

Equality Guidance for Early Years Settings



**Tower Hamlets Council
Early Years Inclusion Team**



Equality Guidance for Early Years Settings

All Unique and All of Equal Value

This publication aims to provide early years settings with guidance in supporting equality and inclusive practice. It complements the *Guidance for Early Years Inclusion Coordinators*, Tower Hamlets Council Early Years Inclusion Team 2016.

Use of the term parents refers to both parents and carers and use of the plural does not imply that the child will necessarily have two parents. Photographs represent a wide range of children in Tower Hamlets.

We would like to thank the early years settings and their families who kindly agreed to photographs of children and staff being used for Early Years publications. We would also like to express our gratitude to the children and families of Tower Hamlets who continue to inspire our work.

Acknowledgements:

East Lothian Council – Equality in the Early Years

Suffolk County Council – Guidance for Promoting Equalities in Early Years and Childcare

March 2017

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Introduction

Each child, like each adult, has intrinsic worth and should be treated with respect and care in all circumstances. Each child brings to each circumstance a unique personhood, identity, perspective and understanding that – regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, physical ability, language, religion, beliefs, social origin or any other status – should be valued and nurtured. Dignity is inherent and cannot be deserved or lost.

Child Rights Partners, An Introduction to Children’s Rights in Practice, 2016 UNICEF UK

Tower Hamlets is fortunate to be a borough with a wealth of cultures, religions and community languages. It is a rich and diverse community, with a history of continuous change.

By celebrating this diversity within settings and communities, it is recognising that we are all unique and all of equal value. Within the community, various groups have differing strengths and vulnerabilities. With some groups having particular needs.

This publication provides guidance, advice and support to help ensure equality for all. It is not intended to be exhaustive, as individuals bring their own knowledge and expertise to developing equality and inclusion.





The aim of this guidance is to support early years practitioners to continue to develop their inclusive ethos, policies and practices to include everyone with the aim of meeting their individual needs.

It is important to remember that the provision of equal opportunities applies to everyone who has contact with or involvement in your setting, including: children, parents and families, staff, the wider community, other services and visitors.

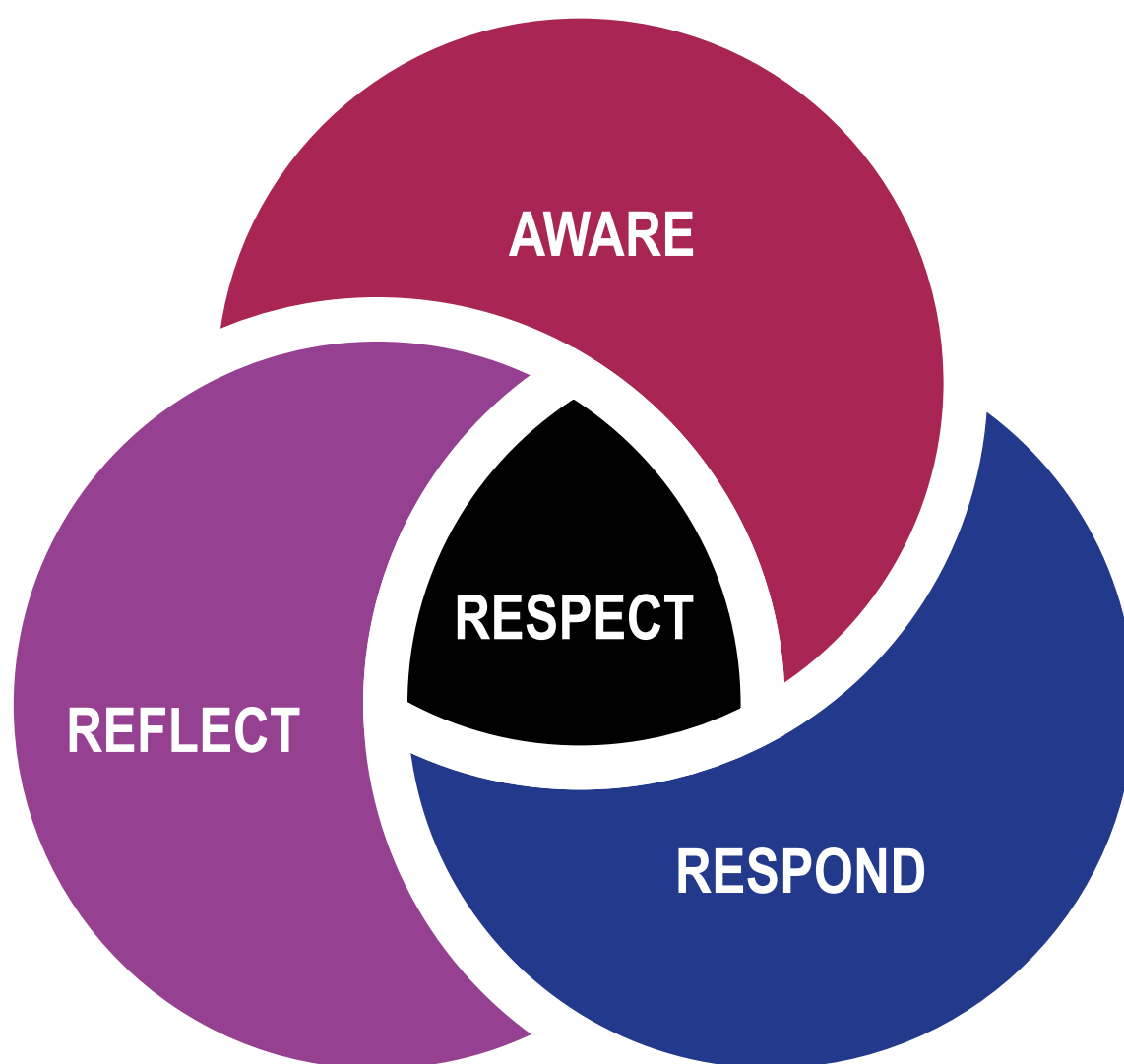
Creating places that are inclusive of everyone means we can help to build an understanding that equality and inclusion are important and create a greater understanding of the needs of different people.

