

## Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Policy (incorporating our Accessibility Plan)

The Governing Body of Maytree Nursery School and Children's Centre adopted this policy on:

Date: ..... Signed by Chair of Governors: .....

### Policy review period 2 years<sup>[1]</sup>:

Reviewed: Spring 2016  
Next review: Spring 2018

### Related policies:

Admissions  
Administration of Medicines  
Attendance  
Breastfeeding  
Extremism and radicalisation prevention  
Food and healthy eating  
Looked after children  
Positive behaviour  
Special education needs  
Teaching and learning  
War, weapon and super-hero play  
Water confidence

### Documents consulted:

- Equality Act 2010
- Ofsted The evaluation schedule for schools Jan 2011
- Promoting Community Cohesion: Toolkit for Lambeth Schools June 2010
- Ofsted Supplementary guidance
  - Inspecting equalities Jan 2011
  - Special Educational Needs and/or disability in mainstream schools Jan 2011
  - Inspecting Maintained Schools' duty to promote community cohesion
- The Equal Opportunities Commission – advice on the Gender Equality Duty
- Commission for Racial Equality – guidance for schools on the race equality duty
- Recording and Reporting Racist Incidents Guidance
- Promoting Disability Equality in Schools

### Statutory Responsibilities

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act.

Racist incidents are recorded and reported on a termly basis to the Governing Body and Lambeth. Any actions are agreed at the governing body meeting. This is a statutory duty.

### Single Equality Scheme

This Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Policy incorporates in a single document the:

- gender equality scheme
- race equality policy
- disability equality scheme
- accessibility plan
- community cohesion audit

It identifies how we monitor the implementation of the policy assessing its impact on:

- children and families
- staff and job applicants
- visitors and partners.

### **Inclusion Statement:**

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

**Any occasions where discrimination is expressed or experienced will be appropriately challenged.**

### **Our Aims:**

- That we actively promote the values inherent in the Every Child Matters document: that all should feel safe, healthy, secure and enjoy emotional well-being in order to achieve.
- That Maytree is a safe and happy environment where all people involved feel enabled to 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 Maytree promotes equality of opportunity and promotes good relations between people of different groups.
- To promote community cohesion through working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities.

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

#### **Equality of opportunity**

- Our admissions policy does not discriminate against any group. Children with additional needs and who meet the Lambeth criteria may receive an earlier start date or be able to access a full-time place.
- 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 for whom English is an additional language, is monitored, measured, and evaluated in a more detailed format than for their monolingual peers. The children are given extra 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 will be monitored through daily

evaluation, and any disparity (of cultural, gender, ability, etc.) will be 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 contextualised 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 will aim to plan according to their interests to support them in their learning. Parents'/carers' access to the library, workshops, meetings etc. will be monitored and evaluated. Resources will be monitored to ensure suitability. The curriculum will also be differentiated to allow for different levels of ability and interests.

- All parents/carers are encouraged to use the libraries 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. Games supporting understanding of mathematical concepts are also available for loan.
- All children receive book as a gift during their time at Maytree.
- Practitioners' knowledge of their children's different learning styles, talents and achievement 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, ethnicity, EAL, those eligible for Free School Meals and attendance, any differences are highlighted and can then be addressed.
- ESOL classes are held regularly to meet the significant need in the community for parents/carers to develop their skills speaking English.
- We work collaboratively with Stockwell Partnership (a bilingual advocacy) service to support families with additional needs.
- Interpreters are used when needed to support meetings where available.
- The Children's Centre organises courses to support parents in basic Literacy and Numeracy skills and IT skills.
- Family Learning programmes are accredited so that parents achieve a recognised qualification in literacy or numeracy skills.
- Mothers who are breastfeeding are encouraged to feel welcome and supported.
- We follow Lambeth Schools Human Resources policy and procedures for recruitment which includes completing the Recruitment Monitoring Form. This collates equalities information about all applicants so that any discriminatory practise is clearly visible. A summary of this is reported to Lambeth.
- During recruitment and promotion processes we may treat individuals with a protected characteristic more favourably when faced with two or more candidates of equal merit, if the more favourable treatment is intended to address under-representation in the workforce. [2]
- Equalities information is reported to Lambeth annually which includes a summary of the information regarding the Recruitment Monitoring Forms mentioned in the previous point and also includes data regarding promotion of existing members of staff and training they have attended.
- Racist incidents are recorded and reported on a termly basis to the Governing Body and annually to Lambeth. Any actions are agreed at the governing body meeting. This is a statutory duty.

