

Equality of Opportunity

Valuing diversity, promoting inclusion and equality

Underlying Principle

Everyone is different and has something unique to offer. Mr. Bee's wants to respect and understand these differences ensuring a fully inclusive approach is taken to ensure we make the most of everyone's skills and abilities as well as meeting the needs of all the children who attend. **Mr Bee's is committed to encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.**

Definitions

Diversity is about understanding, recognising, respecting, and valuing differences.

Equality is about managing differences so that everyone has equality of opportunity through a fair and consistent approach to the application of rules, policies, and procedures. We recognise that sometimes this will mean treating people differently. This commitment is relevant to all we do, how we manage ourselves and how we deliver our services.

Inclusion is about an action or state of including or being included within the organisation.

We will promote equality, diversity, and inclusion across all areas. Our Vision pledges state:

- We aim to be a fair, unbiased and professional.
- Our priority is to meet the children's needs allowing them to reach their full potential.
- We are committed to and promote equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- We are proud of our staff, respect their views and invest in helping them meet their potential.
- At all times, we are accountable for our performance.
- We are one organisation, no matter where we are located, or what job we do.

Summary Statement

Mr. Bee's will ensure that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children, their families, employees, students, volunteers, and visitors. We interpret this as consisting of several tasks and processes in relation to any person working within or using the services of our organisation. These tasks and processes include awareness and knowledge of relevant barriers to inclusion for those with a protected characteristic namely:

- disability
- gender reassignment

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- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- sex (gender)
- age
- marriage or civil partnership (in relation to employment) age.

We meet relevant employer and service provider duties as set out in the Equality Act (2010). We aim to eliminate discrimination including indirect, direct discrimination, discrimination and harassment based on association and perception and discrimination for reason relating to a disability or by failing to make a reasonable adjustment to any provision, criterion, or practice. We promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations with individuals and groups with protected characteristics outlined above. **We also accept our obligations under the Prevent Duty (2015 updated 2023) which highlights the need to foster equality and prevent children from being drawn into harm and radicalisation.**

Leadership and management

The Trustees take overall responsibility for the development of equality and diversity, lead by example and ensure that progress is reviewed and further action instigated, as necessary.

All Mr. Bee's leaders and managers at all levels will demonstrate their commitment to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, and take responsibility for progress, and all staff have personal responsibilities to treat everyone with respect, consideration and without prejudice and to promote the same levels of behaviour in colleagues.

Indicators of success

Leaders and managers visibly:

- challenge unacceptable behaviours and create a climate where complaints can be raised without the fear of reprisal (refer to Whistle Blowing policy)
- take firm action where unfairness or inconsistency exists
- encourage and support diversity within their teams
- demonstrate and promote considerate and fair behaviour
- treat staff with dignity and respect and recognise and value individual skills and contributions
- demonstrate through words and actions that diversity is an integral part of meeting the business priorities
- create an environment in which staff can identify and share good practice, celebrate success, and encourage positive attitudes towards diversity

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Accessibility of our services

We will continue to review service provision to ensure accessibility for all, and that inadvertent discrimination against any community does not arise.

The starting point for such a review is to carry out equality impact assessments to identify and tackle any unintentional discrimination we may find in the provision of our services to children, families, or staff.

This should lead us to consider the language we use and how we communicate information, along with the accessibility of our buildings.

We are committed to reach the position where with everything we do, equality and diversity considerations are built in from the beginning. To do this we will need to understand the different and diverse requirements of our customers and of our staff and to involve them in the planning stages of new initiatives.

Communication

We will ensure that this policy is accessible and understood by everyone in Mr. Bee's.

Getting our message across successfully means all staff will:

- be aware of Mr. Bee's policies on equality, diversity, and inclusion
- understand the benefit of valuing diversity and how these impacts on the work of Mr. Bee's
- have a greater awareness of the value of more inclusive communication
- understand their own role in promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion
- be aware of their legal responsibilities under current equality legislation.

Senior managers will discuss these messages at team meetings; information will be fed back from these meetings to the Trustees for appropriate action.

A copy of our policy is accessible to all **on our communication platform Family** and via our website (<https://mrbeefscentre.co.uk/parent-information/>).