Equality in the Early Years. A guide to equality and diversity for all those working in Early Years Services. East Lothian Council

Life experiences and the influences of those around us, have an effect on the values and views held. Stereotypical views of certain groups can get in the way of seeing the individual. It is important to acknowledge this in ourselves as well as in others. Bringing awareness to this and taking time to reflect will help us to better understand thoughts and actions. By refining and developing awareness, we are better placed to challenge ourselves and others when needed.

All settings and early years practitioners have a duty to promote understanding and appreciation of difference and diversity. This includes developing tolerance, respect and promoting cohesion. There is also a duty to actively challenge all forms of discrimination. It is not enough to be non-discriminatory in our own practice, we need to be anti-discriminatory, which means challenging others when they make discriminatory comments or act in a discriminatory way.

Central to equality and inclusive practice is valuing and having **respect** for all. This guidance outlines an approach where this is achieved through an active process of being **aware** of the situation, considering how to **respond** and taking time to **reflect**, in order to continually evaluate and improve practice.





Equality and the Law

The Equality Act 2010 brings together a range of legislation into a single act. It provides the legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and promote equality of opportunity for all. The requirements of the Equality Act, sit alongside other statutory requirements:

- The Children and Families Act (2014)
- Special educational needs code of practice: 0 to 25 years (2015)
- The statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2014)
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992)

The Equality Act can be found at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Important – For detailed information on specific duties and responsibilities for early years settings under the Equality Act with regards to children with disabilities, see the publication:

Council for Disabled Children CDC (2015) Disabled Children and the Equality Act 2010: What Early Years providers need to know and do, including responsibilities to disabled children under the Children and Families Act 2014: CDC

https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachemnt/equalityact-early-years_online.pdf

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 sets out to ensure that everyone has the right to be treated fairly and protects them from discrimination on the basis of certain characteristics. These are known as Protected Characteristics:



Alongside the Protected Characteristics, it is important to be mindful of the many other differences that there are between individual children, families and others, as everyone is unique.

This diagram illustrates other factors to be considered.



Truly valuing diversity means actively promoting equality and planning to meet the needs of all individuals, whatever their circumstances. Approaches to ensuring equality for all will need to be reflected in all policies and practices.

Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires settings to make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure that a person with a protected characteristic is not at a disadvantage.

To do this, settings should consider:

- policies and practices
- physical features of the environment
- the need for auxiliary aids or other equipment.

The duties are 'anticipatory', meaning that settings need to think ahead and consider what they may need to do to remove any barriers and ensure that policies, practices and environment are as inclusive as possible.

Any adjustments to be made are covered by the concept of 'reasonableness'. This means that the cost of making an adjustment can be taken into account alongside a consideration of the resources available to the setting. Many adjustments can be made at little or no cost. Health and safety issues should also be taken into account and not seen as barriers to inclusion. The setting should seek to remove barriers to include everyone safely in the life of the setting. The goal is to provide equality of opportunity and settings should be prepared to think creatively about how they can include everyone.

