



Inclusion, Equality and Diversity policy

Little Crickets Forest School is committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practices for all children and their families and as an employer. We will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, age, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, marital status, disability and we will seek to value all children, parents, carers, members of staff and suppliers irrespective of perceived differences and backgrounds.

Little Crickets Forest School works in accordance with all relevant legislation, including:

- Children Act 2004
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Childcare Act 2016
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.
- Equality Act 2010

We continually improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality, inclusion and diversity and regularly review, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive practice to ensure we promote and value diversity and differences of everyone in our settings. All members of staff will be made aware of this policy on induction and are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability.

Our Christian ethos

Our Christian ethos supports the work we are doing daily, appreciating, valuing and nurturing the uniqueness of everyone. We encourage children to make sensible choices, to be respectful towards other people, animals and the environment and develop their ability to relate to others with care and sensitivity. Activities celebrating Christian events such as Christmas and Easter will be organised within Little Crickets and everyone will be invited to join in.

We recognise that some families may not wish for their child to participate in these activities, in which case other activities will be offered to the child during these times, at parent's request.

Diversity

Little Crickets Forest School welcome children from a diverse range of religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds and includes and values the contribution of all families. Parents are requested to inform us on their child's application form as to what languages they speak or nationality they are so that we can provide children's books, dolls, instruments and other resources from these cultures and languages, where possible.

Festivals

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all the major events in the lives of the children and families in our forest school, and in our society as a whole and to welcome the diversity of backgrounds from which they come. In order to achieve this, we aim to acknowledge the major festivals which are celebrated in our area and/ or by the families involved in the forest school, using age-appropriate activities and resources: stories, celebrations, special food and clothing.

Before introducing a festival with which the staff in the forest school are not themselves familiar, appropriate advice will be sought from people to whom that festival is a familiar one. Children and families will be invited to share their festival with the rest of the group.

Fundamental British Values

We will be challenging any behaviours (whether of staff, children or parents) that are not in line with the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. These principles are embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Understanding the World) and are reflected in our everyday practice by means of age-appropriate activities within the forest school:

- Children are able to listen and attend to instructions;
 - They know the difference between right and wrong; recognises similarities and differences between themselves and others;
 - make and maintain friendships;
 - develop empathy and consideration of other people;
 - take turns in play and conversation;
 - avoid risk and take notice of rules and boundaries;
 - learn not to hurt/upset other people with words and actions;
 - understand the consequences of hurtful/discriminatory behaviour.
- In our forest school 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 British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

Prevent Strategy: Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, we also have a duty *“to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”*

The Curriculum

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Our planning is based on the children’s individual needs and interests and appropriate next steps and targets will be set up for each child.

Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Appropriate opportunities will be

given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage, setting the standards for Learning and Development and the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements for children from birth to five.

4 overarching principles of the EYFS shape our everyday practice:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environment
- Learning and Development

The characteristics of effective learning are the basis in which continuous provision is shaped and drive adult and child interactions.

Resources

These will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multi-cultural society. It will accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory needs.

The use of toys, resources, imaginary play and activities will be selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes about any group of people and by encouraging positive role models.

Special needs and disabilities

Little Crickets is committed to the inclusion of all children and has a separate Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policy to support this.

Little Crickets Forest School will ensure that disabled children with and without special educational needs are fully supported.

Little Cricket Forest School will provide a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have learning difficulties and/ or disabilities and the Forest Schools ability to provide the necessary standard of care.

Discriminatory behaviour/ remarks

Adults displaying openly discriminatory and possibly offensive or threatening materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour will be dealt with immediately.

These are unacceptable in our forest school.

All staff are expected to challenge language, actions, behaviours and attitudes which are oppressive or discriminatory on the grounds as specified in this policy and recognise and celebrate other cultures and traditions.

To create an environment of mutual respect and tolerance, our staff will model desirable behaviour and help children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable;

Languages

English is the main language spoken at Little Crickets forest school by staff, parents and children. Little Crickets Forest School recognise that bilingual/ multilingual children and adults are an asset. They will be valued and their languages recognised and respected in the Forest School.

For children with English as an Additional Language (EAL), practitioners will provide regular opportunities to develop and use their home language in play and learning,

supporting their language development at home (i.e. collecting words and sentences in the home language). This will ensure the children's home language is valued. We will also ensure children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in the English language, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they start Primary School. If a member of staff is fluent in a child's home language, they may be asked to support the child and their family especially during the important settling in period. We will ensure that children and families whose first language is not English have full access to the early learning opportunities and are supported in their learning.

