

Supporting individual development policies



**Clockhouse
Preschool**
Learning through play

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5.1 Equality Policy and Procedures

Policy statement

All early years settings must consider and meet relevant employer and service provider duties as set out in the Equality Act (2010). Those in receipt of funding must eliminate discrimination including indirect, direct discrimination, discrimination and harassment based on association and perception and discrimination for reason relating to a disability or by failing to make a reasonable adjustment to any provision, criterion, or practice. This duty is anticipatory. Settings must advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with individuals and groups with protected characteristics namely disability, race (ethnicity), religion and belief, sexual orientation, sex (gender), gender reassignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage, and civil partnership. In addition, we are aware of the inequality that users facing socio-economic disadvantaged may also encounter. We will not tolerate behaviour from an adult which demonstrates dislike and prejudice towards groups and individuals living outside the UK (xenophobia).

Procedures

Our provision actively promotes inclusion, equality of opportunity and the valuing of diversity in children, staff, parents, and visitors in the setting, by;

- Promoting understanding of discrimination - through training and staff development - the causes and effects of discrimination on both adults and children and the long-term impact of discrimination; the need to protect children from discrimination and ensure that early years practice is both accessible and inclusive; the need for relevant support to allow children to develop into confident adults with a strong positive self-identity.
- Understanding, supporting and promoting the importance of identity for all children and recognising that this comprises multiple facets which are shaped by a 'kaleidoscope' of factors including British values, 'race' ethnicity and culture, gender, difference of ability, social class, language, religion and belief, and family form and lifestyle, which combine uniquely in the identity of each individual; for example, we welcome and promote bi/multi-lingualism and the use of alternative communication formats such as sign language, and we promote gender equality while at the same time recognising the differences in play preferences and developmental timetables of girls and boys.
- Developing an environment which reflects the 'kaleidoscope' of factors that can provide settings with a myriad of influences and ideas for exploring and celebrating difference.
- Recognising that this 'kaleidoscope' also reflects negative images which may be internalised and negatively affect the development of self-concept, self-esteem, and confidence.
- Ensuring that barriers to inclusion are identified and removed or minimised wherever possible, by completing an Access audit annually.

- Promoting a welcoming atmosphere that genuinely appreciate British values, different cultural and personal perspectives, without stereotyping and prejudicing cultures and traditions on raising children, by always involving parents.
- Promoting community cohesion and creating an environment that pre-empts acts of discrimination so that they do not arise.
- Recruitment of staff to reflect cultural and language diversity, disabled staff, and staff of both genders.
- Addressing discrimination as it occurs from children in a sensitive, age-appropriate manner to ensure that everyone involved understands the situation and are offered reassurance and support to achieve resolution.
- Challenging discriminatory behaviour from parents, staff or outside agencies or individuals that affect the well-being of children and the early years community.
- 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 practice (including parental) that is not in the child's best interest, seeking support and intervention from agencies where appropriate.
- Ensuring that educators work closely with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) to make sure that the additional needs of all children are identified and met.
- Being aware of anti-discriminatory legislation and able to use it to shape the service and support parents and children against discrimination in the local community, for example, against asylum seekers, the Travelling community and same sex parents.
- Promoting identity, positive self-concept, and self-esteem for all children through treating each child as an individual and with equal concern, ensuring each child's developmental and emotional needs are recognised and met, by;
 - Discussing aspects of family/child identity with parents when settling in a new child.
 - Maintaining a positive non-judgemental attitude and use of language with children to talk about topics such as family composition/background, eye and skin colour, hair texture, sex, gender, physical attributes, and languages spoken (including signing).
 - Becoming knowledgeable about different cultures, and individual subjective perceptions of these and being able to reflect them imaginatively and creatively in the setting to create pride, interest, and positive self-identity.
 - Discussing similarities and differences positively without bias and judgement.
 - Celebrating festivals, holy days, and special days authentically through involving parents, staff, or the wider community to provide a positive experience for all.
 - Providing books with positive images of children and families from all backgrounds and abilities. Ensuring individual differences are portrayed with sensitive accuracy. The central characters in individual stories should provide a positive, broad representation of diversity e.g. disability, ethnicity, sex and gender, age and social backgrounds. Individual storylines should contain a range of situations which are easily identifiable by children such as those that include disabled children/adults, different ethnic groups, mixed heritage families, gender diversity, single sex/same and different sex families, multi-generational households, and cultural diversity.
 - Ensuring toys, learning materials and resources reflect diversity and provide relevant materials for exploring aspects of difference, such as skin tone paints and pens.
 - Developing a range of activities through which children can explore aspects of their identity, explore similarities, differences and develop empathy including:
 - self-portraits, photograph albums and displays showing a range of families.
 - books about 'me' or my family
 - food activities, such as tasting and cooking, creating real menu additions.
 - activities about real celebrations such as new babies, weddings, cultural and religious events

