

Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Policy (incorporating our Accessibility Plan)

The Governing Body of Holmewood & Triangle Nursery Schools' and Tree House Children's Centre adopted this policy on:

Date: 22/11/2016

Signed by Chair of Governors: Daniel Brown

Policy review period 4 years:

Reviewed: Autumn 2016

Next review: Autumn 2020

Related policies:

Admissions

Administration of Medicines

Attendance

Extremism and radicalisation prevention

Behaviour policy

SEND information report & policy

Documents consulted:

- Equality Act 2010
- Ofsted The evaluation schedule for schools Jan 2011
- Promoting Community Cohesion: Toolkit for Lambeth Schools June 2010
- SEND Code of Practice 0 - 25 January 2015
- Ofsted Supplementary guidance
 - Inspecting equalities Jan 2011
 - Inspecting Maintained Schools' duty to promote community cohesion
- The Equal Opportunities Commission – advice on the Gender Equality Duty
- Commission for Racial Equality – guidance for schools on the race equality duty
- Recording and Reporting Racist Incidents Guidance
- Promoting Disability Equality in Schools

Statutory Responsibilities

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act.

Racist incidents are recorded and reported on a termly basis to the Governing Body and Lambeth. Any actions are agreed at the governing body meeting. This is a statutory duty.

Single Equality Scheme

This Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Policy incorporates in a single document the:

- gender equality scheme
- race equality policy
- disability equality scheme
- accessibility plan
- community cohesion audit

It identifies how we monitor the implementation of the policy assessing its impact on:

- children and families
- staff and job applicants
- visitors and partners.

Inclusion Statement:

At Holmewood & Triangle Nursery Schools Federation and Tree House Children's Centre, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all children, staff and all those receiving services from the school and children centre. We believe that diversity is a strength of our community, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free whether or not to disclose their gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, political belief, economic circumstance or immigration status, and to participate fully in school and centre life.

Any occasions where discrimination is expressed or experienced will be appropriately challenged.

Our Aims:

- To ensure that we provide a safe and happy environment where all people involved feel enabled to enjoy the setting free from any behaviour that injures, discriminates and offends, and reach their full potential in an atmosphere where they feel safe, respected and valued.
- To ensure that all behaviour that injures, discriminates, and offends is dealt with through consistent strategies and discussion with all the people involved.
- To ensure that we promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people of different groups through working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities.
- We are opposed to discriminatory attitudes and practices and less favourable treatment of any person with regard to differences as described in this policy.
- Although we believe all people are of equal worth, we must respect and value their differences. We recognise that equality does not necessarily mean the same for all.
- We are fully committed to the active promotion of equal opportunities and race equality in our employment practices, in our work in the school and children's centre and in the provision of all our services.

Strategies to Achieve our Aims:

Equality of opportunity

- Our admissions policy does not discriminate against any group. Children with additional needs and who meet the Lambeth criteria may receive an earlier start date or be able to access a full-time place.
- Attendance is monitored to identify any individual or group where attendance is low; steps are taken to support improvements.
- Progress in English, for those children for whom English is an additional language, is monitored, measured, and evaluated in a more detailed format than for their monolingual peers. The children are given extra focused language support as required in group time and in the classroom. We recognise that "bilingualism is an asset, and the first language has a continuing and significant role in identity, learning and the acquisition of additional languages." (Primary National Strategy: Supporting Children learning English as an additional language). Staff explain to parents the importance of continuing to speak their home language with their child to support their cognitive development.
- Access to equipment and to areas of the curriculum is monitored through daily evaluation, and any disparity (of cultural, gender, ability, etc.) is addressed. We aim to promote equality of opportunity for boys and girls by challenging stereotypes, fostering a positive disposition to learning by valuing different learning styles and preferences e.g. providing learning opportunities within contextualised physical play outdoors, and monitoring access to all areas of the curriculum. We value each child as a unique individual with different strengths and interests, and aim to plan according to their interests to support them in their learning. Parents'/carers' access to the library, workshops, meetings etc. is monitored and evaluated. Resources are monitored to ensure suitability. The curriculum

is differentiated to allow for different levels of ability and interests.

- Children's attainment and progress is monitored and analysed individually and by different groups e.g. boys, girls, SEND, ethnicity, EAL, any differences are highlighted and can then be addressed.
- All parents/carers are encouraged to use the lending resources from the libraries or at Triangle Nursery School, from the key person, so that family circumstances do not prevent any child having the opportunity of reading books in the home. We ensure that our range of books include books written in languages that represent the linguistic background of our families. Games supporting understanding of mathematical concepts are also available for loan.
- Practitioners' knowledge of their children's different learning styles, talents and achievement influence planning decisions to ensure that all children access learning. This knowledge also helps practitioners encourage children to broaden their experiences in areas/ways they are less experienced or less confident in.
- ESOL classes are held to meet the significant need in the community for parents/carers to develop their skills speaking English. Interpreter services are used when needed to support meetings.
- Mothers who are breastfeeding are encouraged to feel welcome and supported.
- We follow Lambeth Schools Human Resources policy and procedures for recruitment which includes completing the Recruitment Monitoring Form. This collates equalities information about all applicants so that any discriminatory practice is clearly visible. A summary of this is reported to Lambeth.
- During recruitment and promotion processes we may treat individuals with a protected characteristic more favourably when faced with two or more candidates of equal merit, if the more favourable treatment is intended to address under-representation in the workforce.
- Equalities information is reported to Lambeth annually which includes a summary of the information regarding the Recruitment Monitoring Forms mentioned in the previous point and also includes data regarding promotion of existing members of staff and training they have attended.
- Incidents of bullying and harassment of children, staff and visitors particularly related to their race, gender or disability should be reported to the head teacher or a member of the senior management team, as should racist or sexist incidents or remarks. This is recorded and reported to the governing body and to Lambeth, as described under 'Statutory Responsibilities'. Any actions are agreed at the governing body meeting.
- When selecting visitors and performers who come into the school and children's centre we consider their contribution to the development of positive images and role models.
- As policies are reviewed and developed they will be revised in accordance with this policy. All school and children's centre policies refer to this policy for guidance.
- Displays promote positive images of women and men, ethnic and cultural diversity and disability.
- We will make reasonable adjustments to make sure that the school and children's centre environments are as accessible as possible.

