

CHRIST CHURCH PLAYGROUP

Equal Opportunities Policy

The Pre-school Learning Alliance is committed to helping playgroups provide equality of opportunity for all children and families and take positive action to eliminate discrimination in all areas of their work. This ensures that children have full and equal access to the curriculum and opportunities within the setting, regardless of race, gender, language, ability or culture. As a member of the Alliance,

Christ Church Playgroup works in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

We believe that the group's activities should be open to all children and families, and to all adults committed to their education and care. We aim to ensure that all that wish to work in, or volunteer to help with, our playgroup have an equal chance to do so.

We do not discriminate against a child, their family, employees or prospective employees on the basis of the following protected characteristics (as defined by the Equal Opportunities Act 2010). These are:

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

Admissions

The playgroup is open to every family in the community.

The waiting list is not operated on a first come, first served basis but on a fairer system. We use the following system for accepting children from the waiting list:

- Our normal entry age is two and a half years old
- Places will usually only be offered to children resident within the London Borough of Islington. If there are still places available, once all Islington applicants have been admitted, then places will be offered to children resident in other boroughs.

If there are more applicants within an age band, i.e. 2 year olds and 3 – 4 year olds, than there are places available in that age band, the Admissions Secretary will admit children in that age band according to the following criteria and in the order of priority below:

1. Children who are in public care ('looked after children'). Recent written evidence should be supplied, at the time of application, from the relevant local authority.
2. Children with documented special medical or social needs. Recent written supporting evidence should be supplied, at the time of application, from a relevant professional, such as a doctor, social worker or educational psychologist or a community representative. The supporting evidence should state the reason why Christ Church Playgroup is the most suitable playgroup and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to go to another playgroup.
3. Children who will have one or more siblings attending playgroup at the time of their entry to playgroup, i.e. two siblings attending at the same time.

*Due to the access to the Angel Room some consideration must be taken as to whether it is safe for a child/employee to attend playgroup if they have difficulty on the stairs.

4. Other applicants, according to the proximity of their home address to the playgroup.

Places will not be allocated according to the length of time a child's name is on the application waiting list.

The Playgroup have a limited number of subsidized places which are allocated to families who receive income support.

Families joining the playgroup are made aware of its equal opportunities policy, which is regularly reviewed.

Employment

Any vacancies will be advertised. The playgroup will appoint the best person for each job and will treat fairly all applicants for jobs and all those appointed.

Commitment to implementing the group's Equal Opportunities Policy will form part of the job description for all workers.

Training

We seek out training opportunities for staff to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices which enable all children to flourish.

We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for promoting equality, valuing diversity and inclusion.

Families

The playgroup recognises that many different types of family group can and do successfully love and care for children. The playgroup aims to offer support to all families.

The playgroup has some subsidized places for families receiving benefits.

Festivals

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all the major events in the lives of the children and families in the playgroup, 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 all the festivals that are celebrated in our area and/or by the families involved in the playgroup.
- Without indoctrination in any specific faith, children will be made aware of the festivals that are being celebrated by their own families or others, and will be introduced where appropriate to the stories behind the festivals.
- Before introducing a festival with which the adults in the playgroup are not themselves familiar, appropriate advice will be sought from parents and other people who are familiar with that festival.
- Children and families who celebrate festivals at home with which the rest of the playgroup is not familiar will be invited to share their festival with the rest of the group, if they themselves wish to do so.
- Children will become familiar with and enjoy taking part in a range of festivals, together with the stories, celebrations and special food and clothing they involve, as part of the diversity of life.

The Curriculum

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Management of resources within the playgroup will ensure that both girls and boys have full access to all kinds of activities and equipment and are equally encouraged to enjoy and learn from them.

Appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Resources

These will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multi-racial society.

Materials will be selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and by using images and words that reflect positively the contribution of all members of society.

Special Needs

The playgroup recognises that children have a wide range of needs which differ from time to time, and will consider what part it can play in meeting these needs as they arise.

Planning for playgroup meetings and events will take into account the needs of people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Discriminatory Behaviour/Remarks

Any discriminatory language, behaviour or remarks by children, parents or any other adults are unacceptable in the playgroup.

Our response will aim to demonstrate support for the victim(s), to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices and to make it clear that such behaviour/remarks will not be tolerated.

Language

Basic information, written and spoken, will be clearly communicated in as many languages as are necessary and possible.

Bilingual/multilingual children and adults are an asset to the whole group. Parents will be encouraged to speak to children in their first language at home.

Children and parents who have English as a second or additional language will be valued and their languages recognised and respected in the playgroup.

Food

Working in partnership with parents, children's medical, cultural and dietary needs will be met.

Meetings

The playgroup will make every effort to ensure that the time, place and conduct of meetings enable the majority of parents to attend so that all families have an equal opportunity to be involved in and informed about the playgroup.

Our named person for Equal Opportunities is Kelly Armour.

Monitoring and Review

To ensure our policies and procedures remain effective we will monitor and review them regularly to ensure our strategies meet the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and valuing diversity.

We provide a complaints procedure.

This policy was reviewed 13/03/2017

Signed on behalf of the playgroup