

Inclusion, Equality & Diversity Policy

for Children in our care and their Families/Parents/Guardians



Definition of inclusion in Early Years

"Inclusion is a process of identifying, understanding and breaking down barriers to participation and belonging. Inclusive early years practice is about anticipating, paying attention, responding to and reflecting on the needs and interests of all children. A commitment to inclusion should permeate all aspects of the design of educational programmes and the structuring of environments, as well as shaping every interaction with children, parents and other professionals (UK Government Guidance: Birth to 5 Matters, 2021)."

Statement of intent

At Ollie Owl Day Nurseries we seek to provide an environment in which all children are included, valued, respected and supported to reach their full potential. We take 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 a child or an adult. Our nursery is committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality.

This policy covers all of children and their families, parents and/or guardians.

Aim

We ensure equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and their families, parents and/or guardians.

Any inappropriate attitudes and practices will be challenged. Discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation has no place within our nursery. We strive to meet all needs and make reasonable adjustments to enable such equal access and equal opportunity.

Methods

We have named Inclusion Officers who lead in the areas of Behaviour, E.A.L. and SEN at each nursery. Our Inclusion Officers are usually the Deputy Manager of the nursery and will be named on the office notice board & in the staff room of each nursery. The Inclusion Officers will also act as Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCO). Ollie Owl employs an Area Manager who acts as the Inclusion Lead for all nurseries and can also fill in during periods of absence or when there is a vacancy. Our English as an Additional Language (EAL) Coordinator is the Nursery Manager in Chesham.

The Designated Persons for Safeguarding are named on the office notice board & in the staff room of each nursery and these individuals are responsible for ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met.

Their role is to:

- model excellent practice in these areas
- act as an advocate for the children

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- support employees and parents with these areas
- oversee and make recommendations for adaptations to meet the needs of each individual child
- make referrals when necessary and liaise with external outside professionals
- oversee the implementation of this and all related policies and to constantly evaluate the effectiveness of our practice.

All employees are responsible for ensuring that all the children in their care have equal opportunities to learn & grow and fulfil their potential.

All employees must ensure they meet each individual's needs, including all those listed below (under Inclusion, Equality and Diversity Needs).

All employees should seek advice in staff supervision meetings. All employees have a responsibility to challenge any practice they think is not in the spirit of this policy or not meeting our statement of intent.

Employees should report such matters to the Inclusion Officer for their nursery or if the matter relates to an Inclusion Officer's actions then Amisha Dhir as the Inclusion Lead.

Inclusion, Equality and Diversity Needs:

- We provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and in which difference is celebrated and all are valued, respected and supported regardless of ability, needs, circumstances, ethnicity/culture, home language, religion, gender or sexuality.
- We include and value the contribution of all our families, parents and guardians to our understanding of equality and diversity.
- We provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles and celebrate diverse ethnic, cultural and religious groups and people.
- We make inclusion a thread which runs through all of the activities of the Nursery, including the curriculum planning and the resources we use., 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
- Our curriculum teaches all children to respect and value each other, encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.
- We ensure that all learning opportunities offered in the nursery encourage children to develop positive attitudes to people who are different from them.
- We seek to continually improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity and difference and encourage all practitioners to challenge any practice that they feel is not meeting the statement of intent or spirit of this policy.
- We promote and incorporate the fundamental British values which comprises of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect through within our daily activities and routines.

Legal Framework

The legal framework for this policy is:

- EYFS Statutory Framework (2026).

- Special Education Needs & Disabilities Code of Practice 2015
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- Childcare Act 2006
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Education (Health Standards England) Regulations 2003
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) September 2001
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975

Admissions

- Our nursery is open to all members of the community.
- Please refer to the criteria in our separate Admissions Policy.

Employment

- The Inclusion & Equality policy for our employees is set out in our Employee Handbook.
- As part of these provisions all managers and senior employees receive appropriate training to ensure that they maintain the inclusive practice set out both in this policy and our Employee Handbook.
- Commitment to the companies Inclusion, Equality and Diversity Policy forms part of the job description for all our employees.
- Breaches of this Inclusion, Equality and Diversity Policy and/or the Inclusion & Equality provisions in our Employee handbook, will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated and for the avoidance of any doubt this includes cyber-bullying either over the internet, email or on any form of social media.
- All employees are expected to co-operate with the implementation, monitoring and improvement of this and other policies. They are expected to challenge language, actions, behaviours and attitudes which are oppressive or discriminatory on the grounds specified in this policy and recognise and celebrate other cultures and traditions.
- Employees will follow our 'Good Behaviour' policy where applicable to report any discriminatory behaviours observed.