When things go wrong

Employees who feel they have been unfairly treated, contrary to this policy should raise their concerns with their line managers to get them addressed. If matters are not addressed the individual can raise a grievance using the normal grievance procedure **outlined in our Grievance policy**. All complaints will be investigated thoroughly and without delay.

Contravention of this policy by way of harassment of or discrimination against a colleague will be considered a disciplinary offence and dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. Additional guidance is available in the Whistle Blowing policy.

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Employees should feel confident that raising a grievance will not have an adverse effect on them, and that Mr. Bee's will protect them from victimisation.

Policy Review

We are committed to keeping this policy current and relevant. It will be monitored and reviewed regularly. Equality impact assessments will be carried out by management when a new policy or practice is identified and the results fed back to the Trustees through team and manager's meetings.

Childcare Provision

Each of our childcare centres is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families. We aim to:

- provide a secure and accessible environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are considered and valued;
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 (outlined on page 2 of this policy).
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity; and
- make inclusion a thread that runs through all the activities of the setting.

Procedures

The named Equality Co-ordinator (ENCO) and deputies in our Mr Bee's Centres are:

North Lynn: Lisa Webster and Rebecca Ford

Springwood: Matthew Foulkes and Sophie Bailey

St Augustine's: Jess Spooner and Sharlie Kirk

Admissions

Our Centres are open to all members of the community.

- We advertise our service widely on-line by way of local directories, websites, and social media.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
- We endeavour to provide information in as many languages as possible using google translate.
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system (see Admissions and Registration policy).
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy and an easy read copy of 'The Equality Act, making it real' is available in the parent's area of **Famly**, as well as being sent to families when our policy is reviewed.

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- We are aware of anti-discriminatory legislation and able to use it to shape the service and support parents and children against discrimination in the local community, for example, against asylum seekers, the Travelling community and same sex parents.
- We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our setting for reason relating to disability.
- We create an ethos within which staff work confidently within a culturally complex environment; learning when to change or adapt practice in the setting and having the confidence to challenge practice (including parental) that is not in the child's best interest, seeking support and intervention from agencies where appropriate.
- We act against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents. Displaying of openly discriminatory xenophobic and offensive or threatening materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner – this is outlined fully in our employment policies and employee handbook.

Employment (refer to the Safer Recruitment policy)

- Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria using the Mr. Bee's short-listing criteria agreed by the Centre Lead and the Senior Early Years Professional.
- Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all.
- We may use the exemption clauses in relevant legislation to enable the service to best meet the needs of the community.
- At interview, a set of questions are asked dependent on the job role and scored by an interview panel - this ensures fairness in the selection process.
- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to satisfactory references and checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service, including additional criminal record checks for anyone who has lived or worked abroad.
- All job descriptions include a commitment to promoting equality and recognising and respecting diversity as part of their specifications.
- Information is gathered relating to ethnicity during our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.
- Information gathered is used to prepare and publish specific and measureable equality objectives in line with the specific duties set out in the Equality Act 2010's Public Sector Equality duty. Equality data is reviewed at **development meetings** and new objectives set every four **three years**.

Training (refer to Supervision, Appraisal and Performance Management policy)

- We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which enable all children to flourish.
- We ensure that staff members are confident and fully trained in administering relevant medicines and performing invasive care procedures when these are required for a child to be able to attend which forms part of our **Managing children with allergies and long-term medical conditions; children who are sick or infectious and administering medicines policy**.

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- We reflect on our practice to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for promoting equality, valuing diversity and inclusion which is taken to a Childcare Development meeting regularly as well as addressed by the Centre Leads and the Senior Early Years Professional daily, where required.

Curriculum

The curriculum offered in our Centres encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

We ensure that our practice is fully inclusive by:

- Promoting a welcoming atmosphere that genuinely appreciate British values, diverse cultural and personal perspectives, without stereotyping and prejudicing cultures and traditions on raising children, by always involving parents;
- Promoting community cohesion and creating an environment that pre-empts acts of discrimination so that they do not arise;
- positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities within resources;
- avoiding use of stereotypes or derogatory images within our books or any other visual materials;
- ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning;
- differentiating the curriculum to meet children's special educational **needs** which is further outlined in our **Identification, assessment, and support for children with SEND** policy;
- ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning.

