

Equal Opportunities Policy

Aim

In Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup we believe in valuing and celebrating the diversity within our community. We aim to develop good practice and positive attitudes in the early years, and encourage an anti-discriminatory approach to the world in general and other human beings in particular. We believe that all people should have equal opportunities to learn, develop and grow with dignity in a community of mutual respect.

Implementation of the policy in Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup

The registered person/management committee must ensure that:

- new members of staff, including students and volunteers, receive copies of the Equal Opportunities Policy, and that this is discussed with them during their induction meeting.
- the Equal Opportunities Policy is made available to all parents and carers.
- staff, parents and children are involved in the implementation of the policy.
- every effort will be made to translate policies into other languages if requested.
- parents who are experiencing problems with the English language, both spoken or written, are offered support.
- every effort is made to learn key words and phrases in the child's first language. Where this is not possible or sufficient the playgroup will involve other agencies for advice and assistance.
- the help of key workers is offered to assist and support families.
- every effort is made to obtain suitable specialist equipment, aids or resources.
- reasonable adjustments are made to the premises and activities to cater for anyone with any form of disability.
- volunteers, local speakers or personalities who reflect the diversity of the local community are invited to visit the playgroup.

Our practice

- The Equal Opportunities Policy applies to every staff member, parent, carer and child. Each person is valued as an individual, with differing social, intellectual and cultural backgrounds. Different needs, likes, dislikes, similarities and differences are respected and accounted for.

- Nobody in Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup is subjected to discrimination, racist comments or gender bias. Cultural or religious diversity is respected.
- We value parents as their children's first educators, and staff work closely with parents to share information, experiences, conversation and quality time, thus promoting positive role models for their children.
- We cater for cultural, religious and medical differences at all snack and mealtimes and when cooking with the children.
- We celebrate a variety of festivals and special events each year from cultures represented within our community and outside.
- Our curriculum plan takes into account each child's individual route to learning.
- We give the children equal opportunities and equal access to the full range of activities available, including visits and trips outside the playgroup.
- We monitor activities on a regular basis to ensure that every child has freedom of choice, time for discovery, and support, when it is necessary.
- During play we encourage the children to respect and value each other. We discourage them from making hurtful and unkind remarks. Staff ensure that children are helped towards understanding that it is wrong to judge someone because of their gender, colour, beliefs, disability or social background. We explain why, talk things through and praise positive behaviour.
- We challenge and deal with inappropriate practices and attitudes promptly.
- We record any seriously inappropriate racist or sexist comments made by children and staff, including volunteers and students.

Staff appointments and training

- We take great care to apply the Equal Opportunities Policy when advertising for, interviewing and appointing staff.
- We keep staff informed and updated on new legislation, and train them accordingly. We share information on new national initiatives and courses provided by Bexley's Early Years Team and the Early Years Alliance (formerly the Pre-school Learning Alliance).
- We give the opportunity to attend courses to staff who:
 - have identified an area in which they wish to improve their own knowledge and expertise
 - have been identified through an inspection or an in-house discussion (eg Supervision meeting) as having a training need
 - want to further their own personal development.
- We expect all staff to behave in a professional manner, follow the above policy and try to be consistent, sensitive and fair. We expect them to challenge others who make inadvertent racist, sexist or insensitive remarks.

- The SENCo – Rebecca Birkbeck - is responsible for co-ordinating, advising on and reporting back to the management committee on how successfully the Equal Opportunities Policy has been implemented.

Equipment

- We purchase, organise and monitor equipment, toys, books and resources to reflect diversity in the immediate and wider society. We display positive images of differing races, cultures, religions, social groups, physical abilities and disabilities and gender in and around the playgroup.

References

Reference to the Early Years Foundation Stage safeguarding and welfare requirements

None specific to Equal opportunities

References

Department for Education: Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017)

Reviewed October 2020