Ollie Owl Day Nurseries follows the guidance of the National College for Teaching and Leadership which provides further guidance specific to working with children and states:

- Providers have a responsibility to ensure that practitioners have the health and physical capacity to teach and will not put children and young people at risk of harm. The activities that a practitioner must be able to perform are set out in the Education (Health Standards England) Regulations 2003. Providers are

responsible for ensuring that only practitioners who have the capacity to teach remain on the staff team.

- People with disabilities or chronic illnesses may have the capacity to teach, just as those without disabilities or medical conditions may be unsuitable to teach. Further information on training to teach with a disability is available from the DfE website.

Training

- The nursery recognises the importance of training as a key factor in the implementation of an effective inclusion, equality & diversity policy.
- We seek out training opportunities for employees and volunteers to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which enable all children to flourish.
- We are mindful of equality in employee training opportunities and it is planned against set criteria, ensuring equality.
- All new employees receive induction training including specific reference to the inclusion and equality policy.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is formulated and regularly updated by our Curriculum Lead so that it keeps in line with changes to the EYFS Statutory Framework (2025). The curriculum offered in the nursery encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. Our curriculum encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

We do this by:

- Identifying a key person to each child who will ensure that each child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and continuously observe, assess and plan for their learning and development
- Listening to children (verbally and non-verbally) and making children feel included, valued and good about themselves
- Ensuring that we know what each child knows and "can do" and have equal access to tailored 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 tolerance, making children feel valued and good about themselves;
- Supporting children to talk about their feelings and those of others, manage emotions and develop empathy
- Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable
- Knowing children well, being able to meet their needs and know when they require further support

- Ensuring that all early learning opportunities offered are inclusive for all children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Ensuring that children whose first language is not English have full access to our early learning opportunities and are supported in their learning
- Working in partnership with all families to ensure they understand this policy and challenge any discriminatory comments made
- Ensuring the medical, cultural, nutritional and dietary needs of all children are met and help children to learn about a range of food and cultural approaches to meal times and to respect the differences among them.
- we recognise the importance of communication in meeting children's needs. Practitioners use talk to engage and enthuse children, to skilfully question prompting and developing their thinking, to extend their language and to model good communication;
- recognising the different learning styles of each individual, making appropriate provision and content within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities;
- ensuring that Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHC) plans are made for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).
- recognising that and providing good role models of language are vital to the child's language development, as well as using visual clues and gesturing, with repetition. We will also systematically expand vocabulary.
- being resourced well and having key labels translated to reflect home languages and to support children's language acquisition.
- identifying through observations and interactions individual's strengths and interests and planning accordingly. We are aware these can be transient at this age.
- providing sufficient challenge to all children, particularly those who show a high skill level or who are 'more able' in any aspect of their learning, ensuring they are recognised and extended.
- having regard for the DfE Finding and Exploring Young Children's Fascinations - Strengthening the Quality of Gifted and Talented Provision in the Early Years 2010.

Valuing Diversity in Families

- We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families.
- We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life into the nursery.
- We encourage parents/carers/guardians to take part in the life of the nursery and to contribute fully.
- For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion, including the use of translators when necessary.
- We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means and offer information regarding sources of financial support.

Food & Nutrition

- We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural, nutritional and dietary needs of children are met.
- We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating and to respect the differences among them.
- We encourage healthy eating and teach the children about the benefits of a balanced diet

Parent information and meetings

- Information about the nursery, its activities, experiences, resources are shared with parents as well as information about their child's development. This is given in a variety of ways according to individual needs (written, verbal and translated), to ensure that all parents can access the information they need.
- Wherever possible, meetings are arranged to give all families opportunities to attend and share information about their child.
- We also consult with parents regularly about the running of the nursery and ask them to contribute their ideas.

We are committed to providing quality provision for all children and their families.

There are some 'groups' of pupils whom we think about specifically to ensure we meet their needs. These are identified below.

How we recognise, support and meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Disabilities:

- We implement the Special Education Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 2015
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- We include all children in our provision. All are treated with respect and valued. We will make reasonable adjustments to activities, equipment and provide particular input to support and meet individual needs.
- We provide practitioners to help support parents who have children with special educational needs (SEN)/disabilities or have needs themselves.
- We identify the specific needs of children with SEN/disabilities and meet those needs through a wide range of strategies. For example, we seek external advice and implement specific learning programmes, we adjust seating for children with a hearing loss or eyesight issue, we plan activities to develop skills as necessary and make adjustments to enable access and participation.
- We work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting individual children's needs.
- We monitor and review our practice and provision in monthly supervision staff meetings and, if necessary, make adjustments.
- The Inclusion Officer also acts as the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and give their name to parents.
- The suitable provision for children with SEN/disabilities is the responsibility of all practitioners in the setting.
- We ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity.

- We ensure that our physical environment and equipment is, as far as possible, suitable for children with disabilities, and make reasonable adjustments wherever possible.
- We work closely with parents of children with SEN/disabilities to create and maintain a positive partnership.
- We ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education.
- We provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
- We liaise with other professionals involved with children with SEN/disabilities and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools.
- We use the graduated response system for identifying, assessing and responding to children's special educational needs.
- We provide a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated for children's individual needs and use the 'Assess, Plan, Do and Review' document to assess progress and plan next steps.
- We ensure that children with SEN/disabilities are appropriately involved at all stages of the graduated response, taking into account their levels of ability.
- We provide resources (human and financial) to implement our SEN/disability policy.
- We ensure the privacy of children with SEN/disabilities when intimate care is being provided.
- We provide in-service training for practitioners and volunteers.
- We raise awareness of any specialities the setting has to offer, e.g. Makaton trained staff.

How we recognise, support and meet the needs of children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) :

- We recognise that bilingualism is an asset, and the first language has a continuing and significant role in identity, learning and the acquisition of additional languages.
- We ensure opportunities and encourage children to develop their home language as well as learning English, as we recognise that language acquisition skills are easily transferred across languages and learning two (or more) languages will strengthen the child's ability.
- We have used and refer to 'Supporting children learning English as an Additional Language: Guidance for practitioners in the Early Years Foundation Stage' to provide appropriately for their needs.
- We create a culture that values and celebrates the languages spoken by children in the nursery.
- We provide resources to enable children to enjoy the home language in nursery.
- We recognise the need for good role models of English.
- We ask parents to translate key words and phrases.
- We ensure some labels on displays and resources or areas are in languages represented in the nursery.
- We try to staff the nursery reflecting the languages spoken to support children.

- Employees understand that children may; mix two languages in one sentence, which we will acknowledge and then repeat back modelling the phrase with correct English and grammar. Children may go through a 'silent' (but not passive) phase as they listen to English, in which employees will expect a response but not pressure the child and will use and encourage gestures and non- verbal communication; and may go through a phase of not wanting to use their home language. It is important that parents continue to use their home language at home. All of these are not a cause for concern.
- If we are concerned, for example, if children are having difficulties understanding or using their home language as well as in English, or if after four months they have not begun to use/understand English, or if they have a history of hearing difficulties or find it hard to interact non- verbally, then we will seek parental support, raise our concerns and seek further support and advice.

How we recognise, support and meet the needs of children who are more able/ Gifted and Talented (G&T) :

- We recognise that very young children often possess sophisticated thinking skills and creativity. We aim to nurture those unique skills, interests, aptitudes and passions.
- We identify children who are significantly ahead of their age group in one or more areas as 'more able' or 'gifted and talented'.
- We will create an environment in which all children can discover and gain confidence in their own capacity for learning, by providing rich opportunities which inspire and engage.
- We will work closely with parents and listen to the voice of the child to gain insights into children's emerging capabilities, gifts and talents and plan to develop these further.
- We have used and refer to 'Finding and exploring young children's fascinations, strengthening the quality of gifted and talented provision in the early years' to provide appropriately for their needs.

How we recognise, support and meet the needs of children who are Looked After Children (LAC) :

- Children and young people become 'looked after' if they have been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes, but a small number may be in children's home, living with a relative or even placed back at home with their natural parent (s).
- We are aware that there are a range of reasons why children may be taken into care. These reasons may or may not include abuse or traumatic experiences. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has impact on their emotional well-being. We therefore treat each child as an individual.
- The designated person for 'Looked After Children' is the Safeguarding Officer. All children are allocated a key person and agencies etc will liaise in the first instance with the key person and the Safeguarding Officer where appropriate.
 - We are committed to doing all we can to enable 'looked after' children in our care to achieve and reach their full potential.

- We promote secure attachments in children's lives as the basis for resilience.
- An individual 'education and care plan' will be drawn up with all professionals and persons involved in the care of the child to enable their unique needs to be best met.
- We will have regular contact with the child's social worker and foster carers or person responsible for the child.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>31 July 2026</i>	<i>Dick Tillett</i>	<i>July 2027</i>
<i>This policy meets the EYFS Statutory Framework</i> <i>Intro 3, 1.8, 3.20, 3.25, 3.26, 3.48, 3.66, & 3.68</i>		