**9.1 Valuing diversity and promoting inclusion and equality**

**Policy Statement**

We are committed to ensuring that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children. We recognise that children and their families come from diverse backgrounds. All families have needs and values that arise from their social and economic, ethnic and cultural or religious backgrounds. Children grow up in diverse family structures that include two parent and one parent families; some children have two parents of the same sex. Some children have close links with extended families of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins; while others may be more removed from close kin, or may live with other relatives or foster carers. Some children come from families who experience social exclusion, severe hardship; discrimination and prejudice because of their ethnicity, disability and/or ability, the languages they speak, their religious or personal beliefs, their sexual orientation and marital status. Some individuals face discrimination linked to their gender and some women are discriminated against because of their pregnancy and maternity status.

We understand that all these factors can affect the well-being of children within these families and may adversely impact on their learning, attainment and life outcomes

Our setting is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families. We aim to:

* provide a secure and accessible environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are considered and valued; where every child feels safe and equally included
* promote equality and value diversity within our setting and foster good relations with the local community.
* include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
* promote a positive non-stereotyping environment that promotes dignity, respect and understanding of difference in all forms;
* improve our knowledge and understanding of issues relating to anti-discriminatory practice,
* challenge and eliminate discriminatory actions on the basis of a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act (2010) namely:
  + age;
  + gender;
  + gender reassignment;
  + marital status;
  + pregnancy and maternity;
  + race;
  + disability;
  + sexual orientation; and
  + religion or belief.
* where possible, take positive action to benefit groups or individuals with protected characteristics who are disadvantaged, have a disproportional representation within the service or need different things from the service.

**Procedures**

### Admissions

Our setting is open and accessible to all members of the community.

* We advertise our service widely.
* We reflect the diversity of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
* We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
* We provide information in other languages if appropriate and where possible.
* We provide information on our offer of provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
* We base our Admissions policy on a fair system.
* We ensure that all parents are made aware of our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality policy.
* We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of a protected characteristic as defined by the Equalities Act (2010).
* We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our setting for reason relating to disability.
* We ensure, wherever possible, that we have a balanced intake of boys and girls in the setting.
* Places will be allocated in line with the Admissions policy.
* We make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled children can participate successfully in the services and in the curriculum offered by the setting.
* We take action against any discriminatory , prejudice, harassing or victimising behaviour by staff, volunteers or parents whether by:
* direct discrimination – someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic e.g. preventing families of some racial groups from using the service;
* indirect discrimination - someone is affected unfavourably by a general policy e.g. children must only speak English in the setting;
* discrimination arising from a disability – someone is treated less favourably because of something connected with their disability e.g. a child with a visual impairment is excluded from an activity;
* association – discriminating against someone who is associated with a person with a protected characteristic e.g. behaving unfavourably to someone who is married to a person from a different cultural background; or
* perception – discrimination on the basis that it is thought someone has a protected characteristic e.g. making assumptions about someone's sexual orientation because of their mannerisms or how they speak.
* We will not tolerate behaviour from an adult who demonstrates dislike or prejudice towards individuals who are perceived to be from another country (xenophobia).
* Displaying of openly discriminatory xenophobic and possibly offensive materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on, or around, the premises and will be dealt with immediately and discreetly by asking the adult to stop using the unacceptable behaviour and inviting them to read and to act in accordance with the relevant policy statement and procedure. Failure to comply may lead to the adult being excluded from the premises.
* We follow procedures as outlined in our Prevent Duty Policy to ensure any incident or suspected incident linked to radicalisation, or terrorism is dealt with to ensure the safety & welfare of our community.

## *Employment*

* Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
* Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all.
* We may use the exemption clauses in relevant legislation to enable the service to best meet the needs of the community.
* The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Criminal Records Bureau. This ensures fairness in the selection process.
* All job descriptions include a commitment to promoting equality and recognising and respecting diversity as part of their specifications.
* We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.

### Training

* We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which enable all children to flourish.
* We ensure that staff are confident and fully trained in administering relevant medicines and performing invasive care procedures when these are required.
* We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality.

### Curriculum

The curriculum offered in the setting encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. It encourages development of confidence and self-esteem, empathy, critical thinking and reflection.

We ensure that our practice is fully inclusive by:

* creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
* modelling desirable behaviour to children and helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable;
* positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities within resources;
* avoiding use of stereotypes or derogatory images within our books or any other visual materials;
* celebrating locally observed festivals and holy days;
* ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning;
* ensuring that disabled children with and without special educational needs are fully supported;
* ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages

We will ensure that our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. We do this by:

* Undertaking an access audit to establish if the setting is accessible to all disabled children and adults. If access to the setting is found to treat disabled children or adults less favourably, then we make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled children and adults.
* Fully differentiating the environment, resources and curriculum to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory needs.

### Valuing diversity in families

* We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families.
* We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life to the setting.
* We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of the setting and to contribute fully.
* For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion.
* We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means and offer information regarding sources of financial support.
* We take positive action to encourage disadvantaged and under-represented groups to use the setting.

### Food

* We work in partnership with parents to ensure that dietary requirements of children that arise from their medical, religious or cultural needs are met.
* We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them.

### Meetings

* Meetings are arranged to ensure that all families who wish to may be involved in the running of the setting.
* We positively encourage fathers to be involved in the setting, especially those fathers who do not live with the child.
* Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways - written, verbal and in translation - to ensure that all parents have information about and access to the meetings.

*Monitoring and reviewing*

* To ensure our policies and procedures remain effective we will monitor and review them annually to ensure our strategies meets the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and valuing diversity.
* We provide a complaints procedure and a complaints summary in the prospectus for parents to see.

*Public Sector Equality Duty*

* We have regard to the Duty to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

**Legal framework**

* The Equality Act 2010
* Children Act 1989,( 2004)
* Children and Families Act (2014)
* Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2014)

The Officer responsible for Equal Opportunities is Sue Winder

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| This policy was adopted at a meeting of | NBU5s Preschool | name of setting |
| Held on | June 6th 2023 | (date) |
| Date to be reviewed | June 6th 2024 | (date) |
| Signed on behalf of the management committee |  | |
| Name of signatory | Marie Whiting | |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) | Setting Lead | |

**Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications**

* Guide to the Equality Act and Good Practice (2015)
* Where’s Dad? (2009)
* SEND Code of Practice 2014 for the Early Years (2014)