Every child who attends Clarecroft Day Nursery is given the individual care and attention appropriate to their needs to enable them to flourish and reach their full potential. We promote the inclusion of all children and their families. The appointed Equal Opportunities Co-Ordinator is: Katrina Edwards

*“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” (Birth to 5 Matters, 2021).*

We believe that all children and families from differing backgrounds and with differing abilities should be made to feel they belong in the nursery. All staff should ensure that all children are respected and valued as individuals regardless of dietary and health needs, age, race, culture, religion, language, gender reassignment, disability, sex or sexual orientation. Children with special needs have the rights of inclusion and staff will endeavor to meet their individual needs.

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 Nursery Manager at the earliest opportunity. Appropriate steps will then be taken to investigate the matter and if such concerns are well-founded, disciplinary action will be invoked under the nursery’s disciplinary policy.

**The legal framework for this policy is based on:**

* Special Education Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 2015
* Children and Families Act 2014
* Equality Act 2010
* Childcare Act 2006
* Children Act 2004
* Care Standards Act 2002
* Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

Our goal is to welcome all children and where necessary, seek to provide additional support and resources to enable the inclusion of all children. We believe that all children have the right to high quality care and education. We aim to achieve this by:
- Identifying individual children's needs and requirements.
- Work in partnership with parents / carers.
- Identifying and providing additional resources and support. (We will, wherever possible, help parents / carers find various routes to achieve this. This may be on or off site).

Clarecroft staff and its users are encouraged to:

* Be positive role models.
* Actively promote equal opportunities at all times.
* Challenge those (including children) who do not do so.
* 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 because of age, sex, gender reassignment, disability, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity/paternity
* Providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities or are deemed disadvantaged according to their individual circumstances
* disabilities or are deemed disadvantaged according to their individual circumstances, and the nursery’s ability to provide the necessary standard of care
* Making reasonable adjustments for children with special educational needs and disabilities to remove barriers and improve access for all
* 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).

**The British Values and Prevent Duty**

To continue to be both effective and lawful in keeping children safe and promoting their welfare we also follow the British Values as set out in the Prevent Duty. This is to have due regard to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. (also refer to the child protection policy)

The British Values are defined as

* Democracy: making decisions together- a focus on self-confidence and self awareness
* The rule of law: understanding rules matter- a focus on managing feelings and behaviour
* Individual liberty and mutual respect: freedom for all- a focus on self-confidence and self-awareness and people and communities
* Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs: treat others as you want to be treated- a focus on people and communities, managing feelings and behavior and making relationships.

These values are universal aspirations for equality and fundamental to helping all children become compassionate, considerate adults who form part of a fair and equal society.

We acknowledge that pre-conceptions relating to gender and sexism are abundant within language and will challenge such language where appropriate. Children and staff are encouraged to respect one another irrelevant of differences. Children are to use differing experiences to develop their own understanding and knowledge. Inappropriate attitudes and practices will be challenged both in children and staff and relevant experiences and training will be provided to develop understanding of differing needs to ensure all children and adults value and respect each other.

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:

* Listening to children’s verbal and non-verbal communication and making children feel included, valued and good about themselves
* Ensuring that we know what each child knows and “can do” and has 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
* 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 of 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 the policy and challenge any discriminatory comments made
* Ensuring the medical, cultural 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.
* Creating an environment of mutual respect and empathy
* Identifying a key person to each child who will continuously observe, assess and plan for children’s learning and development

We recognise that all children learn differently and at different rates. The Early Years Foundation Stage is our starting point for planning a curriculum that meets individual specific needs of our children. Experiences and activities are adapted to suit the individual needs of children without differing them from their peers.

All children will be encouraged to join in all activities, i.e. dressing up, shop/home corner, dolls, climbing on large apparatus etc. When outings are organised children with special needs will always be included. Relevant educational targets and plans will be put in place to ensure development at the individual child’s levels providing opportunity for key persons/staff to evaluate practice and progress, making amendments and developments where appropriate meeting the child’s needs, progress and interests.

The nursery acknowledges the diversity of religious practices, customs, and festivals and will provide opportunity for all children to share in these when ever possible.

All toys and books etc. will be selected to provide positive images. Books will be chosen to meet all the children’s ages and abilities and to reflect the many different lifestyles in our society.

Parent information and meetings

Information about the nursery, its activities, experiences and 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 (electronic, verbal and translated), to ensure that all parents can access the information they need.

A variety of ways 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.

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.

**Staff**

All staff will be continually reviewing their working practice and relationships in order to provide the best service to all nursery children and personnel.

* The nursery aims to ensure that individuals are recruited, selected, trained and promoted on the basis of occupational skill requirements. The recruitment of staff will reflect the policy of offering positive role models to children. A member of staff is employed because that person is considered to be the best person for the job. We aim to create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued

Staff members at Clarecroft are expected to treat each child as an individual and show understanding for their needs in order to show positive relationships in teaching children to do the same.

