

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

This document is produced for staff working with the children at Pixies, and is a point of reference for families and others visiting the setting. Within this document 'staff' refers to all persons directly involved in the care of children at this setting, irrespective of their employment status, and includes students, trainees and volunteers.

Aims

Here at Pixies we are committed to positively promoting equal opportunities and ensure that inclusion is a thread that runs through all of the activities within the setting.

This policy is to ensure that all employees, children, their families, and all other visitors are treated as individuals within their own rights and that no discrimination is present in any aspect of the setting.

We aim to ensure that we provide positive and non-stereotyping information about gender roles, our diverse community, cultural groups and people with disabilities. We are constantly improving our knowledge and understanding of anti-discrimination practice.

Values

Pixies bases its values on the premise that all children, carers and staff are equal individuals and can be expected to be so treated, irrespective of age, gender (including reassignment), race (including colour, nationality, ethnic and/or national origins), religion /creed, disability, special educational needs, language, , family structure; including the marital status / civil partnership, sexuality or political beliefs of the family. In this policy these are known as the 'protected characteristics'.

We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families, encouraging them to share experiences of their everyday life.

Implementation

Equal Opportunities must be viewed as an integral part of the daily running of the setting. The Proprietor has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented. All other staff should co-operate with their employer in carrying out this policy.

Admissions

- Our setting is open to all members of the community.
- We advertise our service widely.
- We base our admission policy on a fair system.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our Equal opportunities policy.
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of ethnicity, religion, and social background or because of disability.
- We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents. Name-calling or threatening behavior are unacceptable and will be dealt with in the strongest manner.

Provision for Children

Children should be freely able to develop positive attitudes to differences of race, culture, language, gender, and ability during their time at the nursery. Pixies incorporates multi-cultural activities in all themes and encourages both genders in non-stereotypical activities. Resources will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world.

We will encourage children to empathise with others and begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

Methods and procedures to ensure equal opportunities include:

- Information sharing with parents/carers about their child, family background, and valuing their input.
- Making children feel valued and good about themselves.
- Ensuring that children have equality of access to learning. Recognising different learning styles, and making appropriate provision within the activities/experiences to ensure that each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities.
- Positively reflecting diverse communities in the provision of available resources.
- Selection of books/visual materials promoting positive images.
- Celebrating a wide range of festivals.
- Ensuring that the curriculum is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities.
- Ensuring that children where English is a second language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning. Encouraging the maintenance, and development of home languages.
- Ensuring that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of the children are met.
- Helping children to learn about a range of food, of cultural approaches to meal times and eating, and to respect the differences among them.

Employment

Pixies is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to a policy of treating all its employees and job applicants equally. The Company will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment and selection, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, other terms of employment, discipline, selection for redundancy and dismissal. It is the policy of Pixies to take all reasonable steps to employ and promote employees on the basis of their capabilities and qualifications without regard to the 'protected characteristics'. Pixies will appoint, train, develop and promote on consideration of merit and ability alone.

Employees have a duty to co-operate with their employer to make sure that this policy is effective to ensure equal opportunities in the setting and to prevent discrimination. Action under Pixies' disciplinary procedure will be taken against any employee who is found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful discrimination. Serious breaches of the equal opportunities policy will be treated as potential gross misconduct and could render the employee liable to summary dismissal. Employees must also bear in mind that they can be held personally liable for any act of unlawful discrimination.

Employees must not harass, bully or intimidate other employees, visitors or other persons for reasons related to one or more of the protected characteristics. Employees should draw the attention of their employer to suspected discriminatory acts or practices. Employees must not victimise or retaliate against another who has made allegations or complaints of, or who has provided information about such discrimination. In such instances this behavior will be treated as gross misconduct under Pixies' disciplinary procedure.

See Pixies' Anti-harassment policy which deals with these issues.

Pixies is committed to equal pay and equality of terms of employment. Pixies will endeavour to maintain a pay system that is transparent, free from bias and based on objective criteria. All terms of employment, benefits, facilities and services will be reviewed from time to time in order to ensure that there is no unlawful direct or indirect discrimination because of one or more of the protected characteristics.

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when, because of one of the protected characteristics, a person is treated less favourably than other persons are treated. The treatment will still amount to direct discrimination even if it is based on the protected characteristic of a third party with whom the person is associated and not of their own protected characteristic.

Pixies will take all reasonable steps to eliminate direct discrimination in all aspects of:

- employment and
- the provision of the setting.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination is treatment that may be equal in the sense that it applies to all persons, but which is discriminatory in its effect on, for example, one particular sex or racial group. Indirect discrimination occurs when there is applied to a person a provision, criterion or practice which is discriminatory in relation to a protected characteristic of that person.

Pixies will take all reasonable steps to eliminate indirect discrimination in all aspects of:

- employment and
- the provision of the setting.

Training

Pixies will take such measures as may be necessary to ensure the proper training, supervision and instruction for all staff in order to familiarize them with the company's policy on equal opportunities, and in order to help them identify discriminatory acts or practices and to ensure that they promote equal opportunity.

We seek out training opportunities for staff in order to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices. All staff are expected to be positive role models for the children in their care.

Pixies will also provide training to all employees to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the Company's equal opportunities and anti-harassment policies and what they can do to create a work environment that is free of discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Monitoring equal opportunity

Pixies will regularly monitor the effects of selection decisions and personnel practices and procedures in order to assess whether equal opportunity is being achieved. This will also involve considering any possible indirectly discriminatory effects of its standard working practices. If changes are required, Pixies will implement them.

Pixies will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome substantial disadvantages caused by disability.

Policies are reviewed regularly to ensure they are fully implemented.

The legal framework for this policy is:

- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 2001
- Child Act 1989/2004
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2001

Last updated: February 2015

THIS IS A WORKING DOCUMENT. ALL STAFF ARE REQUIRED TO SIGN AND DATE IT WHEN THEY HAVE REFERRED TO IT

Read by:

Date: