

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

The Autism Early Support Trust Limited implements an effective policy about ensuring equality of opportunity and for supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities in accordance with all relevant legislation including the EYFS 2017 and with regard to the SEN Code of Practice 2015.

We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help at AES have an equal opportunity to do so.

Admissions: AES is open and welcomes all children and families in the community who have a pre-school child with needs and difficulties which our specialist provision can meet. (See Admissions policy). AES will promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice to ensure every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability. All children will be valued and supported and reasonable adjustments made to meet their needs – see The Equality Act 2010.

Employment and recruitment:

AES will offer available positions to the candidate who best meets the job specification. Commitment to implementing AES's Equality of Opportunity policy will form part of the job description. AES recruitment process will respect individuality and will treat fairly all applicants and all those appointed. Staff will undergo training to ensure that the policy is consistently applied and will be made aware of training opportunities and given an equal chance to attend.

Families:

AES recognises that many different types of family can successfully love and care for children. AES is welcoming to children from diverse families and encourages and values the contribution of all families to the life of the setting. AES is committed to working in partnership with parents and other agencies, the views of the children and families being regularly sought. AES work in partnership with parents to ensure medical, cultural and dietary needs are met and that records are reviewed on a regular basis. Parents are encouraged to keep the nursery updated with reference to any changes. Parents are also encouraged to actively take part in and contribute to the life of the setting. Parents are encouraged to join our parent support group and have access to the support of our Family Liaison officer. Parents have access to a parents' notice board, website, as well as a half termly newsletter, with the aim of helping parents keep in touch with meetings events and workshops and information relating to the children, nursery and staff. Children's home languages are valued and used to support learning through the allocated home / school time set aside for communication between parents and staff. Parents are made aware of the nursery's Complaints policy as well as being encouraged to offer their thoughts as to any improvements in policy and procedure that they feel the nursery could implement to the benefit of children and families.

Curriculum and Resources:

The resources at our nursery and those used in our outreach services reflect positive images of the wide range of communities, cultures and abilities from which our children belong to. Festivals and important events from around the world are celebrated, families being invited to contribute should they wish to do so, conversely alternative activities will be offered if parents do not wish their child to take part in certain activities. Books and other materials will not overtly promote stereotyped roles. Activities and play equipment is accessible and free from prejudice or discrimination. There is equal access to resources and play equipment both indoors and out. There is differentiated provision within the curriculum to meet the differing needs of the children who attend our nursery, allowing for reasonable adjustments to the environment (Equality Act 2010) such as enhancing the visual structure of the environment, using signing as well as augmented communication systems including the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). All children are respected and their individuality and potential recognised and valued. Appropriate opportunities are given to children to explore and value similarities and differences between themselves and others. Children are taught values of what makes a good citizen such as listening to others, respect, sharing etc.

Special Educational Needs:

AES has regard to the guidance set out in the SEN Code of Practice, 2015 on the identification and assessment of special educational needs. All children at our nursery have language, communication and / or learning difficulties including autism. Some children are in possession of a EHC Plan when they start at the nursery or families will be advised and supported as to the process of an Education, Health & Care Needs Assessment. All children, regardless of whether they have a EHC Plan have an SEN support plan with individual targets, which are reviewed termly. For children with an EHC Plan, reviews of the EHC Plan take place every six months, approximately. Requests for information from parents will be invited as well as asking parents for permission to convene the meeting. Invitations are then sent to parents and relevant professionals including the local authority EHC Coordinator to attend these meetings. To develop continuity and coordination of provision and approaches for individual children, staff from dual placement nurseries will also be invited to contribute to these meetings. Outreach visits to dual placements take place to help support families and staff.

For further information see our Special Educational Policy

Inappropriate attitudes and practices will be challenged:

Threatening or abusive behaviour or any expression of prejudice or discriminating behaviour towards or between staff or families will not be tolerated and all such incidents will be challenged and recorded. There is a complaints book available for the recording of such incidents. Recognition that incidents of racial discrimination are a serious offence will be responded to accordingly. Incidents involving staff will be recorded on staff files. All staff will be made aware of their collective duty to report incidents of discrimination.

Also see Whistleblowing Policy

Achieving Positive Behaviour:

AES has a Behaviour Management and Positive Handling policy that all staff, volunteers, students and parents are made familiar with in order that behaviour strategies can be consistently applied whilst still recognising the individuality of each child. Staff are asked to provide positive role models in terms of their interactions and language used in relation to both equality of opportunities and behaviour management. AES's philosophy is that all behaviour is a form of communication and agreed protocol involves all staff being familiar

with the Behaviour Management policy: an understanding that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable not the child, that no physical punishment or the threat of physical punishment will ever be used. Individual pupil behaviour plans will be put in place for children whose behaviour persistently threatens the child them self and/or others. All staff and parents will be made aware of this plan and try to apply it consistently to help the child manage their challenging behaviour. All incidents or accidents will be recorded and reported to parents.

Arrangements for reviewing, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive practices will be an integral part of the rolling programme of policy and procedure review by the CEO and Head of Nursery.

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| Review Date: | March 2020 |
| Next Review Due: | December 2021 |