Developing anti-discriminatory practice

To be anti-discriminatory, means challenging others when they make discriminatory comments or act in a discriminatory way. Challenging someone about their words or actions can be difficult and needs to be approached skilfully. However, everyone involved in the setting has a right to be treated fairly, and should not have to endure prejudice, harassment, victimisation or stereotyping. Anti-discriminatory practice is a duty, and results in a better service for all.

Remember to act as a role model. Behave the way you would like others to behave and talk in the way that you expect to be spoken to. Earn the right to challenge others by being open to challenge yourself.

Equality in the Early Years. A guide to equality and diversity for all those working in Early Years Services. East Lothian Council (p21)



Forms of Discrimination

The Equality Act highlights the following forms of discrimination:

Direct

When a person's gender, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, or being transgender is used as an explicit reason for treating them differently.

Indirect

When your services or way of doing things, has the effect of discriminating against certain groups. For example, the building that you choose for an event might not be accessible to everyone with a disability.

Discrimination arising from disability

Where a person with a disability is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability.

Failing to make reasonable adjustments

For example, not making an access ramp available at meeting where you know people will be using wheelchairs.

Multiple discrimination

Some may experience discrimination on several grounds.

The law also protects against **Harassment** and **Victimisation**.

What should I do when a discriminatory incident occurs?

Keep in mind the word **ACCESS** which will help you remember what should be done:



stands for **Act** – you need to respond to any discriminatory incident when it occurs.



stands for **Challenge** – which is what you need to do now. Try to be polite but firm when challenging a discriminatory comment or action. If you are unsure of what you heard or saw, question the person involved, saying something such as “Excuse me, did I hear you say...?” or “What just happened then?” Make it clear that discrimination in any form is not acceptable in the setting.



also stands for **Comfort** – if someone has been offended or upset by discriminatory comments or actions, comfort them and reassure them that action will be taken.



stands for **Educate** – it is important that the person who discriminated realises why their comments or actions are unacceptable. Education may take many forms: discussion, modelling appropriate language and responses, going through the setting’s equal opportunities policy or undergoing training in a particular area.



stands for **Support** – including supporting the victims of discrimination, practitioners supporting each other, and supporting those who discriminate in changing their attitudes and behaviour.



also stands for **Subsequent follow-up** – this includes recording the incident, reviewing practice, arranging necessary training, keeping parents informed and long term planning to address equal opportunities issues that arise.

When recording the incident include:

- date
- person who reported incident
- where incident took place
- what occurred
- type of discrimination
- how any victim was supported
- what action you took including any follow up.

If this incident falls into the category of a Hate Crime you can find further information on the Tower Hamlets website.



Inclusive policies and practices

The benefits for everyone of inclusive policies and practices include:

- setting will be positive and welcoming
- valuing and respecting everyone
- promoting positive attitudes
- developing consistent, cohesive and coherent inclusive policies and practices across the setting
- understanding the setting's approach to equality
- families understanding that their child's individual needs will be catered for
- meeting the requirements of equality legislation
- developing and refining inclusive practice
- promoting community cohesion
- developing tolerance and deeper understanding of equality
- providing reassurance that discrimination and exclusion are not tolerated.



Practitioners ensure that their own knowledge about different cultural groups is up-to-date and consider their own attitudes to people who are different from themselves.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Setting the Standards for Learning, Development and Care for children from birth to five 2007 DfES

Inclusive policies

It is best practice for settings to have an Inclusion Policy which communicates commitment to equal opportunities and the value placed on meeting the needs of everyone.

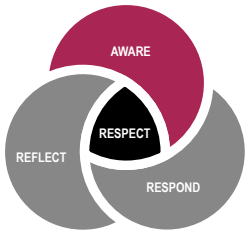
An effective Inclusion Policy has equality of opportunity at its core. If an Inclusion Policy is explicit in its commitment to equal opportunities, and outlines how the setting is working towards this goal, then there is no need to have a separate equal opportunities policy. It should outline how it meets requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Special education needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (2015).

The policy should state the setting's ethos, approaches, practices and what families, children, staff and others can expect.

It is vital that the writing of an Inclusion Policy is seen as a developmental process that involves the whole staff team and other stakeholders, such as parents or committee members.

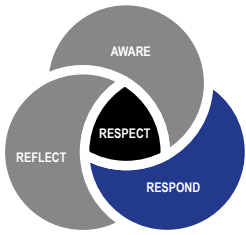
It is important to ensure it is implemented in the setting and regularly reviewed. The Inclusion Policy should inform day-to-day practice in the setting, underpinning procedures and practice.

For more guidance see *Developing an Inclusion Policy in Early Years Settings* in the publication, *Guidance for Early Years Inclusion Coordinators*, Tower Hamlets Council Early Years Inclusion Team 2016.