- providing mirrors at different heights for non-ambulant children.
- developing a music area with a variety of musical instruments children to use to create a range of music.
- home corner play which encourages all children to equally participate and provides domestic articles from diverse cultures.
- 'Dressing up' materials which promote non-gendered roles and enable children to explore different gender identities/gender neutrality.
- providing dolls that sensitively and accurately portray difference such as disability and ethnicity.
- a variety of books, some with dual language texts
- examples of writing in other scripts from everyday sources such as papers and magazines, packaging etc. children's names written on cards in English as well as in their home language script where appropriate
- conversations with young children which explore unfamiliar objects and subjects to help foster an understanding of diversity and identity such as spectacles or hearing aids, religious and cultural practices.
- Record keeping that refers to children's emerging bilingual skills or their use of sign language as achievements in positive terms.
- Record keeping that refers to children's differing abilities and identities in positive terms.

Fostering positive attitudes and challenging discrimination.

- Young children are learning how to grow up in a diverse world and develop appropriate attitudes. This can be difficult, and they may make mistakes and pick up inappropriate attitudes or just get the 'wrong idea' that may underlie attitudes of 'pre-prejudice' towards specific individuals/groups. Where children make remarks or behave in a discriminatory or prejudice way or make inappropriate comments that arise from not knowing facts, staff should explain why these actions are not acceptable and provide appropriate information and intervention to reinforce children's understanding and learning.
- Where children make overtly prejudice or discriminatory remarks they are dealt with as above, and the issue is raised with the parents.
- When children wish to explore aspects of their identity such as ethnicity or gender, they should be listened to in an understanding and non-judgemental way.
- Parents are expected to abide by the policy for inclusion, diversity, and equality and to support their child in the aims of the setting.

Promoting dynamic and balanced mixed gender, culturally, socially, and linguistically diverse staff teams who work constructively together in providing for diverse communities.

- It is recognised that members of staff in diverse teams bring a range of views and opinions to the setting regarding a range of issues to do with the job. It is important that a range of views and perspectives are shared and respected in staff meetings and that decisions are made on which way of looking at the situation will result in the best outcomes for the child.
- Staff views are sought where these offer individuals, social and/or cultural insight, although staff should not be put in an uncomfortable position of being an 'expert' or 'ambassador'.
- Staff respect similarities and differences between each other and users such as ability, disability, religious and personal beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment etc. Staff do not discriminate or harass individuals on the grounds of these or encourage any other member of staff to do so; evidence of such will be dealt with by management immediately.

- Members of staff make the best use of different perspectives in the team to find solutions to difficult problems that arise in socially/culturally complex situations.
- Members of staff support each other to highlight similarities and respect differences.
- Members of staff of both sexes carry out all tasks according to their job description; there are no jobs that are designated female or male jobs.
- Staff are sensitive to the fact that male workers are under-represented in the early years workforce so may be more likely to experience inequality and discrimination.
- Staff should be aware that male workers may be more vulnerable to allegations. Therefore, work practices should be developed to minimise this. These practices are valuable for all staff.
- There is an ethos wherein staff, parents and children are free to express themselves and speak their own languages in ways that enhance the culture of the setting.

Supporting children to become considerate adults.

Children's social and emotional development is shaped by early experiences and relationships and incorporates elements of equality and British and Universal values. The EYFS supports children's earliest skills in an age appropriate way to become social citizens, namely to listen and attend to instructions; know the difference between right and wrong; recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others; make and maintain friendships; develop empathy and consideration of other people; take turns in play and conversation; risk taking behaviours, rules and boundaries; not to hurt/upset other people with words and actions; consequences of hurtful/discriminatory behaviour and regulating behaviour.

British values

The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect & tolerance are embedded into our practice.

Democracy: making decisions together

- For self-confidence and self-awareness (PSED), educators encourage children to see the bigger picture, children know their views count, value each other's views and values and talk about feelings e.g. when they do or do not need help.
- Educators support the decisions children make and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration. Children are given opportunities to develop enquiring minds, where questions are valued and prejudice attitudes less likely.

