

Hope Nursery School Community Relations Equality and Diversity Policy

Reviewed Oct 2019

The main aim of Department of Education's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity policy is to contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others, by providing children and young people, in formal and non-formal education settings, with opportunities to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions within the resources available.

The objectives of the policy are:

- *Ensure that learners, at each stage of their development, have an understanding of and respect for the rights, equality and diversity of all without discrimination; and*
- *Educate children and young people to live and participate in a changing world, so that they value and respect difference and engage positively with it, taking account of the on-going intercommunity divisions arising from conflict and increasing diversity within our society; and*
- *Equip children and young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to develop mutual understanding and recognition of, and respect for, difference.*

(CRED NI)

The Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education identifies the importance of helping young children to understand that we see the world in many different ways depending on our cultural, social and religious viewpoints. The guidance identifies the need for staff to acknowledge and respect the culture, beliefs and lifestyles of the families of all the children, and consequently encourages respect for diversity within our society. This clearly aligns with the aims and objectives of the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity policy.

Of the six discrete headings within the Curriculum for Pre-school education, Personal, Social and Emotional Development most closely aligns with the CRED policy. Young children are encouraged to understand their feelings and the needs and feelings of others, and discussing how their actions can affect others and why we need rules can help them develop respect for others and appreciate the differences between people – like race, culture and disability. This work will provide a firm foundation to meet the on-going and progressive development which is necessary for achievement of the intended outcomes of the CRED policy.

The World Around Us aspect of the Curriculum for Pre-school education also links to the CRED policy. Opportunities provided to talk about themselves, including where they live, the members of their extended family and events in their lives (both past and present), and

learning about the work of some of the people in the local community can also provide opportunities to build on and support the aims and objectives of the CRED policy

Through informal and formal opportunities in **Hope Nursery School** , it is hoped the children will begin to develop-

- Self-respect
- Respect for the rights, equality and diversity of all;
- the skills, attitudes and behaviours that enable them to value and respect difference and engage positively within it;
- confidence in their ability to relate to others from different cultures;
- the skills of engaging constructively in sensitive conversations, articulating their own views and beliefs and listening to others;
- knowledge about their own cultural background and that of others in Northern Ireland;
- the ability to recognise the rights of all as equal citizens;
- the skills necessary to be part of a changing and diverse society in which confident adults engage, learn from and trust one another as members together of a shared society

The Nursery Team work to ensure there is an inclusive environment where barriers to learning are broken down so that all children are valued, respected and feel secure in reaching their full potential.

The barriers to learning, particularly for children with special needs, include;-

- Asking for help
- Initiating play/conversations
- Attention and listening
- Moving between activities
- Sharing/taking turns
- Following instructions
- Waiting
- Regulating emotions
- Self-help/independence skills
- Transferring skills/behaviours to different situations
- Using and understanding language
- Responding to sensory stimuli
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The Nursery team endeavour to reduce these barriers for *all* children by;-

- ❖ Structuring the classroom organisation and layout. For example, clearly defined areas, opportunities for independence when choosing resources, photos displaying classroom routines up on wall, toileting visuals, visual timetable, makaton being used where appropriate.
- ❖ Ensuring routines and transitions are well thought out and adhered to.
- ❖ Engaging in positive behaviour management
- ❖ Supporting children with speech, language and communication difficulties, including those of Newcomer children.
- ❖ Developing an appropriate social and emotional environment
- ❖ Providing opportunities for all children to learn how to identify and express emotions effectively
- ❖ Providing Individual Education Plans when necessary
- ❖ Encouraging self-regulation
- ❖ Promoting a learning environment

Promoting an effective learning environment involves:

- Developing Mutual trust
- Promoting respect for ourselves and others
- Development of positive relationships
- Encouraging a listening atmosphere
- Developing co-operation
- Raising self-esteem
- Establishing a safe environment where views can be expressed without fear of put downs
- Promoting a sense of fairness and justice

The Nursery day provides many opportunities to develop the CRED principles. We believe young children cannot learn how to respect others if they do not firstly respect themselves and also value their own, individual place in school, at home and within their community. A positive self-image is vital for all children in order to learn and grow in an atmosphere of trust and respect.

Therefore, there is a great emphasis placed on understanding feelings, building self-esteem and helping to build the self-esteem of others, both informally and formally.

