

Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Policy

This policy has been agreed and adopted by the Governors:

Date: 01/07/2020

Signed by Chair of Governors: Bruce MacInnes

Policy review period 4 years:

Reviewed: Summer 2020

Next review: Summer 2024

Related policies:

Admissions

Administration of Medicines

Attendance

Extremism and radicalisation prevention

Behaviour

Special educational needs and disability policy/information report - (Accessibility Plan)

Documents consulted:

- Equality Act 2010
- Promoting Community Cohesion: Toolkit for Lambeth Schools June 2010
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Recording and Reporting Racist Incidents Guidance

Introduction

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

This document outlines how we promote and monitor equality, diversity and community cohesion for:

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

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 Aims:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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 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 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 plan according to their interests to support them in their learning. Parents'/carers' access to the library, 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 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.
- 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, EAL, those eligible for Free School Meals and Early Years Pupil Premium and attendance, any differences are highlighted and can then be addressed.
- ESOL classes are held to meet the significant need in the community for parents/carers to develop their skills speaking English.
- 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 Lambeth guidance. We respond to requests from Lambeth regarding equalities information.

- 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 a senior member of staff who will record the details and report to the senior leadership team who will take appropriate action.
- We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the settings are as accessible as possible.

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 Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) meets regularly with the parents/carers and review children's Support Plans and support parents/carers in their application for specialist support and Education and Health Care Plans. Appropriate interventions, such as music therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, physiotherapy, will be planned for and evaluated, along with 1:1 support, group work and Sensory Rooms available at some settings. The SENCOs liaise with the parents and other agencies along with Lambeth 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.
- 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 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

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 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 and children's centre communities include: 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 school.

How well we know our community

Information about children and families associated with the schools is reported to governors termly in the School's Context 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 setting including: supporting visits and outings, coffee mornings, dance, drama and music groups, social events, 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 Coffee Morning event has been established to encourage more families with children with special educational needs to attend.

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 school 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.

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

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