

Mews Nursery & Playclub Equal Opportunities Policy

The Mews Nursery and Play Club (hereafter referred to as 'the centre' is committed providing equality of opportunity for all children and families and will take positive action to eliminate discrimination in all areas of their work. The centre works in accordance with all relevant legislation, including

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986
- Children Act 1989

We believe that the centre's activities should be open to all children and families, and to all adults committed to their education and care. We aim to ensure that all those who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with, our centre have an equal chance to do so.

Admissions

The centre is open to every family who works or lives in the local community. The waiting list is not operated on a first come, first served basis but on a system which allows for the centre to make provision on the basis of need and in maintaining the community aspect of the provision. Please see the admissions criteria provided in the parents' information pack. For further details of our admissions criteria. This is due to be reviewed in August 2002.

Families joining the nursery or playclub are made aware of its equal opportunities policy, which is regularly reviewed (see reference in the parents' handbooks).

Employment

Any vacancies will be advertised. The centre will appoint the best person for each job and will treat fairly all applicants for jobs and all those appointed.

The Salvation Army's own Equal Opportunity Policy and procedures are used to facilitate equal opportunities (see guidelines for applications in the Personnel section)

Commitment to implementing the centre's Equal Opportunities Policy will form part of the job description for all workers.

Families

The centre recognises that many different types of family group can and do successfully love and care for children. The pre-school aims to offer support to all families.

The centre will consider a more flexible payment system for families with differing means at the review of this policy in August.

Festivals

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all the major events in the lives of the children and families in the centre, and in our society as a whole, and to welcome the diversity of backgrounds from which they come.

In order to achieve this:

- We aim to acknowledge all the festivals which are celebrated in our area and/or by the families involved in the pre-school.
- Without indoctrination in any specific faith, children will be made aware of the festivals which are being celebrated by their own families or others, and will be introduced where appropriate to the stories behind the festivals.
- Before introducing a festival with which the adults in the centre are not themselves familiar, appropriate advice will be sought from parents and other people who are familiar with that festival.
- Children and families who celebrate at home festivals with which the rest of the centre is not familiar will be invited to share their festival with the rest of the group, if they themselves wish to do so.
- Children will become familiar with and enjoy taking part in a range of festivals, together with the stories, celebrations and special food and clothing they involve, as part of the diversity of life.

The Curriculum

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Management of resources within the centre will ensure that both girls and boys have full access to all kinds of activities and equipment and are equally encouraged to enjoy and learn from them.

Appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Resources

These will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multi-racial society.

Materials will be selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and by using images and words which reflect positively the contribution of all members of society.

Special Needs

The pre-school recognises that children have a wide range of needs which differ from time to time, and will consider what part it can play in meeting these needs as they arise.

Planning for centre meetings and events will take into account the needs of people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Discriminatory Behaviour/Remarks

Any discriminatory language, behaviour or remarks by children, parents or any other adults, are unacceptable in the pre-school.

Our response will aim to demonstrate support for the victim(s), to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices and to make it clear that such behaviour/remarks will not be tolerated.

Language

Basic information, written and spoken, will be clearly communicated in as many languages as are necessary and possible.

Bilingual/multilingual children and adults are an asset to the whole group. Parents will be encouraged to speak to children in their first language at home.

Children and parents who have English as a second or additional language will be valued and their languages recognised and respected in the pre-school.

Food

Working in partnership with parents, children's medical, cultural and dietary needs will be met.

Meetings

The pre-school will make every effort to ensure that the time, place and conduct of meetings enable the majority of parents to attend so that all families have an equal opportunity to be involved in and informed about the pre-school.