Rule of law: understanding rules matter (PSED)

- Educators ensure children understand their and others' behaviour and consequence.
- Educators collaborate with children to create rules and codes of behaviour, e.g. rules about tidying up and ensure all children understand that rules apply to everyone.

Individual liberty: freedom for all (PSED & UW)

- Children are supported to develop a positive sense of themselves. Educators provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, for example through allowing children to take risks, experiment in their play, explore facets of their own identity, talk about their experiences and learning. Educators encourage a range of experiences, allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on differences and understand we are free to have different opinions.

Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated (PSED & UW)

- Educators create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures and races are valued, and children are engaged with the wider community.
- Children should acquire tolerance, appreciation, and respect for their own and other cultures; know about similarities and differences between themselves, others and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions.
- Educators encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours such as sharing and respecting other's opinions.
- Educators promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example, sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural/racial stereotyping.

It is not acceptable to:

- actively promote intolerance of other faiths, cultures, and races
- fail to challenge gender stereotypes and routinely segregate girls and boys.
- isolate children from their wider community
- fail to challenge behaviours (whether of staff, children, or parents) that are not in line with the fundamental values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

5.2 Looked after children

Policy statement

Children become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority or have been accommodated by the local authority. Most looked after children will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken into the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has an impact on their emotional well-being.

We place emphasis on promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to. Our policy and practice guidelines for looked after children are based on two important concepts: attachment and resilience. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives, as the foundation for resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and enable the development of positive dispositions for learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

Principles

- The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.
- We offer places to two, three and four-year-old children who are in care. In such cases, the child should have been with the foster carer for at least two months and show signs of having formed a secure attachment to the carer, and the placement in the setting will last a minimum of three months.
- We will always offer 'stay and play' provision for a child who is two to five years old who is still settling with their foster carer, or who is only temporarily being looked after.

- Where a child who normally attends our setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer, we will continue to offer the placement for the child.

Procedures

- The designated person for looked after children is the designated safeguarding lead.
- Every child is allocated a key person before they start, and this is no different for a looked after child. The designated person ensures the key person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.
- The designated person and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and his or her family and ensure that appropriate information is gained and shared.
- The setting recognises the role of the local authority children's social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes, especially about the birth parent's or foster carer's role in relation to the setting, without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
- At the start of a placement there is a professional's meeting to determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates the child's learning needs. This plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks and three months. Thereafter at three to six monthly intervals. The care plan needs to consider issues for the child such as their emotional needs and how they are to be met, how any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed, their sense of self, culture, language(s) and identity – and how this is to be supported, their need for sociability and friendship, their interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway; and how any special needs will be supported.
- The settling-in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same as for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. It is even more important that the 'proximity' stage is followed until it is visible that the child has formed a sufficient relationship with his or her key person for them to act as a 'secure base' to allow the gradual separation from the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases, so time needs to be allowed for it to take place without causing further distress or anxiety to the child.
- In the first two weeks after settling-in, as with all children, the child's well-being is the focus of observation, their sociability and their ability to manage their feelings with or without support.
- Further observations about communication, interests and abilities will be noted to form a picture of the whole child in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage (2025) prime and specific areas of learning and development.
- Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's observations and discussed with the foster carer.
- Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.
- The transition to school will be handled sensitively. The designated person and the child's key person will liaise with the school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the looked after child's birth parents.

5.3 Promoting positive behaviour

Policy statement

We believe that children flourish best when their personal, social, and emotional needs are understood, supported and met and where there are clear, fair and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

As children develop, they learn about boundaries, the difference between right and wrong, and to consider the views and feelings, and needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. The development of these skills requires adult guidance to help encourage and model appropriate behaviours and to offer intervention and support when children struggle with conflict and emotional situations. In these types of situations key staff can help identify and address triggers for the behaviour and help children reflect, regulate and manage their actions. Remembering that all behaviour is communication. Attempting to identify what this child is communicating and to meet that need before a child becomes overwhelmed or dysregulated.

