



Highters Heath
Nursery School

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Article 28: You have the right to an identity – an official record of who you are and no-one should take this away.

Equality in School Policy

Our Nursery, through its policies and practices, recognises and strives to meet the needs of all our children. We aim to deliver a curriculum that gives all children the chance to realise their full potential and help prepare them for life in our multi-cultural society.

Code of Conduct statement for all staff

At Highters Heath Nursery all adults in our community of learning adhere to the following statements:

- Democracy:** Everyone has a voice and a say in what we do and how we do it
- Mutual Respect:** We admire and acknowledge everyone's abilities, qualities and achievements
- Liberty:** We have the freedom to make our own choices
- Tolerance:** We accept that everyone has a right to their own views and opinions
- Rule of Law:** We have community rules and practices which keeps our learning community safe and a code of conduct for all adults working within our service.

The nursery is committed to providing inclusive Nursery education. We value diversity and seek to support each child and adult in the Nursery community to reach their full potential.

“Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs. Every child has a fundamental right to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain acceptable levels of learning.

(Taken from the Salamanca Statement, quoted in Disability Equality in Education, Feb. 2002)

Principles



- Equal opportunities are an important part of raising aspirations, self-esteem and educational standards;
- Everyone has the right to receive information, views and guidance in order to effectively make important decisions for themselves;
- Discriminatory practices against any of the Protected **Characteristics (see Appendix 1)** are demeaning for all and must be challenged;
- The richness of cultural diversity must be recognised and celebrated.
- Differences between people should not be linked with ideas of superiority or inferiority;
- While there are real differences between people, no child or adult should be made to feel unhappy because they are 'different';
- No child or adult should be treated with less equity than others because of these differences;
- Everyone is entitled to access a range of high quality educational opportunities and career choices;
- All children should be enabled to grow up with positive attitudes to those who are different from them as well as those who are similar to them;
- Inclusive education will benefit everyone by increasing our understanding and appreciation of each other's lives.

Aims for All Members of the School Community

- To treat every member of the Nursery community as an individual, and to respect her/his strengths and talents;
- To ensure equal access to the Early Years curriculum;
- To value cultural diversity;
- To offer positive images and role models which showcase diversity;
- To enable every child and adult in the nursery community to develop to her / his full potential;
- To provide an inclusive educational environment in which every child, adult and young person can succeed;
- To provide a rich, accurate, non-stereotypical model around all Protected Characteristics.
- To provide children with accurate, developmentally appropriate information about gender, race, culture, physical ability and any other Protected Characteristics;
- To help children become aware of our shared physical characteristics - what makes us all human beings;



- To help every member of our community challenge uncomfortable and inappropriate responses to differences into respectful, comfortable interaction;
- To foster children's developing concept of fairness and feelings of empathy for each other;
- To foster critical thinking about stereotyping;
- To enable all concerned to gain the tools and self-confidence to stand up for themselves and others against biased ideas and discriminating behaviour.

Responsibilities

It is every adult's responsibility to ensure that their own attitudes and behaviour are free from discriminatory practices.

Children will be taught strategies for challenging discriminatory behaviour and will be supported by the adults in the Nursery to use these strategies.

Staff will include anti-bias objectives in planned activities, and will make use of opportunities to discuss biased actions and attitudes with the children, particularly through the use of story and real-life, age appropriate news articles.

All persons witnessing discrimination of any sort should report it to the Head Teacher, who will then record and report to the Governing Board. These incidents will be kept on file and appropriate information transferred to the LA on request.

The Curriculum

The curriculum in all areas of learning will include planned activities that introduce ideas of difference and similarity and provide opportunities for children to discuss differences and similarities in a non-judgemental manner. We will use an anti-bias approach to teach children to interact comfortably with differences, appreciate all people's similarities, and to recognise and confront ideas and behaviours that are biased.

Environment and resources

"An environment that is rich in possibilities for exploring gender, race/ethnicity and different-abilities sets the scene for practising anti-bias curriculum. The material and people resources in the classroom provide children with important data. What is in the environment also alerts children to what the teacher considers important or not important. Children are as vulnerable to omissions as they are to inaccuracies and stereotypes: what isn't seen can be as powerful as what is seen."

