

# Milkshake Montessori Nursery School

## Equal Opportunities Policy

Milkshake Montessori Nursery School is committed to treating each individual as a person in his or her own right. All children are different and it is this that creates their uniqueness and their individuality. This contributes to the richness of humanity. We believe that to be different does not mean being of different worth. We are all different and of equal worth.

We believe that children and adults flourish best in an environment which is free from discrimination, stereotype and prejudice of any kind. These attitudes must be recognised, challenged and eliminated whether they are based on status, sex, race, religion, colour, creed, marital status, ethnicity, nationality, political belief and/or disability. We provide an inclusive and enabling environment to ensure each individual is supported to achieve their full potential.

### **Aims and Objectives**

Milkshake Montessori Nursery School aims to:

- Provide a secure and accessible environment in which all our children/staff can flourish and in which all contributions are considered and 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 disabled people.
- Improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity.
- Make inclusion a thread that runs throughout all of the activities at Milkshake Montessori Nursery School.
- Adhere to all current Equal Opportunities legislation - The Equality Act (2010).

### **1. Admissions**

Written by Geraldine Hill (19/03/2012)  
Review by Cassandra Mitchell (1/10/2013)  
Review date (1/10/2014)

- Milkshake Montessori Nursery School is open to all members of the community.
- We advertise our service through a variety of sources including the Richmond Borough Family Information Service, yell.com and our own website.
- We base our admissions on a first come first served basis - although preference is given to 'full time' children.
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of on status, sex, race, religion, colour, creed, marital status, ethnicity, nationality, political belief and/or disability.
- A waiting list is used to fill available places.
- Families joining the school are made aware of our Equal Opportunities Policy.

## **2. Employment**

- Our recruitment and selection of staff is in accordance with equal opportunities legislation.
- Vacancies are advertised through our school, recruitment agencies and internet websites - 'Gumtree'.
- Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
- Applicants who are offered positions are subject to references and checks with the Criminal Records Bureau.
- Commitment to implementing our Equal Opportunities Policy will form part of the job description for all staff.
- We believe that staff need to be good role models, demonstrating cooperation and respect for everyone who comes into the setting and ensuring that everyone must be treated fairly.

## **3. Training**

- We recognise the importance of training as a key factor in the implementation of an effective Equal Opportunities Policy. Therefore, we strive to offer ample equal opportunities training for all staff.
- Each academic year staff attend three training sessions and two INSET Days.
- The setting has a designated Equal Opportunities Officer: Geraldine Hill who keeps abreast of current Equal Opportunities legislation and ensures it is actively implemented in the setting. In addition, practice and staff training is monitored and reviewed to ensure our Equal Opportunities Policy is implemented.

## **4. Festivals**

Written by Geraldine Hill (19/03/2012)  
 Review by Cassandra Mitchell (1/10/2013)  
 Review date (1/10/2014)

- We aim to show respectful awareness of all the major events in the lives of the children and families in the school and in our society as a whole. We welcome the diversity of backgrounds from which we all come.
- In order to achieve this we:
  - a) Acknowledge all the festivals which are celebrated in our area and/or by the families involved in the school.
  - b) Without emphasis on any specific faith, children will be made aware of the festivals being celebrated by their own families or others, and will be introduced where appropriate to the stories behind the festivals.
  - c) Before introducing a festival with which the adults in the school are not themselves familiar, appropriate advice will be sought from people to whom that festival is familiar.
  - d) Children and families, who celebrate festivals at home which are unfamiliar to the rest of the school, will be invited to share their festival with the rest of the group, if they wish to do so.
  - e) Children will be encouraged to find out about a range of different festivals, together with the stories, celebrations and special food and clothing they involve, as part of the curriculum.

#### **5. Anti-bias Curriculum**

- The Montessori Method of education and our teaching materials are planned to empower children.
- We strongly believe that children should have a positive attitude about themselves as well as people who are different from themselves.
- All children feel valued and at home in our setting regardless of their background.
- Our curriculum aims to ensure cooperation and respect; to encourage children to look at others' point of view and observe similarities and differences between people as diversity to be celebrated and as a learning tool.
- Children are encouraged to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills for critical thinking.

#### **6. Resources**

- Resources are chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multi-cultural society.

- Resources and materials are selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and derogatory pictures or messages about any group or people.
- Our staff are committed to being positive role models and through careful planning promote nonstereotyped roles.
- Books and posters are selected to promote such images and challenge negative stereotypes.

## **7. Special Needs**

- We recognise the wide range of special needs of children, families and staff and will ensure that we try to meet these needs.
- Planning for access to the setting, resources, meetings and events will take into account the needs of people with disabilities (learning, physical, and sensory).
- Assistance will be sought from the setting's SENCO Advisor (see Special Needs Policy).
- Staff will be provided with the necessary training and support in order for them to work with children with special needs.
- Curriculum and activities will be adapted and resources purchased when necessary to ensure and enable access for all children.

## **8. Direct Discrimination**

- On occasions staff will have to deal with children who behave inappropriately or make discriminatory remarks about other children.
- It is important that we do not ignore offensive remarks, even if children are just echoing what they may have heard elsewhere.
- Discriminatory behaviour/remarks are unacceptable. The response will aim to be sensitive to the dealings of the victim(s) and to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices (see Behaviour Management and Safeguarding Policy).
- How to react when children behave in discriminatory ways. For example, in a home corner, a group of girls say to a boy who wants to join them:
  - "We don't want you here, because boys can't play properly."
- The staff should take the following steps of action:
  1. Politely ask the children to stop their activity.
  2. Ask the children what they meant.
  3. Explain to the children what they have said is not appropriate.
  4. Explain to the children why their remarks are hurtful.
  5. Correct any information that is untrue.
  6. Support the other child or children and make sure that they know we care about them.
  7. Mention the incident to Key Persons for the children involved.

8. If appropriate, this issue will be raised in a supportive group environment - e.g. circle time.

### **9. Language**

- Information, written and spoken, will be clearly communicated in as many languages as required.
- Bilingual/multilingual children and adults are an asset to our school. They will be valued and their languages recognised and respected.

### **10. Food**

- Medical, cultural and dietary needs of the children will be met.
- Children learn through having opportunities to cook and taste arrange of foods during mealtimes, cooking activities and festivals.

### **11. Meetings**

- The time, place and conduct of meetings will ensure that all families have an equal opportunity to be involved.

### **12. Complaints Procedure**

- We are committed to making our setting a place where children feel valued and have a positive attitude about themselves and others.
- We work closely with parents/carers to the best of our ability and knowledge. Should any person (parent, carer, and staff) believe that this policy is not being complied with, we encourage them to bring the matter to our attention at the earliest opportunity (see Complaints Policy).

The named Equal Opportunities lead is *Cassandra Mitchell*

The named SENCO lead is *Kat Falczynska*