

Twyford Playgroup EY484175

EQUALITIES POLICY

Date Reviewed: February 2025

Managers Signature: Rachel Knott

Chair of Committee Signature: Melissa Simpson

Review Date: February 2026

Introduction

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of early years education and as an employer.

We believe that all children and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates differences within a culture of respect and cooperation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our playgroup. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole playgroup community working together – our children, staff, committee and parents/carers.

This document outlines the principles which will guide our approach to working with our playgroup community and enabling an open culture.

For staff and prospective staff, this policy should be read in conjunction with the playgroups Employment Policy.

National and Legal Context

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the playgroup community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, race, gender (including transgender), maternity and pregnancy, religion and belief, sexual orientation and marital status (applicable only to staff). We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups.

We also appreciate that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Playgroup Context

Twyford Playgroup is a sessional Charity Committee run Preschool setting in Twyford, Winchester, Hampshire. Our maintained Preschool has provision for children aged 2 years 6 months - 4 years old. Most children at the setting are from a white British background. We welcome children that have English as an Additional Language.

Principles

Twyford Playgroup provides a welcoming community in which each individual is valued, and where tolerance, honesty, co-operation and mutual respect for others are fostered. We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum provides equal opportunity for all children to learn and develop regardless of age, sex, race, colour, religion or disability. We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, committee members, and members of the wider community. To fulfil our legal obligation, we are guided by several principles:

1. All children, families and staff are of equal value

We see all children, potential children, their parents and carers, and staff as of equal value: · Whether or not they are disabled

- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender and gender identity
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- Whatever their age
- Whether or not they have a connection with the force's community
- Whether or not English is their first language

2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not

discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or children may face in relation to their protected characteristics:

- Disability – we understand that reasonable adjustments may need to be made
- Gender (including transgender and non-binary) – we recognise that girls and boys, men and women have different needs
- Religion and belief – we acknowledge that reasonable requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with
- Ethnicity and race – we appreciate that all have different experiences as a result of our ethnic and racial backgrounds
- Age – we value the diversity in age of staff, parents and carers
- Sexual orientation – we respect that individuals have the right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference
- Marital status – we recognise that our staff, parents and carers may make their own personal choices in respect of personal relationships and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of the relationships they have*
- Pregnancy and maternity – we believe that our staff, parents and carers should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy or having recently given birth

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

Positive attitudes and interaction between groups and communities different from each other

An absence of harassment, victimisation and discrimination in relation to any protected characteristics

4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff

We ensure that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the cessation of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, considering aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities avoid or minimise any possible negative impacts and we aim to reduce inequalities that exist between groups and communities different from each other.

6. We consult and involve ensuring views are heard

In our development of policies, we engage with groups and individuals, including children who are affected by a policy or activity to ensure that their views are considered. For policies and activities affecting children, we do this at an age-appropriate level when appropriate for the individual child, for parents, through parent committee representation and for staff, through staff committee representation. Where necessary, we will consult more widely with specific groups.

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum offer, foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

8. We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish information annually to show our compliance with the public sector equality duty, set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Our current equality information can be found in Appendix A to this policy statement.

9. We set ourselves specific and measurable equality objectives

We develop and publish specific and measurable objectives every four years based on the evidence that we have gathered (principle 8) and the engagement we have been involved in (principle 7).

The objectives can be found in Appendix B to this policy statement and consider both national, county and early years level priorities.

We will set ourselves new objectives every four years but keep them under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

Application of the principles within this policy statement:

The principles outlined in the policy statement will be applied and reflected in:

- The delivery of the playgroup curriculum
- The teaching and learning within the playgroup
- Our practice in relation to children's progress, attainment and achievement
- Our teaching styles and strategies
- Our policies and practice in relation to admissions and attendance
- Our policies and practice in relation to staff
- Our care, guidance and support to children, their families and staff
- Our policies and practice in relation to children's behaviour, discipline and in extreme cases exclusions
- Our partnership working with parents and carers
- Our contact with the wider playgroup community

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The playgroup is opposed to all forms of prejudice including, but not limited to prejudice related to protected characteristics. We will ensure that prejudice-related incidents in relation to staff and pupils are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

Roles and responsibilities

The committee is responsible for ensuring that the playgroup complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented and that arrangements are in place to deal with any concerns or unlawful action that arises.

The manager is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

All staff are expected to work in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy to:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their practice
- Deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- Plan and deliver curricula and activities
- Support children in the playgroup who have additional needs

Equalities Information Appendix A

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims, to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marital status, sexual orientation, religion and belief and sexual orientation).

Equality Objectives Appendix B

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- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
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Having referred to and analysed our equality information, we have set ourselves the following objective(s):

Objectives:

For all children and families at Twyford playgroup to feel accepted and to feel that they belong.

To fulfil the above objective, we will gather information and may identify children and families that may not feel like they belong. We will address this to reflect and support their lived experiences. In some circumstances children and families may need to be treated differently to provide meaningful equality of opportunity and to remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.