Our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. If access to the settings is found to treat disabled children or adults less favourably then we make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled children and adults. We do this by:

- Developing an environment which reflects the 'kaleidoscope' of factors that can provide settings with a multitude of influences and ideas for exploring and celebrating difference.
- Ensuring that barriers to inclusion are identified and removed or minimised wherever possible; for example, we complete an access audit form.
- Understanding, supporting and promoting the importance of identity for all children and recognising that this comprises multiple facets which are shaped by a 'kaleidoscope' of factors including British values, 'race' ethnicity and culture, gender, difference of ability, social class, language, religion and belief, and family form and lifestyle, which combine uniquely in the identity of each individual. For example, we welcome and promote bi/multi-linguicism and the use of alternative communication formats such as sign language, and we promote gender equality while at the same time recognising the differences in play preferences and developmental timetables of girls and boys.

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- Recognising that this 'kaleidoscope' also reflects negative images which may be internalised and negatively affect the development of self-concept, self-esteem, and confidence.
- exploring a wide **range of festivals, holy days, and special days authentically through involving parents, staff, or the wider community to provide a positive experience for all;**
- creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
- helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable which is further outlined in our **Promoting Positive Behaviour policy** and Staff/Volunteer handbook.

Valuing diversity in families within childcare

- We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families.
- We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life to the setting and link this to a child's learning and next steps (refer to **the Role of the Key Person and Settling in** policy).
- We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of the setting which is further detailed in our **Working in partnership with Parents and other agencies policy**.
- For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion by providing support through bi-lingual staff members, families at the centre as well as outside agencies.
- We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means and offer information regarding sources of financial support in the form of special arrangements and **accessing or signposting to sources of funding**.
- We take positive action to encourage disadvantaged and under-represented groups to use our Centres.

Food

- We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural, and dietary needs of children are met and displayed on our 'Needs List' and where appropriate a health plan is completed (refer to **Managing children with allergies and long-term medical conditions; children who are sick or infectious and administering medicines** policy).
- 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 (refer to our Food Safety **and Healthy Eating** policy).

Meetings

- Meetings are arranged to ensure that all families who wish to be involved in the running of the organisation.
- We positively encourage fathers to be involved in our Centres, especially those fathers who do not live with the child.

- Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways – **newsfeeds or private message on Family, email**, verbal and where resources allow in translation – to ensure that all mothers and fathers have information about, and access to, the meetings.

Monitoring and reviewing

- To ensure our policies and procedures remain effective we will monitor and review them regularly (refer to our Review of Policy and Policy Review checklist) to ensure our strategies meets the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion, and valuing diversity.
- We provide a complaints procedure and a complaints summary record for parents to view (see Making a Complaint policy).

Legal framework

- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023**
- Children Act (1989) & (2004)
- Children and Families Act 2014 Part 3
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014)
- Disability Equality Duty 2011
- Prevent Strategy 2015 (**updated in 2023**)

FORMS:

- SEN Support: Access Audit Form
- Application Forms
- Registration Forms

Further Guidance:

- The Equality Act, making it real (Government Equalities Office)
- Equality Act 2010: Specific Duties to Support the Equality Duty (www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/ 2011)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-impact-assessments-2010>

Related Policies:

- Whistle Blowing
- Disciplinary and Dismissals
- Identification, assessment, and support for children with SEND**
- Grievance Policy
- Food Safety **and Healthy Eating**
- Role of the Key Person and settling in
- Managing children with allergies and long-term medical conditions; children who are sick or infectious and administering medicines (including storage of medicines)**
- Policy Review
- Making a Complaint
- Admissions and Registration**
- Safer Recruitment**
- Supervision, Appraisal and Performance Management**
- Working in Partnership with Parents and other agencies**

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Re: Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality

This policy was reviewed at a meeting of:

Mr. Bee's Family Centre

Held on:

29th April 2025

Date to be reviewed:

June 2028

Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees:	
Name of role of signatory:	Jeanette Nowrung, Chairperson
Signed by Senior Early Years Professional:	
Individual Centre Lead's Signature:	
North Lynn:	
Springwood:	
St Augustine's:	

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