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St Thomas' Playgroup Equality Policy

1 Our Aims and objectives

- 1.1 It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of any of the nine "protected characteristics" in the Equality Act 2010. These are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 1.2 We do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone, be they staff or families, on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- 1.3 We do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, by association. Associative discrimination, in the Equality Act 2010, is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- 1.4 We do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone if they are perceived to have a protected characteristic. Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he or she has a particular protected characteristic when he or she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.
- 1.5 We ensure that children and staff are not harassed because of a protected characteristic. Harassment refers to unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which may violate a person's dignity or create a hostile, degrading or humiliating environment. We take reasonable steps to ensure that harassment is prevented from happening again.
- 1.6 We ensure that pupils and staff are not victimised because of a protected characteristic. Victimisation occurs when an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he or she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he or she is suspected of doing so, or being about to do so.
- 1.7 We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our playgroup.
- 1.8 We ensure that all children have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the playgroup. We constantly strive to eliminate any forms of direct and indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning and where possible we make reasonable adjustments.
- 1.9 We promote equality and ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.

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- 1.10 We foster good relations by challenging stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs. We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping is caused by low self-image and ignorance. Through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.
 - 1.11 We celebrate the diversity of our community and show respect for all groups.
 - 1.12 Visitors to the playgroup, or those who use the premises, are aware of the Equality Policy.

2 Anti-racism

- 2.1 It is the right of all children to receive the best education the playgroup can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the playgroup. We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will act immediately to prevent any repetition of the incident. Incidents of racism are recorded in the incident book and are reported to the local authority.
- 2.2 We endeavour to make our playgroup welcoming to all minority groups. So, for example, we will immediately remove any offensive graffiti that we may find on the premises. We promote an understanding of different cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in the displays of work shown.
- 2.3 Our EYFS curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups. So, for example, learning focused around the specific area 'People and Communities' or 'The World' gives due emphasis to faiths and cultures found in and beyond our locality. Other learning focuses around religious festivals; for example the children celebrating Diwali to Hindus and Sikhs.
- 2.4 Should anyone at our Playgroup be a victim of racism, we will do all we can to support that person in overcoming any difficulties they may have.

3 Disability

- 3.1 The Act defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'
 - 3.2 It is the right of all children to receive the best education the playgroup can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the playgroup. We do not tolerate any forms of discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment or victimisation towards a disabled member of our playgroup. Should an incident be reported we will act immediately to ensure that it is rectified and does not repeat.
 - 3.3 We endeavour to consider adjustments that may need to be made in order to support disabled members of the Playgroup (See Health and Safety policy). We aim to treat disabled staff and pupils favourably by making reasonable adjustments to ensure that they are not disadvantaged and on a more level footing with pupils and staff without disabilities (See SEN policy).
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- 3.4 Our Playgroup environment and curriculum content reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for disabled people. Similarly the delivery of the EYFS curriculum promotes equality. For example we adapt the EYFS curriculum to ensure accessibility (see SEN policy) and encourage visitors to Playgroup with disabilities to share experiences.
- 3.5 We endeavour to ensure that disabled staff and pupils can play as full a part as possible in playgroup life by making reasonable adjustments where possible. We will supply auxiliary aids to support the needs of disabled pupils where appropriate to ensure that they have equal access to the curriculum and the playgroup facilities.
- 3.6 We monitor and plan for accessibility on a regular basis in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can access the EYFS curriculum and to improve the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education and facilities in the Playgroup.
- 3.7 We ensure that disabled pupils have accessible information available to them.

4 Religion and Belief

- 4.1 We respect all staff and pupils in our school regardless of their religion or belief. We do not discriminate against someone on the grounds that they do not adhere to a particular religion or belief. Should an incident of discrimination occur, whether direct, by association or perception, we will act immediately to prevent any repetition of the incident.
- 4.2 Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for all religions and beliefs and the lack of religion or belief. So, for example the children celebrate different festivals.

- 4.3 We accommodate the needs of families and staff and ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to enable them to follow beliefs and customs

5 Gender

- 5.1 We understand that despite thirty years of individual legal rights to sex equality there is still widespread discrimination and persistent gender inequality. Both sexes suffer from the stereotyping of their roles and needs and such stereotyping has to be understood, challenged and overcome.
- 5.2 We endeavor to eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination. By unlawful sexual discrimination we mean treating one person less favorably than another on grounds of sex or gender. We understand that this could be done directly but that it could also occur indirectly.
- 5.3 We do not tolerate and aim to eliminate sexual harassment. By sexual harassment we refer to behaviour or remarks based on a person's sex or gender, perceived to be unpleasant, threatening, offensive or demeaning to the dignity and self-esteem of the recipient or subject. We see such behaviour as also damaging to the perpetrator. (See *Behaviour/Anti-Bullying policy*)
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- 5.4 Through our school values and aims we promote gender equality. We understand 'sex' to refer to the biological differences between males and females and 'gender' to refer to the wider social roles and responsibilities which structure our lives. By promoting gender equality our intention is to recognise and help overcome those lasting and embedded patterns of advantage and disadvantage which are based on socially ascribed gender stereotypes and assumptions.
- 5.5 We ensure that pupils of one sex are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils.
- 5.6 Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for gender equality. Where a positive action initiative is run within the school in order to raise attainment, it will not be to the advantage of one sex over the other.
- 5.7 Incidents of sexual/gender bullying or harassment are dealt with according to our Behaviour/Anti-Bullying policy.

