



Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Equal Opportunities

Hawkesbury Preschool has and implements a policy, and procedures, to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care, including support for children with special educational needs or disabilities.

9.1 Valuing diversity and promoting equality and inclusion

Policy statement

Diversity is the valuing of our individual differences and talents. At Hawkesbury Preschool we aim to create a culture where all children, parents, staff, students and volunteers can participate, thrive and contribute.

Equality is to protect against discrimination. At Hawkesbury Preschool we promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people with 'protected characteristics'.

Inclusion is a universal human right and at Hawkesbury Preschool we embrace all people irrespective of race, gender, home language, disability, medical or other need. We will ensure that our preschool is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of children and their families, making reasonable adjustments as necessary for the full participation of children with disabilities, specific needs or special educational needs, including supporting children with English as an additional language.

We understand that discrimination and intolerance affects the well-being of families and children and can impact on learning and attainment, therefore we are committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote inclusion, equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families.

- We provide a secure and accessible environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions from children and their families are considered and valued, making inclusion and valuing diversity a thread that runs through all of the activities of Hawkesbury Preschool

- We will challenge and eliminate stereotypical or discriminatory actions and verbal statements made by either children or adults
- We aim to improve the knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting inclusion, equality and valuing diversity through providing positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people.

Procedures

Admissions

Our setting is open to all members of the community.

- We advertise our service widely.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system as set out in our Admissions Policy
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality and Inclusion policy.
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of a protected characteristic as defined by the Equalities Act (2010). These are: disability, race, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. We do not discriminate against children and families whose first language is not English.
- We do not discriminate against anybody with a disability or refuse a child entry to our setting for reason relating to disability, unless we are unable to make adjustments to accommodate the child, yet we will always try to make all reasonable adjustments as necessary.
- We develop an action plan (see policy 9.2 Supporting children with SEND) to ensure that children with disabilities, English as an additional language, specific needs or special educational needs can participate successfully in the services offered by Hawkesbury Preschool and in the curriculum offered.
- We take disciplinary action against any discriminatory behaviour or comments by staff.
- Displays of openly discriminatory and possibly offensive materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour by an adult are unacceptable on or around the premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner and may be reported to the Police in-line with the Equality Act 2010

Employment

- Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against a fair criteria, in-line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014)
- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to eligibility to work in the UK, references and checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- All job descriptions include a commitment to promoting equality and inclusion and recognising and respecting diversity as part of their specifications.
- We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.
- Pregnant members of staff/expectant fathers are given time off to attend ante-natal appointments and are entitled to statutory maternity/paternity leave.
- A full risk assessment will be carried out to ensure that risks to an expectant mother and baby are minimised.

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 when these are required (see policy 6.1 Administering Medicine)
- We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for promoting equality and inclusion, valuing diversity and inclusion.

Curriculum

Our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. If access to Hawkesbury Preschools is found to treat disabled children or adults less favourably then we make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs.

The curriculum offered in Hawkesbury Preschool encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking. We do this by:

- making children feel valued and good about themselves and others;
- ensuring that children have equality of access to learning and care;
- making adjustments to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairments, whenever possible;

- making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities and that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities;
- 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 the individual needs of all children
- helping children to understand that stereotypical and 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; and
- 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 to support this.
- We encourage children to inform the group of their everyday life.
- We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of Hawkesbury Preschool and to contribute fully.
- For families who speak languages other than or 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.

Food

- We work in partnership with parents to develop systems that support the dietary requirements of children that arise from their medical, religious, family preferences or cultural needs.
- 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.

Committee Meetings and Child Development Meetings (Key-person meetings)

- Committee meetings are arranged to ensure that all families who wish to may be involved in the running of Hawkesbury Preschool are able to do so
- We positively encourage fathers, as well as mothers, to be involved in the setting and their child's learning, including those parents who do not live with the child.
- Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways – written and verbal to ensure that all parents have information about and access to the meetings.

Monitoring and reviewing

- To ensure our policies and procedures remain effective we will monitor and review them regularly to ensure our strategies meets the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and valuing diversity.
- We provide a complaints procedure and a complaints summary record for parents to see.

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF AND PARENTS TO BE OPEN AND HONEST IN THE INFORMATION THAT THEY SUPPLY TO ENABLE US TO ENSURE THAT HAWKESBURY PRESCHOOL'S DUTY TO EQUALITY IS POSSIBLE.

ALL INFORMATION SUPPLIED WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL UNLESS PERMISSION TO SHARE INFORMATION IS GIVEN

Legal framework

- The Equality Act (2010)
- Children Act (1989) & (2004)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001)
- Children, Schools and Families Act 2010
- UN Convention on the rights of the child 1989
- Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2012)