(Derman-Sparkes, L. (1989) Anti Bias Curriculum. NAEYC.USA)



In order to provide children with positive images of diversity we will seek to purchase resources that depict all sorts of people in a wide range of contexts, and to eliminate resources that depict stereotypes or inaccuracies. We recognise that this will take time and will identify curriculum funding to be used for the purchase of suitable resources for each area of learning. Where it is not possible to purchase suitable resources we will endeavour to adapt existing materials or create our own.

Challenging Inequality

We recognise that all forms of discrimination and harassment are harmful. We also recognise that discrimination may be unintentional or thoughtless rather than deliberate. We do not, however, believe that this is a reason to ignore such behaviour or 'let it go'. Therefore, we will deliberately seek to create an atmosphere of mutual trust wherein adults are empowered to challenge and support one another to develop truly inclusive attitudes.

Discriminatory comments may be accidentally overheard. People who overhear such things have to judge how best to deal with the incident, and whether to challenge at a more appropriate time or to respond to it immediately. We acknowledge that this is not always an easy thing to do, however if discrimination is not actively challenged it becomes 'the norm'. Adults may want to use one of the following openers when challenging discriminatory attitudes:

- I'm sorry you think that...
- I don't agree with you...
- What makes you think that?
- What makes you say that?
- That's not my experience...
- Please do not include me in that...

Countering discriminatory attitudes from young children is very different from dealing with the discriminatory attitudes of adults. We know that children have not yet had the opportunity to consider other information and points of view, so we address the situation particularly sensitively. The aim is to address the situation in a way that will enable the child to listen, understand, consider and change their behaviour.

Children can learn to take responsibility to tell adults when they witness any form of unkindness, discrimination or name-calling. Staff should encourage this through the use of persona dolls and puppets in story and circle time sessions in the Nursery. These sessions can then be referred back to when an incident occurs.

The following procedures should be used to deal with any situation in which there is a victim and a perpetrator, be it verbal or physical abuse that occurs, and in situations involving children or adults:



- After identifying an incident as discriminatory the first priority is to comfort and support the adult or child who has been victimised.
- Make sure that anyone listening to or overhearing the incident understands that what was said or done was wrong, hurtful and unacceptable.
- Support the child or adult who has said or done something discriminatory while, at the same time, making sure they know it is wrong, hurtful/unacceptable and will not be condoned. Explain why. Take care not to undermine the child or adult's self-esteem by ensuring that the incident itself, not the child or adult, is dealt with. Encourage empathy as to what it feels like to experience discrimination and, where appropriate, consider raising this sort of issue in circle or story time.
- Where appropriate, talk about the incident with the perpetrator and the victim together.
- Follow up the incident with whatever strategy is necessary to prevent it happening again, according to the circumstances and the incident itself. Work with staff, parents / carers and children as appropriate.

Recording and Reporting

Any incidents of discrimination or abuse related to any of the Protected Characteristics should be reported to the Head Teacher who will record, report to the Governing Board and pass on to the Local Authority if requested.

Parents / carers will be informed if their child has been involved in a discriminatory incident and will be expected to work with the school to ensure that their child understands the issues involved and is helped to develop positive attitudes to difference.

Parents / Carers / Visitors who persist in discriminatory behaviour will be asked to leave the premises. In cases of extreme or repeated inappropriate behaviour, either verbally or physically, the Local Authority will support the school in banning parents from the premises.

Monitoring

Review: Annually

Appendix 1: Protected Characteristics



The Equality Act (2010) makes it illegal to discriminate against someone based on any of the following characteristics:

- ❖ Age
- ❖ Disability
- ❖ Gender reassignment
- ❖ Marriage or Civil Partnership
- ❖ Pregnancy and/or Maternity
- ❖ Race
- ❖ Religion or belief
- ❖ Sex
- ❖ Sexual Orientation