In the event that a staff member does not show understanding and relevant adaptations for a child’s individual needs this may result in the disciplinary procedure-taking place.

We recognise the importance of training as a key factor in the implementation of an effective inclusion and equality policy. All new staff receive induction training (please refer to the induction policy). The nursery will strive towards the provision of inclusion, equality and diversity training for all staff on an annual basis.

A commitment to implementing our Inclusion and equality policy is 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 **nursery manager** at the earliest opportunity. Appropriate steps will then be taken to investigate the matter and if such concerns are well-founded, the nursery’s Disciplinary procedure will be followed.

**Dealing with Discriminative Behaviour**

we do not tolerate discriminatory behaviour and take action to tackle discrimination. We believe that parents have a right to know if discrimination occurs and what actions the nursery will take to tackle it. We follow our legal duties in relation to discrimination and record all perceived or actual incidents relating to discrimination on any grounds and report these where relevant to children’s parents and the registering authority.

Definition and legal framework

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, criterion or practice is in place which applies to everyone in the organisation but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic and that provision, criterion or practice cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim
* **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’
* **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 (depending on the nature of what is written)
* Provocative behaviour such as wearing badges and insignia and the distribution of discriminatory literature
* Threats against a person or group of people pertaining to the nine protected characteristics listed above
* Discriminatory comments including ridicule made in the course of discussions
* Patronising words or actions.

Our procedures

We tackle discrimination by:

* Providing inclusive early years practice where all staff are able to identify, understand and break down barriers to participation and belonging and create an ethos of equality
* Consistently promoting the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs to all practitioners, children and families in the setting. We value diversity and celebrate differences in children and families
* Providing training and support around this subject to support staff understanding and confidence in challenging discriminatory practice
* Challenging any observed instances of inequalities, discrimination and prejudice as they arise in play, conversation, books or other contexts from practitioners, children and families and follow this policy, as outlined below, to ensure that discriminatory behaviours against the protected characteristics are not tolerated within our setting
* Ensuring all children and families have a sense of belonging and they can see themselves and their family’s identity reflected in the setting
* Expecting all staff in the nursery to be aware of and alert to any discriminatory behaviour, stereotyping, bias or bullying taking place in person or via an online arena
* Expecting all staff to intervene firmly and quickly to prevent any discriminatory behaviour or bullying, including behaviour from parents and other staff members
* Expecting all staff to treat any allegation seriously and report it to the nursery manager. Investigating and recording each incident in detail as accurately as possible and making this record 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 recorded appropriately. Any patterns of behaviour should be noted. Perpetrator’s and victim’s initials may be used in the record.
* Ensuring any online bullying or discriminatory behaviour is tackled immediately
* Informing the parents of the child(ren) who are perpetrators and/or victims of the incident and of the outcome, where an allegation is substantiated following an investigation
* Excluding or dismissing any individuals who display continued discriminatory behaviour or bullying, but such steps will only be taken when other strategies have failed to modify behaviour. This includes any employees where any substantiated allegation after investigation leads to disciplinary procedures (please see the Disciplinary procedures).

We record any incidents of discriminatory behaviour or bullying 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.

If the behaviour shown by an individual is deemed to be radicalised, we will follow our procedure as detailed in our Safeguarding children and child protection policy and the Prevent duty and radicalisation policy in order to safeguard children and families.

Nursery staff

We expect all staff to 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.

We aim to create an atmosphere 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, or appear to endorse such views by failing to counter behaviour, which is prejudicial in a direct manner. We expect all staff to use a sensitive and informed approach to counter any harassment perpetrated out of ignorance.

**How we recruit, promote, and make other selections**

We carry out all recruitment, promotion and other types of selection procedures, such as redundancy selection processes, on the basis of merit, using non-discriminatory and, as far as possible, objective criteria. At times we may promote through succession planning and therefore, would not necessarily open it up to all.

Advertisements for vacancies must not include wording that may discourage some groups of people from applying, or stereotype in any way, and they must be placed where they can reach as wide and diverse a pool of potential candidates as possible.

Nobody applying for a job with the Company may be asked about their health, attendance record, or whether they have a disability, before a job offer is made - except in very limited situations. It may, for example, be justifiable to ask whether the applicant needs any disability-related measures put in place for the interview, or to check that they are capable of carrying out a key part of the job. It is acceptable to make some job offers dependent on a medical examination.

It is unlawful to ask job applicants anything that might suggest an intention to discriminate on the grounds of a protected characteristic. Asking an applicant about their religion when they are applying for a job that involves weekend working would not, for example, be allowed. Nor would asking an applicant whether they have childcare responsibilities be allowed, as that suggests you might be intending to indirectly discriminate on grounds of sex or marital status.

It is fine to include certain health or disability questions in equal opportunities monitoring exercises, but the data gathered must not be used for selecting someone for a role, or in making other employment-related decisions.