

Green Shoots Pre-School

Equality of Opportunity Policy

Statement

Green Shoots will ensure that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children, particularly those that arise from their ethnic heritage, social and economic background, gender, ability or disability. Our setting is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families.

Aim

We aim to:

- Provide a secure and accessible environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued
- Include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity
- Provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and people with disabilities and Special Educational Needs
- Improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity
- Make inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities of the setting

Procedures

Admissions

Green Shoots is open to all members of the community, we advertise widely and reflect the diversity of members of our society in our publicity and promotional materials. We provide clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form and will provide information in as many languages as required. We base our admissions policy on a fair system and we ensure that all parents and carers are made aware of our equality and diversity policy.

Green Shoots does not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion or social background. We do not discriminate against a child with additional needs, disability, or Special Educational Needs neither do we refuse entry to our setting.

Green Shoots develops individual plans to ensure that children and adults with additional needs, disability or Special Educational Needs can participate successfully in the services offered by the setting and in the curriculum offered.

We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents/carers. Displaying of 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

Green Shoots 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 the exemption clauses of the Race Relations Act and the Sex Discrimination Act where this is necessary to enable the service to best meet the needs of the community.

The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service. This ensures fairness in the selection process. All job descriptions include a commitment to equality and diversity as a part of their specifications. We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.

Training and Supervision

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 ensure that staff are confident and fully trained in administering relevant medicines and performing invasive care procedures when these are required. We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policies for equality, diversity and inclusion.

All staff and volunteers are required to go through an induction and probation process, including reading all policies and agreeing to abide by the requirements and procedures. All staff and volunteers receive regular one to one reflection time and yearly appraisals with line manager, to ensure quality practice.

Curriculum

The curriculum offered in the setting encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking. We use Quest to support the way we review, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our inclusive practices.

Our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. If access to the settings is found to treat disabled children or adults less favourably then we make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled children and adults.

Green Shoots does this by:

- Making sure children feel valued and good about themselves
- Encouraging children to value and respect others
- Ensuring that children have equality of access to learning and experiences
- Making adjustments to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairments
- Recognising the different characteristics of learning children possess, making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities
- Positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources

- Avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of books or other visual materials
- Celebrating a wide range of festivals
- Creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance
- Differentiating the curriculum to meet children's special educational needs;
- Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable
- Ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with additional needs, disability or Special Educational Needs.
- 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 languages

Valuing Diversity in Families

Green Shoots welcomes the diversity of family structures and lifestyles and we strive to create a partnership with all families. We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life to the setting. We encourage parents and carers to take part in the life of the setting and to contribute fully. We encourage families to share with us any cultural events that they celebrate during the year and plan with them to include the event in our term planning. For families who speak different languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion. We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means and offer information regarding sources of financial support.

Food

Green Shoots works in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met. We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them. We aim to use local produce for our snacks and hot lunches, staff and volunteers are expected to eat alongside the children to support a positive, relaxed eating experience.

Meetings

Green Shoots' staff team have regular staff meetings and one to ones where staff are able to discuss fully any needs or concerns of the setting's children. All staff attend regular inset days and training days to ensure that all children are safe, happy and stimulated. We use our Quest documents to ensure all parents/carers have the opportunity to be involved in the development of the setting policies and procedures. Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways- written, verbal and in translation – to ensure that all parents and carers have information about and access to a meeting.

Staff are supported by the manager to deal sensitively with toileting, changing, feeding administering medicine and occasions where facilities are used off-premises to ensure the

privacy of children. The SENCO is responsible for making sure staff are kept up-to-date with training, information, new legislation and any other aspects relating to inclusion and other aspects of special needs.

Confidentiality

Green Shoots will always respect and maintain confidentiality at all times. All documents and details about the children, families and staff are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the resource cupboard. All staff, volunteers and students complete an induction and are required to read and sign to agree to follow all policies and procedures. We use a separate room to hold any meetings and private conversations.

Useful resources and websites

- Special Educational Needs (SEN) A Guide for Parents and Carers reference SEN 050. DFES publications centre: dfes@prolog.uk.com 0845 602 2260.
- Information and publications about the Disability and the Equality Act 2012 www.direct.gov.uk
- 'Support and aspiration, a new approach to SEN and disability' Green paper consultation 2011

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