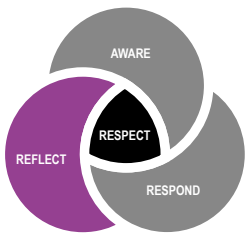
Aware

- Have knowledge of and understand the relevant legislation around equality and inclusion.
- Understand the strengths, vulnerabilities and needs of the groups and individuals within your community.
- Recognise the impact of discrimination and social inequalities.
- Recognise the importance of what is learned and experienced in childhood and how this may affect future generations.



Respond

- Review the current Inclusion Policy as a whole staff group. A policy that has been developed by the whole team will be more effective.
- Consider developing a short summary of your Inclusion Policy for parents. This should be simply written, avoiding jargon.
- Regularly revisit the policy as a staff group to refresh knowledge and understanding and consider if any updates are needed.
- Use the policy to inform the setting's Local Offer.



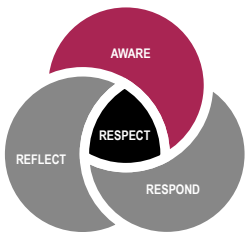
Reflect

- Have all staff participated in the development of the policy?
- Do all staff understand the Inclusion Policy and are they committed to it?
- Are your setting's other policies consistent with your inclusive approach outlined in your Inclusion Policy?
- Do your induction procedures include familiarisation with your equality and inclusion practices?
- How do you share your inclusive ethos, policy and practices with families, new members of staff, students and volunteers?



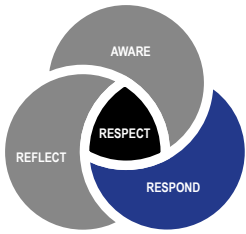
Inclusive practice

In order to ensure that the practice at the setting is inclusive, you will need to take time with your staff group to examine all aspects of the work you do to get a fuller, more accurate picture of your current practice. By committing to do this together there will be a more cohesive approach to developing inclusive practice.



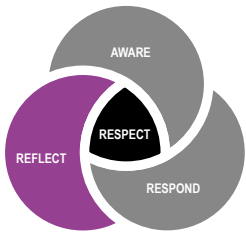
Aware

- Have knowledge of the different community groups.
- Understand the various cultural practices and customs.
- Understand the benefits for all of truly inclusive practice.
- Understanding of effective practice and procedures that ensure equality is promoted and diversity celebrated.
- Recognise personally held bias and prejudices and how they might affect practice.
- Know the named person at the setting who is responsible for equality.



Respond

- Share the Inclusion Policy with parents when they come to look around or register.
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour, language, negative labels, attitudes and stereotypes.
- Regularly reflect as a staff team on differing aspects of your practice.
- Consult parents and other user groups on their experiences at your setting.
- Include all groups in developing your practice.
- Identify areas where you are working inclusively and others that may need some improvement.
- Always include the elements of equality and inclusion in any staff training.



Reflect

- Is everyone in your setting equally valued and treated with equal respect and concern?
- Do you show that you equally value aspects of other people's lives?
- Does each child and family have equal access to all available opportunities, experiences and resources?
- How do you ensure that the needs of each individual are met?
- Are the needs of every child, family and others identified and addressed?
- How do you promote good relationships between different groups?
- Do you challenge when you hear discriminatory remarks or encounter discrimination in any guise?
- How you challenge bias and prejudice?
- Do all practitioners have access to training with a focus on equality and inclusion?

Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live

The Rights of Every Child, A Summary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF - Article 30



Inclusive planning for individual needs

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

The Rights of Every Child, A Summary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF - Article 29

All children have individual needs that should be recorded and planned for in an early years setting. Best practice is when key persons and others, including Inclusion Coordinators and Managers, know a child and their family well. Families feel valued when they are involved and that staff are genuinely interested in their child.

As Practitioners, we recognise the uniqueness and individuality of children. Parents, like their children, bring their own individuality to your setting. Every Parent will bring a unique set of values, beliefs, attitudes, background and circumstance to your setting. Being aware of and understanding these factors will support you to build positive relationships with Parents.

Guide for working with parents of children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND), 4 Children

Some children may have additional needs that have been identified very early on, even at birth, while for others significant needs will become apparent over time as their play and learning may begin to take a different pathway or be delayed compared to typical child development. This is nearly always a very difficult circumstance for parents. How practitioners respond to this is key to supporting families effectively. For other children they may have a period when life is more challenging due to loss, change in circumstances, illness or injury, or a traumatic event. Some children may experience things that continue to impact upon them that need consideration when planning. This is especially important for children who are looked after, adopted, in special guardianship, who are asylum seekers, refugees or who live in a refuge or other 'place of safety'.