Accessibility Plan

The Accessibility Plan and Disability Equality Scheme covers the three strands of the planning duties including:

1. Improving the physical environment of school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled children are able to take advantage of education and associated services.
 - Wheelchair access to classrooms is available
 - Adult toilets suitable for wheelchair users are available in the main school building.
2. Increasing the extent to which disabled children can participate in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- Strategies and procedures are in place to ensure early identification of children who may need additional support or resources.
 - Skilled practitioners ensure that all the children's different learning styles and communication styles, including signing, Makaton, visual timetables, eye pointing etc, are acknowledged and valued by all.
 - Continuing involvement of professionals to support practitioners in their understanding of how to support children who have complex needs.
3. Improving the delivery of information to children with disabilities.
- All parents have access to information. Makaton signing, Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS) are used for children when appropriate. Support is available from the Hearing Impaired Unit at Jubilee Primary School.

Diversity

Race equality

Keyworkers know their children and families very well; home visits, regular informal discussions and parent conferencing meetings ensure good relationships are fostered so that key information is shared. Displays and resources are carefully planned to ensure children develop a sense of belonging and children will be encouraged to value diversity and respect others by:

- the use of artefacts and resources in cultural celebrations
- bilingual books available for borrowing from the school library
- home corner resources such as dolls and dressing up
- music
- specific activities such as mehndi patterns for Diwali celebrations etc.

Different languages and scripts are used for notices around the setting.

Families are encouraged to continue to speak to their child in their home language(s), and these are valued through language of the week and language focused coffee mornings where parents have the opportunity to meet and to support each other.

Interpreters, where available, will be used when needed for parents who do not speak English, and signing interpreters for deaf parents.

Children's Centre staff observe whether parents/carers are isolated or vulnerable and support the development of friendships between different parents.

Ability

- For children with Special Educational Needs (SEND) or those who are disabled, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) meets regularly with the parents/carers and reviews children's support plans and supports families in making requests for statutory assessment for education health care plans. Appropriate interventions, such as music therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, physiotherapy, will be planned for and evaluated, along with 1:1 support, group work. The SENCO liaises with the parents and other agencies along with Lambeth Children and Young People's Service to ensure the best possible provision at Holmewood & Triangle and to support the transition process between different settings e.g. nursery to school.
- Practitioners attend a range of training courses which meet the diverse needs of learners and develop awareness of disability issues, for example, Makaton training, Letters and Sounds, Parents for Inclusion training.
- Resources are purchased to include positive images of children and adults with disabilities.
- Where children have particular skills they are encouraged to help other children. For example, finding a book, switching on the computer, finding resources etc.

Gender equality

- Educational practitioners encourage children to participate in all activities in the nursery and use images, stories, visitors, etc. to challenge stereotypes regarding gender relating to activities, types of play, access to resources, colour and jobs.

- Practitioners challenge children sensitively; offering opposing scenarios if children express stereotypical views.
- Any inappropriate attitudes and practices will be challenged by referring to the appropriate policy and legislation, by educating and fostering positive and respectful attitudes (see Behaviour Policy).

Other

- Information is shared regarding other groups who may face discrimination through lack of understanding e.g. fact sheets regarding Refugee and Asylum Seekers.

Community Cohesion

Community cohesion was defined by Ofsted as follows:

'By community cohesion, we mean working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.'

School is a common feature for parents from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds and we offer opportunities for them to interact with each other, promote friendships and develop understanding of each others' backgrounds.

The school community includes: parents/carers, children, staff, the governing body and community partners.

We also have connections with the local geographical community: local schools, partner organisations and the people who live and work close-by and the communities of Lambeth and London itself. Many children are connected to the global community through their extended families abroad and activities and discussion focus on this throughout their time at Holmewood & Triangle Nursery Schools' & Tree House Children's Centre.

How well we know our community.

Both nursery schools & the children's centre have a clear understanding of the economic and social make up of our catchment areas. The nursery schools undertake a termly audit of information for all children attending the school and this is shared at termly governors meetings. The information includes:

- free school meals
- vulnerable families
- children with SEND
- children with English as an Additional Language and the range of languages spoken
- ethnic backgrounds
- nationality

Extensive information is collected and analysed to inform the Children's Centre's work, for example, the economic status of parents, needs of children, ethnicity, age of parents and children attending activities.

Actions promoting community cohesion

Ongoing

Practitioners help children to understand others through interaction and discussion, planned activities and carefully selected resources, particularly stories.

A range of activities encourage parents/carers to spend time in the nursery school setting including: supporting visits and outings, story trails, Family Learning, language coffee mornings, dance and music groups, social events and volunteering. These offer opportunities for families from different backgrounds to socialise and have fun together.

Our Children's Centre programme is reviewed regularly and activities planned and reorganised to reach groups who are not accessing our services.

Future plans for promoting community cohesion

Continuing with our programme of festivals and celebrations throughout the year.

Impact

Families demonstrate how well they relate to each other as they meet and greet each other when bringing and collecting their children to and from school.

Incidents of discrimination are very rare.

Attainment of children is analysed to enable us to compare progress of children from different groups including ethnicity, ability, free school meals, and EAL. A summary of this information is included in a termly report to governors.