Procedures

In order to manage children's behaviour in an appropriate way we will:

- attend relevant training to help understand and guide appropriate models of behaviour;
- role model considerate and respectful behaviour to children and adults in the setting;
- notice and praise considerate and respectful behaviour in children and adults in the setting;
- implement the setting's behaviour procedures including the stepped approach;
- have the necessary skills to support other staff with behaviour issues and to access expert advice, if necessary;
- ensure all staff complete the Promoting Positive Behaviour programme, on Early Years Alliance Central <https://central.eyalliance.org.uk/>
- work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person. We work with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.
- support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
- do not ask children to say sorry but help them to understand the outcomes of their actions and support them in learning how to cope or resolve conflict more appropriately.

Rosie White has overall responsibility for our programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development and acts as our behaviour coordinator.

Initial intervention approach

- We use an initial problem-solving intervention for all situations in which a child or children are distressed or in conflict. All staff use this intervention consistently.
- This type of approach involves an adult approaching the situation calmly, stopping any hurtful actions, acknowledging the feelings of those involved, gathering information, restating the issue to help children reflect, regain control of the situation and resolve the situation themselves.

Focused intervention approach

- The reasons for some types of behaviour are not always apparent, despite the knowledge and input from key staff and parents.
- Where we have considered all possible reasons, then a focused intervention approach should then be applied.

- This approach allows the key person and behaviour coordinator to observe, reflect, and identify causes and functions of unwanted behaviour in the wider context of other known influences on the child.
- We follow the ABC method which uses key observations to identify
 - a) an event or activity (antecedent) that occurred immediately before a particular behaviour,
 - b) what behaviour was observed and recorded at the time of the incident, and
 - c) what the consequences were following the behaviour.

Once analysed, the focused intervention should help determine the cause (e.g. ownership of a toy or fear of a situation) and function of the behaviour (to obtain the toy or avoid a situation) and suitable support will be applied.

Use of rewards and sanctions

- All children need consistent messages, clear boundaries and guidance to intrinsically manage their behaviour through self-reflection and control.
- Tangible rewards such as stickers may provide an immediate change in the behaviour but will not teach children how to act when a 'prize' is not being given or provide the child with the skills to manage situations and their emotions. Instead, a child is taught how to be 'compliant' and respond to meet adult's own expectations to obtain a reward (or for fear of a sanction).
 - We only use these in select situations, after the type of rewards and their function have been carefully considered and agreed by the behaviour coordinator.
- Children should never be labelled, criticised, humiliated, punished, shouted at or isolated by singling them out in conversations or removing them from the group to leave them alone in 'time out' or on a 'naughty chair'. However, if necessary, children can be accompanied and removed from the group to calm down and if appropriate helped to reflect on what has happened.

Stepped approach

Step 1

- We apply the setting's procedures on Promoting Positive Behaviour
- We undertake an annual audit of the provision to ensure the environment and practices supports healthy social and emotional development. Findings from the audit are considered by management and relevant adjustments applied.
- We ensure that all staff are trained and supported to address issues relating to behaviour including applying initial and focused intervention approaches.

Step 2

- We address unwanted behaviours using the agreed and consistently applied initial intervention approach. If the unwanted behaviour does not reoccur or cause concern, then normal monitoring will resume.
- Behaviours that result in concern for the child and/or others will be discussed between the key person, the behaviour coordinator and Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or/and manager. During the meeting, the key person will use their knowledge and assessments of the child to share any known influencing factors (new baby, additional needs, illness etc.) to place the behaviour into context. Appropriate adjustments to practice will be agreed and if successful normal monitoring resumed.
- If the behaviour continues to reoccur and remain a concern, then the key person should liaise with parents to discuss possible reasons for the behaviour and to agree next steps. If a cause for the behaviour is not known or only occurs whilst in the setting, then the SENCO will suggest using a focused intervention approach to identify a trigger for the behaviour.

- If a trigger is identified, then the SENCO and key person will meet with the parents to plan support for the child through developing an action plan. If relevant, recommended actions for dealing with the behaviour at home should be agreed with the parent/s and incorporated into the plan. Other members of the staff team should be informed of the agreed actions in the action plan and help implement the actions. The plan should be monitored and reviewed regularly by the key person and SENCO until improvement is noticed.

Step 3

- If, despite applying the initial intervention and focused intervention approaches, the behaviour continues to occur and/or is of significant concern, then the behaviour coordinator and SENCO will invite the parents to a meeting to discuss external referral and next steps for supporting the child in the setting.
- It may be agreed that the Early Support process should begin, and that specialist help be sought for the child – this support may address either developmental or welfare needs. If the child's behaviour is part of a range of welfare concerns that also include a concern that the child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, we will follow the Child Protection Policy. It may also be agreed that the child should be referred for further referral and support in line with our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs policy.
- Advice provided by external agencies should be incorporated into the child's action plan and regular multi-disciplinary meetings held to review the child's progress.

