Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Special educational needs

Valuing diversity and promoting inclusion and equality

Policy statement

We are committed to providing an inclusive, nurturing early years environment where all children and families feel welcomed, respected, represented and safe. We recognise that children and families bring a wide range of identities, experiences, languages, cultural backgrounds, abilities, and family structures. These differences enrich our setting and strengthen our community.

We promote anti-discriminatory practice, equality of opportunity, and positive attitudes to diversity, ensuring that no child or family is ever disadvantaged or excluded because of a protected characteristic or socio-economic circumstance.

We follow the Equality Act 2010 and, where applicable to the provider, the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), together with the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers in force from 1 September 2026. We also have regard to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and current Bromley SEND, inclusion and safeguarding arrangements.

September 2026 update: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 strengthens expectations that leaders create inclusive, anti-discriminatory cultures and that practitioners challenge racism and discrimination. Equality, inclusion and safeguarding are therefore considered together in our curriculum, staff practice, family work and safeguarding response.

We aim to:

- Promote equality and foster good relationships across our community.
- Challenge discrimination and bias at all levels.
- Ensure full participation, accessibility and support for all children, including those with SEND and EAL.
- Create a respectful environment where differences are valued, represented and celebrated.
- Promote children's early citizenship, empathy, respect, self-esteem and understanding of rights and responsibilities.

Procedures

Admissions

We ensure that admissions are inclusive, transparent and fair.

We:

- Welcome all families, regardless of background, identity, ability, or socio-economic status.
- Do not discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Special educational needs

- Publicise our provision widely and clearly.
- Provide information in accessible formats and languages where possible.
- Inform all families of our equality, inclusion, SEND and safeguarding policies.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and avoid policies or practices that place them at a substantial disadvantage. Adjustments are considered proactively and reviewed with parents and relevant professionals.
- Provide clear information about our SEND provision, Bromley SEND Local Offer, the Early Years Inclusion Team (EYIT), Ordinarily Available Provision and routes to additional assessment or support.

We challenge and act upon all discriminatory practice, including:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment or victimisation
- Discrimination by association or perception
- Xenophobic, racist, homophobic, sexist or ableist behaviour

Any adult demonstrating discriminatory behaviour will be addressed immediately in accordance with our safeguarding and conduct procedures.

Employment

We are a fair and equal employer.

We:

- Advertise vacancies openly and welcome applications from diverse backgrounds.
- Select candidates based solely on skills, experience and suitability.
- Include explicit commitments to equality and inclusion in all job descriptions.
- Monitor applications to ensure fairness and accessibility.
- Provide reasonable adjustments for interviews and employment.
- Expect all staff to uphold and model inclusive, non-discriminatory behaviour.

Staff Training & Development

To maintain a knowledgeable, confident workforce, we ensure that:

- All staff receive induction and ongoing professional development on equality, inclusion, SEND, Prevent Duty, anti-discriminatory and anti-racist practice, respectful language, reasonable adjustments and recognising how bias or disproportionality can affect children and families.

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Special educational needs

- Staff are trained to deliver specialist or medical procedures when required.
- Training needs are reviewed during supervision and appraisal.
- Staff understand how stereotyping, unconscious bias and discriminatory language impact children.
- Staff use inclusive teaching strategies and resources.

We work with:

- Bromley Early Years Inclusion Team (EYIT), including Area SENCO/Advisory Teacher support
- Health professionals
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Family Help and Children's Social Care, where appropriate
- Equality and diversity networks

Curriculum & Inclusive Practice

Our curriculum is designed to ensure *all children* feel represented, included and valued.

We:

- Build an environment of mutual respect and tolerance.
- Model inclusive behaviour and challenge prejudice or stereotypes.
- Ensure resources reflect the diversity of our community (books, images, dolls, languages, celebrations, abilities, family structures).
- Avoid stereotypical or derogatory portrayals in any materials.
- Celebrate a wide range of festivals, cultures and family traditions sensitively and appropriately.
- Support children learning English as an Additional Language (EAL), valuing and promoting home languages.

Recognise that speaking more than one language is an asset. A child is not regarded as having SEND solely because their home language differs from English; where there are developmental concerns, we consider the child's skills across languages and seek appropriate advice.

- Fully support children with SEND, ensuring access to a differentiated and well-scaffolded curriculum.
- Provide opportunities for children to explore identity, empathy, fairness, emotions and relationships.
- Encourage children to share experiences from home.

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Special educational needs

Accessibility & Reasonable Adjustments

We are committed to a physically and socially accessible environment.
We:

- Make reasonable adjustments to buildings, routines, resources and teaching.
- Adapt provision for physical, sensory, cognitive, social or behavioural needs.
- Work with parents and professionals to remove barriers to participation.

Use Bromley's Ordinarily Available Provision as the universal starting point and, where eligible and appropriate, consider support such as Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding (SENIF) and the Disability Access Fund (DAF) to help remove barriers and build setting capacity.

- Review accessibility and inclusive practice regularly, taking account of Bromley's current SEND Local Offer, Ordinarily Available Provision and SEND Outcomes Framework 2026.

Valuing Diversity in Families

We welcome and honour all family identities and structures.
We:

- Encourage families to share their lived experiences, languages and cultures.
- Support equal participation of all carers, regardless of gender or relationship to the child.
- Avoid assumptions about family roles or lifestyles.
- Engage with families sensitively, respectfully and without bias.

Children's views are sought in developmentally appropriate ways, including through observation, play, communication aids and key-person knowledge. Families are involved in decisions affecting their child, reflecting Bromley's emphasis on co-production and outcomes that matter to children and families.

Food & Cultural Practice

We:

- Work with parents to meet dietary, cultural and medical needs.
- Teach children about varied foods and cultural traditions.
- Encourage respectful attitudes towards different mealtime customs.

Challenging Discriminatory Incidents

We have zero tolerance for discriminatory, harmful or prejudiced behaviours.
We:

- Address incidents immediately, calmly and firmly.

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Special educational needs

- Record incidents factually and report safeguarding concerns promptly to the DSL. Where a child may be at risk of harm, the setting follows its Child Protection Policy and current Bromley safeguarding procedures; discriminatory behaviour is never dismissed as "just banter" or an inevitable part of childhood.
- Support children to understand why the behaviour was hurtful.
- Engage parents constructively and professionally.

Serious or repeated incidents follow safeguarding and complaints procedures.
Staff consider whether discriminatory incidents may indicate wider harm, including racism, bullying, abuse, exploitation, radicalisation or harm occurring online or outside the setting. Concerns are assessed in the child's wider family, peer and community context and escalated without delay where safeguarding thresholds may be met.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Review

To ensure our approach remains effective and compliant, we:

- Review this policy annually or sooner if legislation changes.
- Monitor equality data (participation, outcomes, representation).
- Gather feedback from children, parents, staff and external partners.
- Where the Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the provider, meet the relevant equality information/objective requirements. In all cases, use monitoring proportionately to identify barriers, disproportionality or discriminatory patterns and improve inclusion.
- Reflect on practice through staff supervision, team meetings and leadership evaluation.

Legal and Statutory Framework

- Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Children & Families Act 2014
- EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers (effective 1 September 2026)
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (current statutory guidance)

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Special educational needs

Supporting Guidance

- Bromley Local Offer
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Current Prevent Duty guidance and early years safeguarding guidance
- Equality Act 2010 guidance and current DfE early years inclusion/equality guidance
- Early Years Alliance: Guide to the Equality Act
- Bromley Early Years Inclusion Team (EYIT), SEND Local Offer, Ordinarily Available Provision and SEND Outcomes Framework 2026