



## The Wandsworth Federation of Maintained Nursery Schools

Balham Nursery School  
Eastwood Nursery School  
Eastwood Day Nursery  
Somerset Nursery School

# Equality Policy Equality Objectives

**Updated: Autumn 2022**

Signed..........(Chair of Governors)

Date..... 6/12/22 .....

Signed..........(Executive Headteacher)

Date..... 6.12.22 .....

## **Our equality objectives 2022-2026**

The Equality Act 2010 requires all public bodies to publish equalities objectives every four years. This document identifies the equalities objectives that we have chosen to focus on over the next few years, from 2022 to 2026, to improve equality, diversity and inclusion in The Wandsworth Federation of Maintained Nursery Schools (including the Day Nursery).

We take our responsibilities very seriously, both as a provider of service to our local community in Wandsworth, and as an employer.

We welcome our general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires our settings to publish information about Equalities. The Equality Act 2010 clearly states that the following areas must be taken into account

- Disability
- Sex (gender)
- Race (ethnicity)
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Religion and Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender reassignment

People identified in these groups are considered to have a protected characteristic.

We welcome the emphasis in the Ofsted inspection framework on the importance of narrowing gaps in achievement which affect, amongst others:

- pupils from certain cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- pupils who belong to low-income households and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
- pupils who are disabled
- pupils who have special educational needs
- boys in certain subjects, and girls in certain other subjects.

### **Inclusion Statement**

We are committed to ensuring that children and families, staff and job applicants, visitors and stakeholders do not experience discrimination. We are committed to promoting equality, celebrating diversity and working together for community cohesion. To achieve this everybody involved in our Federation will have access and opportunity irrespective of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, belief, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, ability, gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status and age.

Any occasions where discrimination is expressed or experienced will be appropriately challenged (our legal duty).

## Our Aims

Our aim is to help every child to have the best start to life, and we do this through offering high-quality early years education and childcare. We want every child, and every family, to have a positive experience with us, and we want every child to be well-prepared for the next stage in their education and learning. Promoting health and emotional wellbeing, and keeping children safe, runs through everything we do.

This means that equality is central to everything we do, as well as being positive about the diversity of our local community and celebrating it.

Aims include:

- That we actively promote the values that everyone in our Federation should feel safe, healthy, secure and enjoy emotional well-being in order to achieve.
- That our Federation provides a safe and happy environment where all people enjoy the setting free from any behaviour that injures, discriminates and offends.
- To ensure that all individuals are able to learn, teach, work and visit the setting 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 enable all individuals to have the opportunity to develop to their full potential within the setting in a context of fairness and mutual respect.
- To ensure that we promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people of different groups.
- We aim to make sure that no-one experiences harassment, less favourable treatment or discrimination because of their age; any disability they may have; their ethnicity, colour or national origin; their gender; their gender identity or reassignment; their marital or civil partnership status; being pregnant or having recently had a baby; their religion or beliefs; their sexual identity and orientation.
- To promote community cohesion through working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities.

### Early Inequality

Children have the right to be included and barriers denying this equality should be addressed. If children face inequality early in life this can have a long-term impact on their life chances and affect their self-esteem, confidence, trust of others.

Inequality is growing in the UK despite evidence showing that a [fairer and more equal](#) society benefits everyone and supports young children's development, health, education and well-being.

[Research](#) shows us that early intervention protects the most vulnerable young children at risk of poorer outcomes because of

- Intergenerational disadvantage
- Intersectionality
- Inequality and discrimination relating to religion, race, disability, sex and family background
- Adverse early experiences

- Social exclusion
- Low income and poverty
- Parental mental and physical health difficulties
- Inadequate diet
- Housing issues
- Ineffective home learning environment
- Lack of high quality early education
- Insecure attachments
- Parenting issues and associated lifestyle choices

Our settings play a crucial part in offering support to the most vulnerable children and families within disadvantaged communities. This was evidenced by the Effective Provision for Pre-school education (**EPPE**) research by Sylva et al, in 2004. The research findings consistently found that good/outstanding early childhood experiences set the trajectory for a child's life outcomes.

## **Strategies to Achieve our Aims:**

### **Equality of opportunity**

- Our admissions policy does not discriminate against any group of people, children or families.
- 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 who are bi or multilingual, is monitored, and evaluated. The children are given 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 are 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 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 plan according to their interests to support them in their learning. Parents'/carers' access to the library (or book club), 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.
- Displays will promote positive images that support our inclusion statement.
- All parents/carers are encouraged to use the libraries (book clubs) 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.