Informal strategies

- Each child is valued-The nursery team greet each child and talk about who is here/not here. If a child is absent the team tell the child they were missed and that we are glad they have returned to school.
 - The children are spoken to with respect- all adults within the nursery setting are aware of this and model how we should speak to each other.
 - Staff work hard to resolve disputes, by helping children to understand the problem, see how the other person is effected, and ask for ideas to help solve the problem or help the effected person feel better. E.g.
- Identify an area of conflict
 - Approach calmly
 - Use positive, non-blaming phrases where possible
 - Acknowledge feelings
 - Gather information
 - Restate the problem
 - Ask for ideas
 - Follow up support

- The nursery's rules are portrayed in a positive way, discussed with the children and shared with parents. (see positive behaviour policy).
- All children are given praise, positive feedback and encouragement for effort which is specific to the child and the task.
- Children are given praise and rewards, and achievements are celebrated together.
- Children's observations and ideas are valued, and, where possible, are incorporated into plans or activities, e.g. suggestions for resources to be added to an area, or an activity to join in.
- Children's work is attractively displayed, photographs are taken of their work and are also displayed. The Seesaw app is used to send photographs home.

The promotion of independence is used to develop each child's self-esteem-For example, making choices throughout the day (e.g. play materials, choosing materials at art and craft activities,), self-registration, developing self-help skills, tidying up, mopping up spills, helping at snack/lunch time, preparing their own snack, pouring their own drink, toileting routine, putting on coats etc.

Developing respect for others in the Nursery

- Nursery rules promote respect for others and their environment.
- Helping others develop self-esteem- individual achievements are discussed at group times. Children are encouraged to praise their friends.
- Children are aware of good listening rules and are encourage to listen to each other as well as to adults.
- If a dispute takes place, children are encouraged to think about how their actions have affected others and what they can do about it.

Formal strategies for building self-esteem, understanding feelings and encouraging respect in the nursery

- See Personal Social and Emotional Learning Intentions
- See The World Around Us learning intentions
- Group /Circle Time
- ✓ Following simple ground rules
- ✓ Focusing/teaching about feelings
- ✓ Encouraging self and group awareness
- ✓ A non-judgemental process
- ✓ Taking personal responsibility for one's own thoughts and feelings
- ✓ Affirmation - personal and group

- Show and tell days- at specific times, children are encouraged to bring in items from home to talk about and others are encouraged to listen and respond positively, whilst understanding children have different things in their houses, and different things important to them.
- Use of puppets – e.g. Media Initiative puppets to explore issues such as joining in with friends, making friends, cultural differences etc, through specific stories and videos. Children also take these home on a rota basis and then tell their friends about their own home activities. This gives opportunities for exploring a variety of similarities and differences.
- Newcomer days- if parents of Newcomer children are agreeable, we encourage them to come and talk to the class about where they live, sometimes bringing in new foods for the children to try, photos etc. We also try to learn “hello” and “goodbye” in their particular language.
- Story Time- stories are an excellent resource to explore diversity.
- Resources- throughout the year, the nursery ensures there are a wide variety of resources available for the children to explore different cultures/backgrounds. E.g. variety of ethnic dolls in the house area, play food from different countries, Jigsaws depicting children from around the world/different abilities etc.
- Discussions about festivals from local and other cultures, e.g. Harvest, Christmas, Pancake Day, St Patrick’s Day, Easter, Chinese New Year, Divali, Eid etc.

Hope Nursery School aims to ensure that there is equality of opportunity in all aspects of play and other experiences that are offered within the setting.

This does not just cover equal opportunities for girls and boys but also includes children from different races and cultures, and children with special needs.

The experiences provided are planned to give the children opportunities to explore situations and express feelings in a non-gender specific way, and to challenge a range of stereotypes e.g. through dressing up and role-play in the ‘home’ area.

The children will not be restricted to any one type of role-play and both sexes will be encouraged to take on various leadership roles and to talk with adults about traditional and non-traditional roles.

It is hoped that with careful planning and thoughtful interaction the children will become more sensitive of others similarities, differences and needs.

Hope Nursery school opposes all forms of racism, prejudice and discrimination. Our school supports diversity and actively promotes good personal and community relations. Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among all those who belong to our school community.