### **Accessibility Plan**

The Accessibility Plan and Disability Equality Scheme covers the three strands of the

planning duties including:

1. Improving the physical environment of school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled children are able to take advantage of education and associated services.
  - Wheelchair access to classrooms is available through the garden gates.
  - Unfortunately adult toilets are not suitable for wheelchair access, suitable toilets are however available at Thresholds.
  - Planning for the new build will ensure the new school and children's centre will be accessible to all.
2. Increasing the extent to which disabled children can participate in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
  - Skilled practitioners ensure that all the children's different learning styles and communication styles, including signing, Makaton, visual timetables, eye pointing etc, are acknowledged and valued by all.
  - Continuing involvement of professionals to support practitioners in their understanding of how to support children who have complex needs.
3. Improving the delivery of information to children with disabilities.
  - All parents have access to information. Makaton signing, Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS) are used for children when appropriate. Support is available from the Hearing Impaired Unit at Jubilee Primary School.

## **Diversity**

### *Race equality*

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:

- the use of artefacts and resources in cultural celebrations
- bilingual books available for borrowing from the school library
- home corner resources such as dolls and dressing up
- music
- specific activities such as mehndi patterns for Diwali celebrations etc.

Different languages and scripts are used for notices around the setting.

Families are encouraged to continue to speak to their child in their home language(s), and these are valued through language of the week and language focused coffee mornings where parents have the opportunity to meet and to support each other.

Interpreters, where available, will be used when needed for parents who do not speak English, and signing interpreters for deaf parents.

Children's Centre staff observe whether parents/carers are isolated or vulnerable and support the development of friendships between different parents.

### *Ability*

- For children with Special Educational Needs (SEND) or those who are disabled, the Inclusion Manager and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) meets regularly with the parents/carers and review children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs) termly, and applies for Statements of Special Needs as required. Appropriate interventions, such as music therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, physiotherapy, will be planned for and evaluated, along with 1:1 support, group work, visits to a Soft Play and Sensory Room facility and small story groups. The Inclusion Manager liaises with the parents and other agencies along with Lambeth Children and Young People's Service to ensure the best possible provision at Maytree and to support the transition process both in to the

setting, between the children's centre and school, local Birth to 5 settings, Childminders, and on to primary schools.

- As many as six different group times take place where the content and style of delivery is differentiated to meet the wide range of children's experiences and styles of learning. The groups range from a small group where children are less experienced or may have special educational needs where singing and interactive stories are shared to an 'Extension' story group where more experienced learners come together, the content is planned carefully to challenge and extend understanding of more complex information and skills.
- Practitioners attend a range of training courses which meet the diverse needs of learners and develop awareness of disability issues, for example, Makaton training, Letters and Sounds, Parents for Inclusion training.
- 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, switching on the computer, finding resources etc.

#### *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).

#### *Other*

- Information is shared regarding other groups who may face discrimination through lack of understanding e.g. fact sheets regarding Refugee and Asylum Seekers.

### **Community Cohesion**

Community cohesion was defined by Ofsted as follows:

'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 and in the wider community.'

School is a common feature 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 school community includes: parents/carers, children, staff, the governing body and community partners.

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

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

**Maytree** - A termly audit of the children attending the school is documented in the School's Context Data spreadsheet which is reported on to governors termly. This includes information as listed below with significant changes highlighted:

- free school meals
- vulnerable families

- children in single parent families
- children with SEND
- children with English as an Additional Language and the range of languages spoken
- ethnic backgrounds

Extensive information is collected to inform the Children's Centre's work, for example, the make-up of parents and children attending activities. This information is stored in the Management Information System (MIS) and reports, specific to Maytree, are produced quarterly for us by the Local Authority to inform us about which groups within the community are attending our centre.

### **Actions promoting community cohesion**

#### ***Ongoing***

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 setting including: supporting visits and outings, story trails, Family Learning, language coffee mornings, dance and music groups, Welcome Social event, Summer Social event and volunteering. These offer opportunities for families from different backgrounds to socialise and have fun together.

Our Children's Centre programme is reviewed regularly and activities planned and reorganised to reach groups who are not accessing our services. For example a Sign, Wriggle and Rhyme group has been established to encourage more families with children with special educational needs to attend.

A map is displayed in the entrance area showing where our children's families are from and which languages they speak.

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

#### ***Future plans for promoting community cohesion***

Continuing with our programme of festivals and celebrations throughout the year.

#### **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 school.

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.

Attendance data at Children's Centre activities show the range of people with different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.

Attainment is analysed to enable us to compare progress of children from different groups: ethnicity, ability, free school meals, and EAL and a summary of this information is included in a termly report to governors.

