**Dealing with Discriminatory Behaviour**

We have a duty to create and implement strategies in the nursery to prevent and address all discriminatory behaviour. Such strategies include:

• The nursery records all incidents relating to discrimination on any grounds

• All recorded incidents are reported to the children’s parents, and when appropriate to the registering authority.

Parents have a right to know if discrimination occurs and what actions the nursery will take to tackle it.

Types of discrimination

• 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 or criterion is in place which applies to everyone in the organisation but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic

• 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’

• Third party harassment is the harassment of employees by a third party not employed by the nursery, e.g. visitors or parents

• 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

• Provocative behaviour such as wearing badges and insignia and the distribution of discriminatory literature

• Threats against a person or group of people because the nine protected characteristics listed above

• Discriminatory comments including ridicule made in the course of discussions

• Patronising words or actions.

Procedure

• All staff in the nursery should be constantly aware of and alert to any discriminatory behaviour or bullying taking place

• They must intervene firmly and quickly to prevent any discriminatory behaviour or bullying, this may include behaviour from parents. Any allegation should be taken seriously and reported to the nursery manager

• Each incident should be investigated and recorded in detail as accurately as possible. This record should be available for inspection by staff, inspectors and parents where appropriate, on request

• The nursery 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 to the nursery

• Where an allegation is substantiated following an investigation, the parents of the child(ren) who are perpetrators and/or victims should be informed of the incident and of the outcome

• Continued discriminatory behaviour or bullying may lead to exclusion but such steps should only be taken when other strategies have failed to modify behaviour

• Adults found to be perpetrators must be reported immediately to the manager and where such adults are employees and such allegations are substantiated after investigation, appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken which can include dismissal.

Discriminatory behaviour or bullying needs to be recorded to ensure that:

• Strategies are developed to prevent future incidents

• Patterns of behaviour are identified

• Persistent offenders are identified

• Effectiveness of nursery policies are monitored

• A secure information base is provided to enable the nursery to respond to any discriminatory behaviour or bullying.

Nursery staff

All staff should 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 in nursery. An atmosphere must be created 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 the nursery. It is incumbent upon all members of staff to ensure that they do not express any views or comments that are discriminatory. Nor must staff appear to endorse such views by failing to counter behaviour, which is prejudicial in a direct manner. A sensitive and informed approach must be used to counter any harassment perpetrated out of ignorance.

**Confidentiality**

The nursery’s work with children and their families will bring us into contact with confidential information. It is a legal requirement for the nursery to hold information about the children and families using the nursery and the staff working at the nursery. This information is used for registers, invoices, learning journeys and emergency contacts. However all records will be stored in the locked office at the school or on password protected computers. It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their families and we will do so by:

• Storing confidential records in a locked room and using password protected computers

• Ensuring that all staff, volunteers and students are aware that this information is confidential and only for use within the nursery

• Ensuring that parents have access to files and records of their own children but not to those of any other child

• Gaining parental permission for any information to be used other than for the above reasons or in serious safeguarding issues

• Ensuring the staff, through their close relationship with both the children and their parents, learn more about the families using the nursery

• Ensuring all staff are aware that this information is confidential and only for use within the nursery setting. If any of this information is requested for whatever reason, the parent’s permission will always be sought

• Ensuring staff do not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs

• Ensuring staff, student and volunteer inductions include an awareness of the importance of confidentiality in the role of the key person. If staff breach any confidentiality provisions, this may result in disciplinary action, and in serious cases, dismissal. Students on placement in the nursery are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it

• Ensuring staff, students and volunteers are aware of and follow our social networking policy in relation to confidentiality

• Ensuring issues concerning the employment of staff remains confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions

• Ensuring any concerns/evidence relating to a child's personal safety are kept in a secure, confidential file and are shared with as few people as possible on a "need-to-know" basis. If, however, a child is considered at risk, our safeguarding/child protection policy will override confidentiality

CCTV is used in all of the classrooms, the kitchen, the garden, the entrance hall and the first floor landing. These enable us to monitor activity in each room and enable us to review any incidents. Recordings are kept for 21 days and are then deleted. Footage will be sent in certain circumstances to Ofsted or another Governing Body (if required) and not to any other Body or parents. If parents wish to view an incident that their child was involved in, their request will be considered and if appropriate, they will be shown the footage in the School Office on the school’s equipment.

