

Pre-school Learning Alliance

Children's Centre

Policies

CC8 Standard Promoting Inclusion, Equality & Valuing Diversity Policy

Aim

Pre-school Learning Alliance children's centres actively promote inclusion, equality of opportunity and the valuing of diversity and are accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. We aim to ensure that all sections of the community receive accessible information and that our admissions procedures are fair, clear and open to all families who would benefit from our services. These procedures build on the Pre-school Learning Alliance's organisational policies.

Links to Every Child Matters

- Being Healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well-being

Objectives

The Pre-school Learning Alliance supports the definition of inclusion as stated by the Early Childhood Forum, to which we are member contributors:

'Inclusion is the process of identifying, understanding and breaking down the barriers to participation and belonging.'

We interpret this as consisting of the following tasks and processes:

- Awareness and knowledge of barriers to inclusion. These include active discrimination as well as covert discrimination on the grounds of:
 - Colour ('race'), ethnicity, culture and religion
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
 - Impairment
 - Social status.
- Understanding, through training and staff development, the causes and effects of discrimination and how staff can ensure that the children's centre is both accessible and inclusive.
- The Pre-school Learning Alliance ensures that its children's centres operate in an inclusive manner enabling all children and families to access its services.

- The Pre-school learning Alliance also has regard for the needs of parents who are:
 - looking to take up work, remain in work or extend their hours of work
 - looking to commence training or education

- Centres work in partnership with the Local Authority and other agencies to ensure that provision is accessible to all sections of the community.
- Services are widely advertised and information is accessible to all sections of the community.
- Where the number of children and families wanting places exceeds the number of places available a waiting list is operated using clear criteria for allocation of places at the most suitable sessions. Allocation is based upon the percentage of need in the area and gives due consideration to the following:
 - excluded groups with whom the children's centre establishes contact:
 - teenage mothers and pregnant teenagers;
 - lone parents;
 - children in workless households;
 - children in Black and Minority Ethnic groups;
 - disabled children and children of disabled parents; and
 - other priority vulnerable groups in the children's centre area.

- Inclusive practice includes:
 - Devising and following a policy on inclusion with a statement of intent that applies to day-to-day practice including resources, activity programmes and recognition of additional needs and developing inclusive relationships
 - Ensuring that barriers to inclusion are identified and removed or minimised wherever possible.
 - Recruitment of staff to reflect cultural and language diversity, and staff of both gender
 - Understanding, supporting and promoting the importance of identity for all children and families and recognising that this comprises multiple facets which are shaped by a 'kaleidoscope' of factors including colour ('race') and ethnicity, gender, difference of ability, social class, language, religion and family lifestyle, which combine uniquely in the identity of each individual
 - Recognising that this 'kaleidoscope' also reflects negative images which may be internalised and negatively affect the development of self-concept and self-esteem
 - Promoting a welcoming atmosphere that genuinely values different cultural perspectives, without stereotyping cultures and traditions, on raising children by involving parents at all levels

- Welcoming and promoting bi/multi-lingualism
- Promoting gender equality, while at the same time recognising differences in 'learning styles' of girls and boys to promote equal achievement
- Creating an ethos within which staff work confidently within a culturally complex environment; learning when to change or adapt practice in the setting and having the confidence to challenge parental practice that is not in the child's best interest, seeking support and intervention from agencies where appropriate
- Challenging discrimination as it occurs from children, parents, staff or outside agencies or individuals that affect the well-being of the children's centre community
- Being aware of anti-discriminatory legislation and able to use it to shape services and support parents and children against discrimination in the local community – e.g. against asylum seekers or travellers.

Legal References

Equalities Act 2010