Equal Opportunities Policy

The Ark Nurseries are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all children, families and staff. It is our aim to have regard for all relevant legislation including –

* The Children act 1989
* The Children act 2006
* Sex Discrimination Act 1986
* Equal Pay Act 1970
* Race Relations Act 1976 and amendment act 2000
* Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005
* Equality act 2006 and 2010
* Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 2014

The equal opportunities policy applies to all people whether using or working within the setting.

Equality of opportunity is fundamental when developing a high quality early years curriculum. It is essential to ensure that no-one is disadvantaged on the grounds of race, gender, culture, disability, class, belief, lifestyle or family circumstances.

We aim to encourage children to develop positive attitudes about themselves and other people by:

* Listening to children to ensuring each child feels included, safe, valued and respected.
* Ensuring that all children have equal access to activities, resources and learning opportunities.
* Making appropriate provision to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities and recognise different learning styles.
* Providing play materials/resources and activities that demonstrates diversity of background and ability, that help to develop positive attitudes to differences of race, culture, language, gender and ability.
* Promoting children’s awareness of their own culture and beliefs and those of other people.
* Promoting the British Values of; Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutural Respect and Tolerance.
* Ensuring the differentiation of activities to include the needs of all children.
* Working in partnership with key professionals to ensure that individuals with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities can participate fully in all aspects of the provision.
* Avoiding stereotypical images in equipment, resources and activities.
* Using positive, non-discriminatory language with all children.
* Valuing the home background of all children.
* Ensuring any discriminatory language or practice is challenged appropriately.

Effective learning can only take place in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. An equal opportunities approach is therefore crucial to the provision of high quality learning experiences for all children.

**Admissions**

The nursery welcomes all children and their families from all sections of our community. We believe each child is unique and should be treated and respected as an individual irrespective of gender, race, religious belief, ability or social background. We work with parents/carers and other professionals to ensure best practice with regard to the child’s needs.

**Families**

The Ark Nurseries recognise that children live in many family groups. We welcome and support anyone who cares for children and believe that diversity can enrich the learning experience of both adults and children.

**English as an Additional Language**

The needs of bilingual children and adults will be recognised, and we will work closely with parents/carers. Staff will value linguistic diversity and provide opportunities and support for children to use and develop their home language in their play. Opportunities for children to develop English in a range of meaning full contexts will be provided. Please see EAL policy.

**Discrimination/prejudice**

We aim to promote a positive attitude and challenge stereotypes. These include issues relating to gender, race and ability. We will not accept discriminatory remarks or behaviour (whether direct of indirect) from anyone involved in the nursery including staff, students, children, parents and other carers. We will aim to be sensitive to all parties involved in discriminatory behaviour and help those responsible to understand why this is not acceptable through discussion and education.

**Meals and Snacks**

We offer a varied menu at meal and snack times. All dietary needs will be respected and catered for whether medical, cultural or through personal choice.

**Curriculum and Resources**

The nursery curriculum is planned to take into account children’s individuality and stages of development. We aim to extend the children’s experience and knowledge of other cultures, beliefs, languages and celebrations. We encourage both boys and girls to take part in and experience all the groups’ activities. Our resources are chosen to promote positive images and role models which are non-stereo typed. We provide equipment which reflects the diversity of our

multi-cultural society; equipment is also selected to take into account the varying needs of children. Our provision, including the curriculum and the layout will be adapted, where necessary, to accommodate the differing needs of the children attending.

**Inclusion**

All children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulty or disability, gender or ability will have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development. (for specific information on SEND please refer to our SEND policy) Staff will ensure that there are positive attitudes to diversity and difference so that every child is included and not disadvantaged.

• Children will be supported to learn from the earliest age to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society.

• Staff will work with parents/carers and other professionals to make reasonable adjustment to the environment to accommodate and meet the needs of a child with identified learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities.

• Staff will focus on each child’s individual learning, development and care needs by;

- Removing or helping to overcome barriers for children where these already exist

- Being alert to the early signs of needs that could lead to later difficulties and

responding quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as necessary

- Stretching and challenging all children.

**Employment**

The nurseries aim to ensure that individuals are recruited, selected, trained and promoted on the basis of occupational skill requirements. All applicants will be judged against specific and fair criteria. Job applicants and employees will be treated with equal fairness and will not be treated less favourable on the grounds of age, gender, sexuality, family status, race, religion, cultural or national origin. Nor will they be discriminated against on the grounds of disability.

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