Foods

We work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that the medical, cultural and religious dietary needs of children are met. We will help children to learn about a range of food and cultural approaches to mealtimes and to respect the differences among them.

We will display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all kitchen staff and practitioners are fully informed about them.

We will show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies and not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy.

Recruitment and employment

Little Crickets will ensure that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, disability, marital status, race, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, which cannot be justified as being necessary for the safe and effective performance of their work or training.

Little Crickets will appoint the best person for each job and will treat fairly all applicants for jobs and all those appointed. Any member of staff responsible for recruitment will be committed to the inclusive practice set out in this policy.

At interview, all candidates will be asked the same questions, and members of the selection group will not introduce nor use any personal knowledge of candidates acquired outside the selection process.

Candidates will be given the opportunity to receive feedback on the reasons why they were not successful.

2e. Dealing with Discriminatory Behaviour

At Little Crickets we do not tolerate discriminatory behaviour and take action to tackle discrimination. We believe that parents have a right to know if discrimination occurs and what actions the Forest School will take to tackle it. We follow our legal duties in relation to discrimination and record all incidents any perceived or actual relating to discrimination on any grounds and report these where relevant to children's parents and the registering authority.

Definition and legal framework

Types of discrimination

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- **Direct discrimination** occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic
- **Discrimination by association** occurs when there is a direct discrimination against a person because they associate with a person who has a protected characteristic
- **Discrimination by perception** occurs when there is a direct discrimination against a person because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic
- **Indirect discrimination** can occur where a provision, criterion or practice is in place which applies to everyone in the organisation but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic and that provision, criterion or practice cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim
- **Harassment** is defined as 'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual'
- **Victimisation** occurs when an employee is treated badly or put to detriment because they have made or supported a complaint or raised grievance under the Equality Act 2010 or have been suspected of doing so.

Protected characteristics

The nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity.

Incidents may involve a small or large number of persons, they may vary in their degree of offence and may not even recognise the incident has discriminatory implications; or at the other extreme their behaviour may be quite deliberate and blatant.

Examples of discriminatory behaviour are:

- Physical assault against a person or group of people
- Derogatory name calling, insults and discriminatory jokes
- Graffiti and other written insults (depending on the nature of what is written)
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing badges and insignia and the distribution of discriminatory literature
- Threats against a person or group of people pertaining to the nine protected characteristics listed above
- Discriminatory comments including ridicule made in the course of discussions
- Patronising words or actions.

Our procedures

We tackle discrimination by:

- Expecting all staff in the Forest School to be aware of and alert to any discriminatory behaviour or bullying taking place in person or via an online arena
- Expecting all staff to intervene firmly and quickly to prevent any discriminatory behaviour or bullying, this may include behaviour from parents and other staff members
- Expecting all staff to treat any allegation seriously and report it to the Forest school manager. Investigating and recording each incident in detail as accurately as possible and making this record available for inspection by staff, inspectors and parents where appropriate, on request. The Forest School manager is responsible for ensuring that incidents are handled appropriately and sensitively and entered in the record book. Any pattern of behaviour should be indicated. Perpetrator/victim's initials may be used in the record book as information on individuals is confidential.
- Ensuring any online bullying or discriminatory behaviour is tackled immediately
- Informing: the parents of the child(ren) who are perpetrators and/or victims should be informed of the incident and of the outcome, where an allegation is substantiated following an investigation
- Excluding or dismissing any individuals who display continued discriminatory behaviour or bullying, but such steps will only be taken when other strategies have failed to modify behaviour. This includes any employees where any substantiated allegation after investigation will incur our disciplinary procedures (please see the policy on disciplinary procedures).

We record any incidents of discriminatory behaviour or bullying to ensure that:

- Strategies are developed to prevent future incidents
- Patterns of behaviour are identified
- Persistent offenders are identified
- Effectiveness of Little Crickets Forest School policies are monitored
- A secure information base is provided to enable Little Crickets to respond to any discriminatory behaviour or bullying.

If the behaviour shown by an individual is deemed to be radicalised, we will follow our procedure as detailed in our Safeguarding Policy in order to safeguard children and families concerned.

Forest School staff

We expect all staff to be alert and seek to overcome any ignorant or offensive behaviour based on fear or dislike of distinctions that children, staff or parents may express.

We aim to create an atmosphere where the victims of any form of discrimination have confidence to report such behaviour, and that subsequently they feel positively supported by the staff and management of Forest School.

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It is incumbent upon all members of staff to ensure that they do not express any views or comments that are discriminatory; or appear to endorse such views by failing to counter behaviour, which is prejudicial in a direct manner. We expect all staff to use a sensitive and informed approach to counter any harassment perpetrated out of ignorance.