6. Pregnancy and Maternity

- 6.1 We will not treat anyone, less favourably, because she becomes pregnant or has recently had a baby.

7. Sexual Orientation

- 7.1 We do not tolerate any forms of discrimination, harassment or victimisation against staff who are gay, lesbian or bisexual, or of the pupils of gay, lesbian or bisexual parents. Should a pupil or member of staff be discriminated against, victimised or harassed, we will act immediately to prevent any repetition of the incident.
- 7.2 We endeavour to make our playgroup welcoming to all gay, lesbian and bisexual staff. We promote an understanding and respect towards people of different sexual orientation.
- 7.3 Should anyone at our school be a victim of discrimination due to their sexual orientation, we will do all we can to support that person in overcoming any difficulties they may have.

8 Gender Reassignment

- 8.1 We do not tolerate any forms of discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of gender reassignment; or associated or perceived gender reassignment. Gender variant staff, or pupils of transgender parents are not treated less favourably. Any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation will be dealt with immediately and issues raised will be handled sensitively.
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9 Employment Provisions

- 9.1 We do not discriminate against potential employees or existing employees in respect of the benefits facilities and services offered (eg. Training, promotion and dismissal)
- 9.2 We endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to arrangements or practices to alleviate disadvantage for staff and aim to provide auxiliary aids and services where necessary and reasonable.
- 9.3 We regularly consider reasonable alterations to physical features of the playgroup in order to avoid disadvantage caused by disability.
- 9.4 Recruitment processes ensure that questions relating to health are directly linked to the job on offer.
- 9.5 We will take steps to counteract the effects of any past discrimination in staff recruitment. Where we are uncertain whether there is a genuine occupational requirement for preference to be given to the employment of someone of a particular gender we will seek specialist advice.

9. The role of the governing body

- 9.1 The Management Committee has set out its commitment to the equality act in this policy statement, and it will continue to have due regard to the equality considerations in all playgroup policy and practice. The governing body will ensure that all members of the playgroup community are treated fairly and with equality.
- 9.2 The Management Committee seeks to ensure that disabled people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The Committee take all reasonable steps to ensure that the playgroup environment gives access to people with disabilities.
- 9.3 The Management Committee welcome all applications to join the playgroup, whatever background or disability a child or adult may have.
- 9.4 The Management Committee body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our playgroup on account of their sex, race, religion or belief. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion affects the school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.
- 9.5 The Management Committee ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy/maternity. The school will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's individual circumstance.

10 The role of the Playgroup Leader

- 10.1 It is the role the Playgroup Leader to implement the school's equality policy and equalities objectives and she is supported by the governing body in so doing.
- 10.2 It is the Playgroup Leader's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equality, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

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- 10.3 The Playgroup Leader ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
 - 10.4 The Playgroup Leader promotes the principle of equality developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life, for example, in the assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the school.
 - 10.5 The Playgroup Leader monitors all incidents of discrimination and treats all incidents of unfair treatment with due seriousness.

11 The role of the Playgroup Practitioner

- 11.1 The practitioner ensures that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect. We do not discriminate against any child.
- 11.2 When selecting playgroup material, staff pay due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the group and do not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature. Staff strive to provide material that gives positive images of disabled people, ethnic minorities and that challenge stereotypical images of minority groups.
- 11.3 When designing schemes of work, we use this policy to guide us, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues.
- 11.4 All of our practitioners challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any serious incidents in the incident book, and draw them to the attention of the Playgroup leader. Staff support the work of support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any occurrence of discrimination.

12 Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this Equality policy. The governing body does this by:

- monitoring the progress of pupils of minority groups and comparing it to the progress made by other pupils in the group;
- monitoring the progress of boys and girls and comparing it to the progress made nationally;
- monitoring the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- requiring the playgroup leader to report to governors on an annual basis on the effectiveness of this policy;
- taking into serious consideration any complaints regarding equality issues from parents or staff;
- monitoring the playgroup behaviour and exclusions policy, so those pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

Signed: (Chair person)

Date:

Date of next review:
