



## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

(Including Admissions)

### **INTRODUCTION**

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

At Living Spring Montessori Nursery we are committed to providing equality of opportunity and non discriminatory practice for all children, parents, visitors and staff. We take great care to treat each person as an individual in their own right, with equal rights and responsibilities to any other individual, regardless of whether they are adults or children. We are committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and their families, according to their individual needs.

### **We aim to:**

- Benefit from the diversity of the children, staff and families in our school as we believe our work is greatly enriched by the distinctive contribution, which can be made by people of differing backgrounds and experience.
- Welcome people from all cultures, race, religious, and ethnic backgrounds.
- At all times, meet the needs of all able and less able members of staff, children and families by providing the opportunity for everyone to access our building, and use our facilities irrespective of their abilities.
- Continuously improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality and diversity; and make inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities of the nursery.
- Value each child as an individual without discriminating on the basis of race, gender or ability by encouraging all children to reach their full potential.
- We cover a wide range of subjects to reflect the cultures of the children and families within our school as well as the cultures of the wider society.
- We work in partnership with parents, guardians and our local communities to learn about and acknowledge the variety of festivals, celebrations, and customs around us.

- We take the protection against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation very seriously, and concerns will be addressed immediately when informed (see Complaints Policy, Safeguarding Policy including Staff Code of Conduct, Behaviour Management, Fundamental British Values, SEND and Whistle Blowing Policy).
- We work with parents and guardians to follow and promote inclusive practice both at home and in school.
- We ensure that there is a balance of male and female children and a wide ethnic mix within the school.
- We ensure we recruit staff fairly on the basis of required skills and competencies. We ensure no applicant will receive less favourable treatment due to gender, race, age, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, ethnic or national origin, or political belief.
- We work with parents and guardians to follow and promote non-discriminatory practice both at home and in school.
- A child centred approach is paramount. Anyone working with children should see and speak to the child; listen to what they say; take their views seriously and work with them collaboratively when deciding how to support their needs (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018). Always listen to children. We train and support our staff to listen to children and to engage in dialogue with them, in ways appropriate to their age and understanding. It is the role of the adult to help each child to feel comfortable to share as well as recognising and understanding the rules of being with others, waiting for a turn for instance (Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021). Maria Montessori called these groups New Periods and Grace and Courtesy groups. The children learn that their voices and views count. Children share pictures and stories about their lives, what they have been doing, their cultures and traditions.
- Staff are aware that children can be harmed by the behaviour of other children; for example, by bullying or by discriminatory behaviour. We encourage children to develop a positive self-image by celebrating the wide range of ethnicities, languages, religions, cultures and family units which make up our school community and indeed the world. We also acknowledge that there are many different styles of learning and different ways of relating to the world. We value, protect and support everyone's unique contribution to our community.

- Staff have a responsibility to challenge any discriminatory remarks or behaviour against other staff members, visitors, children and their families. (Please refer to Behaviour Management, Safeguarding including Staff Code of Conduct, Whistle Blowing and SEND policies).

## **Objectives**

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

We interpret this as consisting of the following tasks and processes:

- Awareness and knowledge of barriers to inclusion. These include active discrimination as well as covert discrimination on the grounds of:
  - Colour (‘race’), ethnicity, culture and religion
  - Gender
  - Sexual orientation
  - Impairment
  - Social status.
- Understanding, through training and staff development, the causes and effects of discrimination and how staff can ensure that our childcare practice is inclusive.

Developing inclusive practice that includes:

- Devising and following aims on inclusion with a statement of intent that applies to day to day practice including resources, activity programmes and curriculum, assessment, recognition of special educational needs and disabilities and developing inclusive relationships.
- Recruitment of staff to reflect cultural and language diversity, and staff of both gender.
- 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 colour (‘race’) and ethnicity, gender, difference of ability, social class, language, religion and family lifestyle, which combine uniquely in the identity of each individual.
- Recognising that this ‘kaleidoscope’ also reflects negative images which may be internalised and negatively affect the development of self-concept and self-esteem.

- Promoting a welcoming atmosphere that genuinely values different cultural perspectives, without stereotyping cultures and traditions, on raising children by involving parents at all levels.
- Welcoming and promoting bi/multi-lingualism.
- Promoting gender equality, while at the same time recognising differences in ‘learning styles’ of girls and boys to promote equal achievement.
- Developing the role of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator to ensure that the special educational needs and disabilities of children are identified and met in conjunction with the code of practice.
- Creating an ethos within which staff work confidently within a culturally rich environment; learning when to change or adapt practice in the nursery and having the confidence to challenge parental practice that is not in the child’s best interest, seeking support and intervention from agencies where appropriate.
- Encouraging children to work together through a variety of activities and materials available in the environment, appreciating that we share values and that we work towards a common goal are all paramount to developing an understanding of our interdependence. The Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS, 2012) states “Encourage children to choose to play with a variety of friends from all different backgrounds, so that everyone is being included.”
- Challenging discrimination as it occurs from children, parents, staff or outside agencies or individuals that affect the well-being of the nursery community.
- Being 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 or travellers.

### **Fundamental British Values (see also Fundamental British Values Policy)**

- We include the Fundamental British Values in the day to day programme of each class, the theme planning and in each child’s individual learning plan and observations.
- Through group discussions and asking open ended questions, looking through books, having celebrations all help to broaden the children’s minds. Opportunities to see the world, people, cultures through outings, nature walks, celebrations, songs, books, videos and discussions. “Strengthen the positive impressions children have in their cultures and faiths, and those of others in their community, by sharing and celebrating

a range of practice and special events” (Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2012).

- Developing respect for others and the environment. Through cultural celebrations children are supported in their appreciation of the similarities and differences which are shared by people and communities.
- Staff encourage a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of their feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand that we are free to have different opinions. In groups children discuss topics such as what they did over the weekend or a story they heard. Everyone can participate; taking turns to talk. Teachers demonstrate active listening and by doing this the children learn to respect all their friends’ opinion and ideas.
- Mutual Tolerance and Respect for others. Develop an understanding of communities from around the world, supporting an appreciation of and a respect for children’s own and other cultures. This is done through News Period groups, cultural celebrations, special dietary requirements, stories, music, pictures and videos, dressing up and cooking. Parents are often invited to talk to the children about specific celebrations, religions and festivals linking the children’s learning so they understand they are part of a much wider world. We promote mutual respect and tolerance and teach children to be kind and helpful. The teachers model how to share opinions and be respectful of others.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)**

Living Spring Montessori have arrangements in place to support children with SEND (See Special Education Needs and Disability Policy).

### **ADMISSIONS**

#### **Aim**

To actively promote inclusion, equality of opportunity and the value of diversity within the nursery. These procedures build on the Living Spring Montessori’s organisational policies.

#### **General**

- Our school is open to all members of the community.

- We advertise our service widely
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system.
- We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our nursery because of any disability or additional/special needs.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy on our website.
- We develop an action plan to ensure that people with disabilities can participate successfully in the services offered by the school and in the curriculum offered.

### **Links to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**

#### **Section 3 – The safeguarding and welfare requirements 2021:**

- Suitable people
- Staff qualifications, training , support and skill
- Key person
- Special educational needs and disability
- Information for parents and carers
- Safeguarding
- Behaviour Management

#### **The legal framework for this policy are:**

- Promoting British Values as Part of SMSC in Schools (2014)
- Working Together to Safe Guard Children (2018)
- Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2012, 2021
- The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (2019)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Children Act 1989, Children and families Act 2014
- Equal Opportunities and Discrimination (Equality Act 2010)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years, January 2015