- Practitioners' use their knowledge of their children to 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.
- Children's attainment and progress is monitored individually and analysed by different groups e.g. boys, girls, SEND, those with low attendance, those eligible for Free School Meals and Early Years Pupil Premium. Any differences are highlighted and can then be addressed.
- Interpreters are used when needed to support meetings where available.
- Mothers who are breastfeeding are encouraged to feel welcome and supported.
- Equalities information is recorded as part of the recruitment procedures as per Wandsworth's guidance. We respond to requests from Wandsworth regarding equalities information.

### Equality and Diversity

- When selecting visitors and performers who come into the settings we will consider their contribution to the development of positive images and role models.
  - Incidents that conflict with our Inclusion Statement are reported to the senior leadership team who will record the incident and will take appropriate action.
  - We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the settings are as accessible as possible.
  - 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:
1. The use of artefacts and resources in cultural celebrations
  2. Bilingual books available for borrowing from the school library (book club)
  3. home corner resources such as dolls and dressing up
  4. Music
  5. specific activities such as mehndi patterns for Diwali celebrations etc.
  6. Different languages and scripts can be displayed around the setting.
- Families are encouraged to continue to speak to their child in their home language(s), and these are valued throughout our settings
  - Interpreters, where available, will be used when needed for parents who do not speak English, and signing interpreters for deaf parents.
  - For children with Special Educational Needs (SEND) or those who are disabled, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) meets regularly with the parents/carers and review children's EHCPs Education and Health Care Plans. Appropriate interventions, such as music therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, will be planned for and evaluated, along with 1:1 support, group work and Sensory Rooms available at Eastwood. The SENDCOs liaise with the parents and other agencies along with Wandsworth Children's Services to ensure the best possible provision at each setting and to support the transition processes between different settings/schools.
  - Group times are organised to ensure that all children can participate at a level that meets their needs; additional support may be provided for some children.
  - Practitioners attend a range of training courses which meet the diverse needs of learners and develop awareness of disability issues, for example, Makaton training and ELKLAN.

- 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, finding resources, using the IPad etc.

### **Gender Action**

Gender Action is an award programme which promotes and supports a whole-setting approach to challenging stereotypes.

#### *Why tackling gender stereotypes matters?*

Children learn from the world around them. Gender stereotypes perpetuate inequality and reinforce difference between men and women, rather than individuals being people first and equals. This can affect many aspects of life such as jobs, income, self-esteem and self-belief. Gender stereotypes encourage ideas of what it means to be a boy or a girl; man or woman, which limit men and women alike.

We aim to ensure that gender stereotyping is challenged through our curriculum and resources.

We monitor children's progress with a view to identifying any inequalities in outcome.

We are aware that there may be barriers to the participation of boys and girls in activities and take steps to encourage equal participation.

#### Gender equality

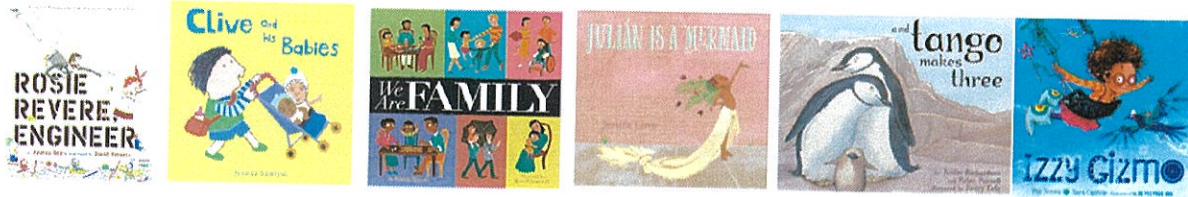
- Educational practitioners encourage children to participate in all activities in the nursery and use images, stories, visitors, etc. to challenge stereotypes regarding gender relating to activities, types of play, access to resources, colour and jobs.
- Practitioners challenge children sensitively;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

**As a staff we have been working together to develop 'non-gendered practice'.**

For example:

- Thinking about how we speak to children and using inclusive language
- Talking about gender roles and providing a variety of role models for all children
- Using 'unisex' toys, games and activities
- Using pictures and stories which depict men and women in a variety of traditional and non-traditional roles
- Encouraging all children to use all toys and areas of the nursery
- Having books and other resources which are 'non-sexist' and which challenge some of the unwritten rules
- Sharing stories that depict different family units including Grandparents, extended family members and same-sex relationships

Some books we use to support equality and diversity



## **Disability**

We are committed to working for the equality of people with and without disabilities.

