

 **Promoting inclusion, equality and valuing diversity policy**

# This policy was adopted by *Buxton Preschool Playgroup* on *1/06/2022*

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.

**Statement of intent**

Buxton Preschool Playgroup is committed to valuing diversity by providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families,

**Aim**

Buxton Preschool Playgroup actively promotes inclusion, equality of opportunity and the valuing of diversity.

###### **Objectives**

We support the definition of inclusion as stated by the Early Childhood Forum:

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

We interpret this as consisting of several tasks and processes in relation not only to children but also to parents and visitors in the setting. These tasks and processes include awareness and knowledge of relevant barriers to inclusion for those with a protected characteristic namely:

* disability
* gender reassignment
* pregnancy and maternity
* race
* religion or belief
* sexual orientation
* sex (gender)
* age
* marriage or civil partnership (in relation to employment)

This includes unlawful behaviour towards people with protected characteristics. Unlawful behaviour being direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, associative discrimination, discrimination by perception, harassment, and victimisation (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**). This also applies to the same behaviour towards specific groups of people and individuals who are British Citizens residing in the UK.

We promote 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 childcare 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.

* Developing practice that includes:
* Developing an environment which reflects the ‘kaleidoscope’ of factors that can provide settings with a great number of influences and ideas for exploring and celebrating difference. An environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued.
* Ensuring that barriers to inclusion are identified and removed or minimised wherever possible.
* 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.
* Recognising that this ‘kaleidoscope’ also reflects negative images which may be internalised and negatively affect the development of self-concept, self-esteem, and confidence.
* 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 practitioners work closely with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator to make sure that the additional needs of all children are identified and met.
* We are 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.
* We regularly monitor and review our practice including long-term preventative measures to ensure equality such as auditing of provision, formulating an equality plan, applying impact measurements and positive actions. In addition, short term measures such as recognition and assessment of children’s additional support needs (e.g. impairment, home language, family hardship, specific family beliefs and practices), day-to-day activities, provision of suitable support and resources, activity programme and curriculum., assessment, recognition of special educational needs and developing inclusive relationships.

**Methods**

*Admissions*

We are open to all members of the community.

* We provide information in clear, concise language, whether spoken or written form.
* We bas our admissions policy on a fair system.
* We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy.
* We do nor discriminate against a child or their family or prevent entry into our setting on a basis of colour, ethnicity, religion or social background, such as being a member of a travelling community or an asylum seeker.
* We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse entry to our setting because of any disability.
* We develop an action plan to ensure that people with disabilities can participate successfully in the services that we offer and in the curriculum offered.
* We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents . Displaying openly racist insignia, distribution of racist material, name calling or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner.

*Employment*

* Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
* Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all.
* We may use exemption clauses of the Race Relations Act and Sex Discrimination Act where this is necessary to enable to best meet the needs of the community.
* The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to 2 references and checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS checks). This ensures fairness in the selection process.
* All job descriptions include a commitment to equality and diversity as part of their specifications.
* We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.

*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 review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for equality, diversity and inclusion.

*Curriculum*

The curriculum offered at Buxton Preschool Playgroup aims to encourage children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as the people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop skills of critical thinking.

*We do this by:*

* Making children feel valued and good about themselves.
* Ensuring that children have equality of access to learning.
* Avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of book or other visual materials.
* Celebrating a wide range of festivals.
* Creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance.
* Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable.
* Ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities.
* Ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning.
* Ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home language.
* By positively promoting British values.

*Valuing diversity in families*

* We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families.
* We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life to the setting.
* We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of the setting and to contribute to their childs online learning journey via Tapestry.
* For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion.

**Legal references**

General Data Protection Regulation 2018

Children and Families Act 2014 Part 3

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014

Disability Equality Duty 2011

Equality Act 2010

Prevent Strategy 2015

**Further guidance**

Guide to the Equality Act and Good Practice (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2015)