Use of physical intervention

- The term physical intervention is used to describe any forceful physical contact by an adult to a child such as grabbing, pulling, dragging, holding or any form of restraint of a child such as pulling a child away, or holding down. This includes all physical contact with a child that is not wanted by them. Where a child is upset or angry, staff will speak to them calmly (using a calm tone of voice, and non-threatening body language), encouraging them to vent their frustration in other ways by diverting the child's attention. All other methods of behaviour management will be considered before any physical intervention is used. This would include a range of approaches such as humour, distraction, relocation and offering choices, which are direct alternatives to using restrictive physical intervention.
- Staff should not use physical intervention – or the threat of physical intervention, to manage a child's behaviour unless it is necessary to use "reasonable force in order to prevent children from injuring themselves or others or damage property" (EYFS).
- If "reasonable force" has been used for any of the reasons shown above, parents are to be informed on the same day that it occurs. The intervention will be recorded as soon as possible within the child's file, which states clearly when and how parents were informed.
- Corporal (physical) punishment of any kind should never be used or threatened as it could adversely affect a child's well-being.
- Where an individual child's behaviour means they are likely to require physical restrictive handling we will discuss this with the parents and set out a physical handling plan. This plan would specify the staff member(s) most appropriate and other methods to be used to support the child and maintain their physical and emotional health. Other professionals appropriate to the child may be consulted in the making of the plan. These plans will be reviewed at least once every term and more often if there are major changes in the child's behaviours.

Bullying

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. It is characterised by intent to hurt, often planned, and accompanied by an awareness of the impact of the bullying behaviour.

A child who is bullying has reached a stage of cognitive development where he or she is able to plan to carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress to another.

Bullying can normally occur in children five years old and over and may well be an issue in after school clubs and holiday schemes catering for slightly older children.

If a child bullies another child or children:

- we show the children who have been bullied that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them, giving them reassurance.
- we intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child or children.
- we explain to the child doing the bullying why their behaviour is not acceptable; helping them to recognise the impact of their actions.
- we make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practise and reflect on considerate behaviour.
- we discuss what has happened with both sets of parents separately, working out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour; and explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

5.4 Superhero and Weapon play

Policy statement

Children learn best when they are comfortable in their environment. This can only happen when children feel they are a valued member of the group and are fairly represented. The approaches we take to teaching and the learning that comes from role play should reflect the interests of all the children involved.

Children learn to manage their own emotions and reaction to risk, as with all their learning, in repeated play-based practice. Most children enjoy engaging in imaginative play that relates to, and makes sense of, the world that they live in. For lots of children, this imaginative play contains a strong element of conflict and superhero re-enactment. Re-enacting weapon use is a universal language of play for children and usually results in high levels of engagement for the children actively involved in it. Research shows that children learn important lessons by exploring these themes in a safe arena of play, for example, concepts such as good and evil, life and death, strength, power and identity.

We recognise that each child is unique, and we will do everything to support children to be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of secure and loving relationships, as well as having the opportunity to learn in a positive and stimulating environment.

Procedures

When children are involved in conflict, superhero, weapon based or other rough play, practitioners will always be nearby to observe and extend play, and will;

- Remind children of the rules of this play, which are;
 - Weapons do not touch people.
 - We only play with others who are playing the same game.
 - We take care not to hurt other people when running and chasing.
- Assess all children's emotional welfare, wellbeing, and involvement whether they are joining in with the play or not, ensuring all children are enjoying the play.

- Acknowledge the positive aspects of the character of the superhero while discussing the negative aspects of weapon use and physical violence at a level that is appropriate. This will be mainly done through story, drama, and appropriate discussion.
- Extend children's play through, for example by introducing craft, storylines, or other characters.
- Support children to make a weapon if they wish to do so, extending their learning into researching, planning, and drawing.
- Deal with conflicts and disagreements, as they would in any play, by listening, discussing, compromising, and resolving the problem. (Please see our behaviour management policy for more information.)

Superhero costumes, like any other fancy dress are allowed to be brought into pre-school from home. This will help practitioners to plan for individual children's interests.