**Hingham Playgroup**

Hingham Playgroup Equality Policy

Statement of Intent

Hingham Playgroup aims to ensure that every individual is treated equally, whether they are a child or adult. We are committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and adults, according to their individual needs. In accordance with The Equality Act 2010, discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, religion or belief, age, marriage or civil partnership, disability – physical or mental, special educational needs, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, ethnic or national origin has no place within our setting.

Legal framework

The Equality Act 2010 lays out two specific duties and three general duties which we must comply with. In our setting, we have met the two specific duties by:

* creating a Hingham Playgroup Equality Statement which is displayed within our lobby and is accessible on our website.
* creating an action plan which contains the targets we have set ourselves around promoting equality and diversity.

The three general duties are part of our everyday activity and something which we always consider within our practice:

* eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
* advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
* fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Aims – within our setting we aim to:

* enable all children to access our setting and the activities we offer.
* look for and stop any form of discrimination from adults and children.
* look for and stop any harassment or bullying.
* look for and break down any barriers to participation.
* find ways to overcome disadvantage experienced by certain groups.
* look for and meet specific needs of certain groups.
* foster good relations between different groups.

How we will achieve our aims – we are committed to achieving our aims in the following ways:

**Recruitment** – when recruiting new staff to the playgroup, all procedures take regards of this policy’s statement of intent.

* Advertisements and information packs will clearly state the need for DBS check and references to be completed before a job offer can be made.
* We ensure that we do not question or ask for information which could potentially discriminate on the grounds specified in the statement of intent.
* All candidates will be asked the same questions and any panel member’s personal knowledge of the candidate will not be offered or included in the selection process.
* Candidates will be given the opportunity to receive feedback on the reasons why they were not successful.

**Staff** – are required to work within the guidance of this policy within every aspect of their role.

* They are advised that any anti-discriminatory comments or practice will not be tolerated. Significant or persistent incidents will lead to disciplinary action being taken.
* Within their roles, staff are required to monitor children’s play and challenge any anti-discriminatory practice and model ‘acceptable’ behaviour.
* They are required to be part of a rolling review of policies and highlight any part of the policies which do not uphold this policy’s statement of intent.

**Training** – Hingham Playgroup recognises that training is an essential part of staff development. We will cascade all training throughout the staff team and encourage staff members to attend a variety of training and use their training to reflect upon our settings practice and where this can be improved for all our users.

**Environment** – we will strive to promote equal access to services 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 families and children.

* By providing positive non-stereotypical information, images and toys.
* Providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are deemed disadvantaged according to their individual circumstances and the Playgroup’s ability to provide the necessary standard of care.
* By asking for, including and valuing the contribution of our families so this enhances our understanding of equality, inclusion and diversity.

**Early Learning Framework** – the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory framework states that there should be:

**‘***Equality of opportunity**and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.’*

In Playgroup we achieve this in the following ways:

* providing a secure environment where all children feel good about themselves, can flourish and their contributions are valued.
* ensuring all children have equal access to learning and play opportunities.
* monitoring play and challenging any discriminatory play or language.
* staff are role models within play and learning, challenging any discriminatory ideas.
* staff will develop empathy with children by using open ended questions to promote thoughts and discussion about inclusion and feelings.
* reflecting the widest possible range of communities and cultures through the resources and activities we offer.
* avoiding stereotypical and derogatory images and games.
* ensuring all activities and learning experiences offered are inclusive to all the children, adapting them as necessary in ensure access children with differing needs.
* aiding children with English as an additional language to access the opportunities offered through support and ‘pec pics’.
* sourcing support from outside services and agencies to enable us to include and support families and children.
* ensuring that children, whose abilities are more advanced than their peers, are supported as they continue to learn and develop at their higher level.
* celebrations of many different cultural festivals.
* having a member of staff trained within Special Educational Needs and Disabilities to support families for who this is relevant.

**Monitoring –** as part of our rolling policy review, this policy along with all policies will be reviewed to ensure our practice meets The Equality Act 2010.

* We will record any incidents of discrimination in setting and how it was dealt with in a designated book. This will be reviewed to look for any patterns occurring or recurring issues.
* We have a complaints procedure available for parent to use if they wish to complain about an incident of discrimination (or any other concern they may have). These complaints will be dealt with in accordance with our Complaints Policy.
* Equality is part of the agenda for staff meetings, ensuring it regularly considered by staff within relation to their role and planning for the setting.

**Setting’s ENCO** – Hingham Playgroup’s Equality Named Co-Ordinator (ENCO) is Nicola Hindle. Her role is to work collaboratively with all staff, families and committee to co-ordinate and monitor equality requirements of all children aged 2-5 years, families and setting, proactively enhancing and promoting inclusive practice and removing barriers to inclusion.

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| Last review date |  July 2020 |
| Reviewed/agreed by staff team / date |   |
| Reviewed/agreed by committee/date |   |
| Signed on behalf of committee |  |
| Print name/date/role |  |
| Date of next review | July 2021 |

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