others through everyday routines, imaginary play and activities that promote non-stereotypical images.
- Staff will ensure that sanctions used in the nursery are the same for boys and girls and are applied equally.
- We will have regard for promoting understanding, respect and awareness of diversity and equal opportunities in planning and implementing our programmes of activities.
- We will help all children to celebrate and express their cultural and religious identity by providing a wide range of appropriate resources and activities.

Monitoring and Reviewing:

The Head Teachers will be responsible for ensuring that the Equality Policy and Procedures are implemented and that their effectiveness is regularly monitored. To ensure that these policies remain up to date, they will be reviewed annually.

They will also be responsible for ensuring that:

- Staff receive appropriate training
- The Equality Policy and Procedures are consistent with current legislation and guidance.
- Appropriate action is taken wherever discriminatory behaviour, language or attitudes become apparent.

If the inappropriate behaviour is from a child:

- The child displaying the behaviour will be removed from the situation and spoken to, at their level of understanding, by a member of staff and have explained to them why what they have said or done is “unkind” and not acceptable in the nursery.
- The child who has been subjected to discrimination/bullying will be comforted by a number of staff.
- The parents/carers of both children will be spoken to when collecting the children.

If the inappropriate behaviour is from a member of staff, Newcastle City Council’s discrimination procedure will be followed.