

Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Policy

Updated May 2024

To be read in conjunction with the **Gender Equality Policy**

At Apple Tree Nursery 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 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, they must report the matter to the attention of the management team 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:

- Equality Act 2010
- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004
- Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002.
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

The nursery and staff are committed to:

Recruiting, selecting, training, and promoting individuals based on 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

Providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or are deemed disadvantaged according to their circumstances, and the nursery'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 nursery, for example, by encouraging positive role models with toys, imaginary play and activities, promoting non-stereotypical images and language, and challenging all discriminatory behaviour (see dealing with discriminatory behaviour policy).

Admissions

The nursery is accessible to all children and families in the local community and further afield. We welcome the diversity of family life and work with all families. As a nursery, we encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life into the nursery.

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.

Recruitment

Recruitment/promotion will be conducted based on 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.

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 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.

Staff

It is the policy of Apple Tree Nursery 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.

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.

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
- 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 additional support needs 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
- Work 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 for each child who will observe, assess, and plan for individual children's learning and development
- Helping children to learn about a range of food and cultural approaches to mealtimes and to respect the differences among them.
- Providing books with positive images of children and families from all backgrounds and abilities ensuring individual differences are portrayed with sensitive accuracy. The central characters in individual stories should provide a positive, broad representation of diversity e.g. disability, ethnicity, sex and gender, age, and social backgrounds. Individual storylines should contain a range of situations which are easily identifiable by children such as those that include disabled children/adults, different ethnic groups, mixed heritage families, gender diversity, single sex/same and different sex families, multi-generational households and cultural diversity

Parents

Information about the nursery, its activities and 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, opportunities will be arranged to give all families time to attend and contribute their ideas about the running of the nursery.

Parents are expected to abide by the policy for Inclusion, Diversity and Equality, Gender Equality and to support their child in the aims of the setting.

At Apple Tree Nursery, discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated. All staff have the skills to challenge discrimination and support children's rights to equality and a life free of discrimination.