**EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

The Early years Alliance is committed to helping Preschool provide equality of opportunity for all children and families. As a member of the Alliance:

Martlesham Preschool works in accordance with all relevant legislation, including

1. Equality Act 2010
2. Children Act 1989, 2004
3. Children & Families Act 2014
4. Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Code of Practice 2014

We believe that activities should be open to all children and families, and to all adults committed to their welfare.

We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with, our preschool have an equal chance to do so.

We will ensure that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children, particularly those that arise from their ethnic heritage, social and economic background, gender, ability or disability.

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

**Admissions**

The preschool is open to every family in the community. Children can start when they are 2 years old. We base our admissions policy on a fair system.

Families joining us are made aware of its equal opportunities policy.

We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equality and diversity policy and all other relevant policies.

We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion or social background, such as being a member of a Travelling community or an asylum seeker.

We do not discriminate against a disabled child or refuse a child entry to our setting for reasons relating to disability or learning difficulties.

We develop an action plan to ensure that all individuals can participate successfully in the services offered by the setting and in the curriculum offered.

We take action against any discriminatory, prejudice, harassing or victimising behaviour by [our/my] staff, volunteers or parents whether by:

* direct discrimination – someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic e.g. preventing families of a specific ethnic group 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.
* 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 or threatening materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on, or around, our 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.

**Families**

The preschool recognises that many different types of family successfully love and care for children.

The preschool offers a flexible payment system for families with differing means.

**Employment**

The preschool will appoint the best person for each job and will treat fairly all applicants for jobs and all those appointed.

Commitment to implementing the preschool’s Equal Opportunities policy will form part of the job description for all workers.

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 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 Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS). This ensures fairness in the selection process.

All job descriptions include a commitment to valuing 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.

**The Curriculum**

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

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 children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

The environment should be accessible for all visitors and service users. If access to the settings is found to treat disabled children or adults less favourably than reasonable adjustments should be made to accommodate the needs of disabled children and adults.

We do this by:

* making children feel valued and good about themselves
* making adjustments to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairments
* making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities; e.g. recognising the different learning styles of girls and boys
* positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources
* avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of books or other visual materials
* celebrating a wide range of festivals
* creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance
* differentiating the curriculum to meet children’s special educational needs
* helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable
* ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning
* ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages

**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.

**Festivals**

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all major events in the lives of children and families in the playschool, and in our society as a whole, and to welcome the diversity of backgrounds from which they come.

In order to achieve this, we aim to acknowledge all the festivals which are celebrated in our area and/or by the families involved in the preschool:

* Without indoctrination in any specific faith, children will be made aware of the festivals which are being celebrated by their own families or others, and will be introduced where appropriate to the stories behind the festivals.
* Before introducing a festival with which the adults in the preschool are not themselves familiar, appropriate advice will be sought from people to whom that festival is a familiar one.
* Children and families who celebrate at home festivals with which the rest of the preschool is not familiar will be invited to share the festival with the rest of the group, if they themselves wish to do so.
* Children will be encouraged to welcome a range of different festivals, together with the stories, celebration and special food and clothing they involve, as part of the diversity of life.

**Resources**

These will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multi-racial society.

Material will be selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and derogatory pictures or messages about any group of people.

**Individual Needs**

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is Carol Lupton.

The preschool recognises the wide range of individual needs of children and families in the community, and will consider what part it can play in meeting these needs. This includes care plans, IEPs, SEN, dietary needs and allergies etc, which are reviewed on a regular basis.

Planning for meetings and events will take into account the needs of people with individual needs

**Discriminatory behaviour/remarks**

These are unacceptable in the preschool. The response will aim to be sensitive to the feelings of the victim(s) and to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices.

**Language**

Information, written and spoken, will be clearly communicated in as many languages as necessary.

**Food**

We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children 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.

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 policy and procedures remain effective we will monitor and review them annually to ensure our strategies meet the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and valuing diversity.

**British Values**

See our British Values Policy.

**Prevent Strategy**

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we also have a duty “to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn intoterrorism”

**Legal framework**

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

**Further guidance**

Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty - What Do I Need to Know? A Quick Start Guide for Public Sector Organisations (Government Equalities Office 2011)

Fundamental British Values in the Early Years (Foundation Years 2015)

Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (HMG 2015)

The Prevent Duty: Departmental Advice for Schools and Childcare Providers (DfE 2015)

*This policy is reviewed annually by Martlesham Preschool Committee*