- We support disabled learners and staff by meeting their individual needs.
- We take steps (reasonable adjustments) to ensure that disabled pupils are not put at a disadvantage compared to other pupils.
- We involve disabled learners, their families and disabled staff in the changes and improvements we make and consult them on issues affecting them, rather than relying on people acting on their behalf.
- We carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils that increases the extent to which they can participate in the curriculum, improves the physical environment of the setting and increases the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.
- We hope to update our Rights Respecting Schools Award as soon as possible.
- We ensure that the curriculum contains positive images of disabled people and supports understanding of and respect for diversity.
- We take opportunities to invite people with disabilities to visit and to contribute to our provision.
- We ensure that parents are fully involved in the setting-based response for their child, and understand the purpose for any intervention or programme of action.

## **Religion and belief**

We are committed to working for equality for people based on their religion, belief and non-belief. We gather statistics relating to families' religion or belief, and non-religion or belief: they are free to tell us about their beliefs if they wish to.

Our communities are diverse and there is no evident minority or majority group of believers. We respect the cultural capital that children bring to the setting.

Respect for others' beliefs is promoted through our curriculum, through discussion when it arises naturally and through stories and the introduction of relevant resources.

Visiting performers are invited where they can help us to understand or celebrate e.g. festivals.

Where parents advise us of beliefs held we support the child in maintaining traditions and explaining them to others and encourage this to be child-led. We do our best to ensure that beliefs are respected and represented in displays, activities etc.

## **Community Cohesion**

Definition: '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/settings and in the wider community.'

Nursery is a communal place 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 Nursery community include: parents/carers, children, staff, the governing body and community partners.

We also have connections with the local geographical community: local schools/settings, partner organisations and the people who live and work close-by and the communities of Wandsworth 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 school.

### **How well we know our community**

Information about children and families associated with the schools/settings is reported to governors termly in the data report.

### **Actions promoting community cohesion**

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 and day nursery setting including: supporting visits and outings, coffee mornings, music groups, SEND groups, social events, and volunteering. These offer opportunities for families from different backgrounds to socialise and have fun together.

Occasional fundraising events draw attention to children and families both in the UK and other parts of the world.

### **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 the settings and children's centres. Incidents of discrimination are very rare.

Case studies document the impact of our work on families' lives in terms of their confidence and interaction with different groups.

Children's attainment data is analysed to enable us to compare progress of children from different groups including gender, free school meals, and SEND and a summary of this information is included in a termly report to governors.

### **Consultation and engagement**

We aim to engage and consult with pupils, staff, parents and carers, and the local community so that we can develop our awareness and information, learn about the impact of our policies, set equality objectives and improve what we do.

Our main activities for consulting and engaging are:



Meetings between staff members and parents/carers to discuss individual children.  
Annual questionnaire to parents and carers.  
Annual questionnaire to staff.  
Consultation with staff over policy-making.  
On-going consultation with other agencies e.g. health visitors, social services, local schools/settings

### **Related Policies and Documents**

- We have a SEND Policy which outlines the provision we make for children with Special Educational Needs.
- Our Positive Behaviour Policy, and Staffing Handbook set out our approach to dealing with discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- Our Complaints Policy sets out our procedures for handling complaints.
- Our Accessibility Plan describes how we aim to improve access for disabled users of our setting.
- Our Federation Strategic Plan as well as our Development Plan sets out our priorities over the next 3 years.

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives 2022-2023:**

Our commitment to equalities is set out in our Federation Development Plan shared by all settings

***To ensure that we aim to help realise the potential social, intellectual, physical and emotional development of each child (and family) irrespective of race, class, gender, culture, language or disability***

1. Children and families are made to feel safe and secure by the setting's fully inclusive and non-bias practice.

#### **We will do this by:**

Staff will develop an awareness of equity, equality, diversity, inclusion and bias through high quality training and are able to use this awareness to support children's thinking and learning – with a focus on the area - Understanding of the World

Quality CPD training will be sourced to 'kick off' our thinking on equity, equality, diversity, inclusion and bias

Staff meetings will continue to reflect on our practice. Bias will be more conscious and sensitively challenged

2. To challenge stereotypes within the nursery, in the community and beyond

#### **We will do this by:**

Ensuring we are providing a more diverse range of role models including visitors to the nursery and local trips, as well as representing diversity in stories

Staff meeting on stereotypes and how we can help to challenge them- and why we should!

To ensure this is reflected in the updated Equality objective 2022/2023

To begin to share the Gender Action principles and practice between settings

Staff will feel confident to challenge stereotypes within children's play and through interactions and using resources