All the undertakings above, are subject to the paramount commitment of the nursery, which is to the safety and well-being of the child.

**Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

Statement of intent

The nursery takes great care to treat each individual as a person in their own right, with equal rights and responsibilities to any other individual, whether they are an adult or a child. The nursery is committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families according to their individual needs. Discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, race, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, ethnic or national origin, or political belief has no place within this nursery.

A commitment to implementing our inclusion and equality policy will form part of each employee’s job description. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the Manager or Deputy Head at the earliest opportunity.

The legal framework for this policy is based on:

• Equality Act 2010

• Children Act 2004

• Care Standards Act 2002

• Childcare Act 2006

• Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

The nursery and staff are committed to:

• Recruiting, selecting, training and promoting individuals on the basis of occupational skills requirements. In this respect, the nursery will ensure that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, sex, gender reassignment, disability, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and pregnancy or maternity which cannot be justified as being necessary for the safe and effective performance of their work or training

• Providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or are deemed disadvantaged according to their individual circumstances, and the nursery’s ability to provide the necessary standard of care

• Striving to promote equal access to services and projects by taking practical steps, (wherever possible and reasonable) such as ensuring access to people with additional needs and by producing materials in relevant languages and media for all children and their families

• Providing a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and all contributions are valued

• Including and valuing the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality, inclusion and diversity

• Providing positive non-stereotypical information

• Continually improving our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality, inclusion and diversity

• Regularly reviewing, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive practices to ensure they promote and value diversity and difference and that the policy is effective and practices are non-discriminatory

• Making inclusion a thread, which runs through the entirety of the nursery, for example, by encouraging positive role models through the use of toys, imaginary play and activities, promoting non-stereotypical images and language and challenging all discriminatory behaviour (see dealing with discriminatory behaviour policy).

Admissions/service provision

The nursery is accessible to all children and families in the local community and further afield through a comprehensive and inclusive admissions policy. The nursery will strive to ensure that all services and projects are accessible and relevant to all groups and individuals in the community within targeted age groups.

Recruitment

All members of the selection group will be committed to the inclusive practice set out in this policy and will have received appropriate training in this regard.

Application forms will be sent out along with a copy of the equal opportunities monitoring form. Application forms will not include questions that potentially discriminate against the grounds specified in the statement of intent.

At interview, no questions will be posed which potentially discriminate against the grounds specified in the statement of intent. 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.

Staff

It is the policy of The Montessori School not to discriminate in the treatment of individuals. All staff are expected to co-operate with the implementation, monitoring and improvement of this and other policies. 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. All staff are expected to participate in equality and inclusion training.

Training

The nursery recognises the importance of training as a key factor in the implementation of an effective inclusion and equality policy. The nursery will strive towards the provision of inclusion, equality and diversity training for all staff on an annual basis.

Early learning framework

Early learning opportunities offered in the nursery encourage children to develop positive attitudes to people who are different from them. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

We do this by:

• Making children feel valued and good about themselves

• Ensuring that all children have equal access to early learning and play opportunities

• Reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources

• Avoiding stereotypical or derogatory images in the selection of materials

• Acknowledging and celebrating a wide range of religions, beliefs and festivals

• Creating an environment of mutual respect and empathy

• Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable

• Ensuring that all early learning opportunities offered are inclusive of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children from disadvantaged backgrounds

• Ensuring that children whose first language is not English have full access to the early learning opportunities and are supported in their learning.

Food

• We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met, wherever possible

• We will help children to learn about a range of food and cultural approaches to meal times and to respect the differences among them.

Meetings

• Meetings will be arranged to ensure that all families who wish to, may express their views on the running of the nursery and offer suggestions

• Information about meetings and activities will be communicated in a variety of ways according to individual needs (written, verbal and translated), to ensure that all parents have information about access.