A Policy for Inclusion and Equality

General rationale
- At Epsom Sure Start Children’s Centre we are committed to educate, develop and prepare the children for life whatever their gender, colour, creed, race, religion or ability
- We put inclusion at the heart of Children’s Centre development
- We create a secure, accepting, collaborating and stimulating Community where everyone is valued
- To ensure inclusion is the responsibility of every member of staff
- Inclusion permeates all Children’s Centre policies
- Celebrate our diversity

We overcome potential barriers to learning for children and families. The following ‘At Risk’ groups relate to our Children’s Centre specifically:

- Sick children and their family
- abusive background and neglect
- looked after children
- disadvantaged children
- SEND children
- minority groups (racial, religious and other)
- low self esteem
- children of parents who have recently separated
- children in a family that has experienced a change in circumstances eg financial, alcoholism, substances, domestic abuse
- children with English as an additional language
- child protection register
- bereaved children
Responsibilities (co-ordinating inclusion)

It is the responsibility of the Centre Manager to ensure that the Children’s Centre is inclusive. We undertake to lead all staff in promoting our inclusive ethos and commitment to an inclusive culture.

Admissions

The Children’s Centre will not automatically refuse entry to children on the grounds that they have special, social, educational or behavioural needs.

Specialist provision - SEND

Aspects of access to the Centre for children and adults with disabilities are addressed. We are committed to ensure that our Centre is accessible to all.

What our service offers, where we are located and the area we cover

We offer varied activities for children under five and their families in the Epsom area including Stay and Play sessions with messy play and Baby Boogie Mites. We are located at Epsom Primary and Nursery School.

What our service provides

We provide sessions for under fives with their parent or carer regardless of their needs in a welcoming, friendly environment.

How parents or carers can start using the service

Children can be referred to the Centre via professionals or just by visiting the Centre and completing a registration form. It is not a requirement to live in the Centre’s reach area to access the services however some restrictions are imposed if sessions are over-subscribed. Please see the Centre Admissions Criteria. There is a charge for some sessions to cover the cost of tea and coffee etc.

How we communicate with service users and how they are involved in decision making/planning

Once a term we hold a chat for change session, this is part of the normal session so does not require any additional commitment by parents/carers. We ask everyone to complete an evaluation and also to chat to us about the service and how this can be improved and developed further. Parents/carers can make personal comments by adding them to the evaluation form if they do not wish to discuss them in an open forum.
Our service is fully accessible

The centre has wheelchair access and we have disabled toilet and changing facilities. Activities are provided on all levels and are accessible to all and the Children’s Centre makes reasonable adjustments where necessary to support children and families.

Further information

If a parent/carer wishes to discuss their child’s needs before attending the session they should call the Centre on:

01372 749834 Monday to Friday 8.30am – 5.00pm.

Information can also be found on our website:
www.epsomsurestart.childrencentre.org

Staff new to the Children’s Centre

In appointing staff for any position we will adhere to the Surrey County Council statement of Equal Opportunity (1984).

Existing staff welcome all new staff and they are involved in making them feel part of a team. Knowledge that they bring to the Centre is valued and they are supported in any area identified. A Staff Handbook provides basic information about the Children’s Centre. New staff to the Centre are provided with a range of opportunities to meet and discuss issues with existing staff. Staff development activities are supported for each individual, once the areas have been identified.

Inclusive provision

The Centre is seeking to promote inclusion in the following specific ways:

- Session planning ensures that all children have access to the same range of opportunities, which builds on the contribution of all people irrespective of gender, race or ability
- We provide a variety of learning resources according to the needs of the child
- Fair access to staff training programmes
- Working with outside agencies

Racial Equality

Users of the Children’s Centre come from a variety of social and economic backgrounds, from the Community nearby, an established area of mixed owner occupied and social housing. There are 53 different languages spoken at Epsom Primary and Nursery School.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 legally requires education establishments to make efforts to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, promote
equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons of different racial groups.

References: A Guide to the Law for School Governors
Learning for All-Standards for Race Equality in Schools (2000)

www.cre.gov.uk  www.dfes.gov.uk

Our Values and Aims

Epsom Sure Start Children’s Centre is committed to promoting racial equality, to challenge discrimination and to encourage good race relations by providing equality of opportunity for all parents, community, children and staff. This policy confirms our belief that by creating a positive inclusive atmosphere, based on respect for people’s differences, and showing a commitment to challenging and preventing racism and discrimination we will be able to provide the best possible environment for all children regardless of colour, race, religion, nationality, home circumstances or ability.

We aim to:

- Provide equal access for all children
- Promote the principles of fairness and justice for all including children, staff, parents and the community
- Encourage a positive climate in the Children’s Centre and the community it serves
- Encourage racial harmony but to be aware of and treat incidents of racial harassment seriously
- To develop the children’s awareness of different cultures and backgrounds and to make full use of the skills and knowledge of people from different groups

This policy covers all aspects of Children’s Centre life including:

- activities
- training
- behaviour management
- staff recruitment and career development
- parental and community involvement
- the role of the governing body

The Governing Body of Epsom Primary and Nursery School is responsible for:

- approving and reviewing this policy ensuring that it complies with the race relations legislation and fulfils the school’s commitment to challenge discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good race relations;
- monitoring that the policy has been implemented and is effective by reviewing the centre’s Service Delivery Plan and Managers Report which details activities provided and the outcomes of these activities. They will also monitor that other policies are consistent with the policy for Race Equality and contain a section that considers racial equality issues.
The Manager of the Children's Centre is responsible to the Governing Body for:

- implementing the policy and its related procedures and strategies;
- ensuring that appropriate arrangements are made to ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and to give them appropriate training and support;
- ensuring that all contractors or partners, visitors and volunteers who work with or for the Children's Centre are aware of and comply, as appropriate, to the policy;
- ensuring that arrangements are in place to take appropriate action in any cases of racial discrimination;
- ensuring that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy;
- co-ordinating racial equality work and dealing with reported incidents of racism or racial harassment.

All staff are responsible for:

- identifying, challenging and reporting where necessary, racial bias and stereotyping;
- promoting racial equality, good relations and not discriminating on racial grounds;
- keeping up to date with racial equality legislation and research through training and development.

Visitors and contractors

Visitors, partners, volunteers and contractors who work with or for the Children’s Centre should be aware of and comply with the race equality policy.

Breaches of the Policy

Action will be taken if children, staff or others do not comply with this policy, this action should be guided by two major principles:

- To protect the victim of such attacks;
- To make a strong and immediate response in such a way as to make the Centre’s position clear; that such behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Staff and other adults

Where it is established that the policy has been breached and as a consequence it has caused discrimination against an individual or racial group or prevented equality of opportunity, appropriate action will be taken.

Precise action taken will depend on the severity of the offence, but in any instance some form of constructive dialogue should take place.

Other action could include:

- Further training and awareness raising of equality issues being provided;
- Disciplinary procedures being applied;
- A requirement of a contractor to take specific action;
- Termination of an agreement with a contractor
- Termination of arrangements for a volunteer working within the Children’s Centre