When children are identified as having needs that are described in the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (2015), planning to meet children's diverse needs will be reflected through relevant Person centred planning, including My Profile and My Plan formats. Other needs will be met through reflecting on the continuous provision and making adjustments to meet the needs of individual children.

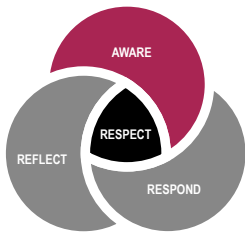
Above all it is the attitudes and commitment of staff that will make planning inclusive. A truly inclusive setting will know each child as an individual within the context of their family and community. Inclusive planning will seek to meet needs with a 'can do' attitude, while acknowledging when expertise, advice and training are needed to support understanding and practice. When there is a positive attitude and expectation to making reasonable adjustments then the planning of activities and routines will reflect the needs of the individual child.

Likewise there needs to be a similar approach and attitude to meeting the needs of parents and staff.

For specific information on using Person centred planning refer to *Guidance for Early Years Inclusion Coordinators* London Borough of Tower Hamlets Early Years Inclusion Team 2016.

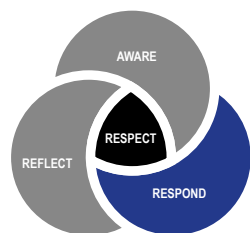
The benefits for everyone in planning to meet individual needs include:

- ensuring that children's progress is tracked and that children are making the best progress that is possible
- approaches that support one child will often support other children within the group
- removing a barrier for one child will support the duty to be anticipatory for children yet to come
- developing practitioner skills and knowledge that will enhance the setting as well as the individual
- developing active listening and empathy skills in working at this level of planning with families who are often coming to terms with, or receiving diagnosis of a lifelong condition
- becoming more attuned to small steps that children make and supporting parents to notice and celebrate these
- feeling more fulfilled in professional practice.



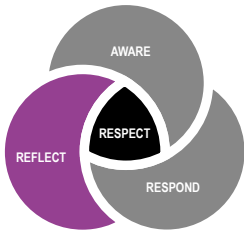
Aware

- The community and faith groups that are important to the family.
- The child's family and who lives where; and anyone else who lives in the same house as them.
- The individual needs of each child, especially with additional needs, and how the setting can overcome barriers to their learning.
- The adjustments that need to be made in the environment and the approaches used by practitioners.
- Any needs that parents have in order to be able to be involved in planning for their child.
- The parents' aspirations for their child.
- The way that the family describe their child and the family circumstances.
- Changing circumstances of the family such as moving home, births, bereavements.



Respond

- Person centred planning that is clear and known by everyone, is in place for all children with additional needs, and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure Individual healthcare plans are in place and regularly reviewed.
- Plan to reflect festivals and community events.
- Key person takes time to talk to children and families about their family life and what is important to them, encouraging them to share information and reflect this in their special books.
- Make sure that individual children and their families are reflected in resources for example dolls with feeding tube, hearing aids, glasses.
- Celebrate all children's achievements in ways that are meaningful to the individual child.
- Make sure that individual children can access all experiences at an appropriate developmental level with plenty of open ended activities. Ensure learning experiences are also physically accessible.
- Incorporate important circumstances for the family into planning in order to reflect the lives of individuals, for example hospital visits, new baby in family, loss, first visits to dentist, hairdressers, moving house.



Reflect

- How do key persons and the Inclusion Coordinator make sure that they know what is happening for individual children and share that with the team?
- Does Person centred planning for disabled children and children with special educational needs make a difference and how is it shared with everyone who needs to know?
- Is diversity celebrated and explored through planned activities and seen as a positive by all staff?
- Do families have the opportunity to share their culture and skills through your planned activities and events?
- Are practitioners sensitive to the individual needs of children when talking and playing together and when planning to celebrate particular festivals or events such as Father's Day and Mothering Sunday?
- Do staff feel confident to talk about diversity with children and families?
- Do staff respect confidentiality and know what is appropriate with parents who want to talk about other children?
- How does the setting establish the best way for interventions to be carried out for the child, such as exercise, tube-feeding, Intensive Interaction?
- Are individual plans reviewed regularly and adapted in response to changes as soon as possible, for example new medication?
- Are all staff confident to talk about child development and needs?

The diversity of individuals and communities is valued and respected. All children are entitled to enjoy a full life in conditions which will help them take part in society and develop as an individual, with their own cultural and spiritual beliefs.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Setting the Standards for Learning, Development and Care for children from birth to five 2007 DfES



Inclusive relationships and partnerships

The emotional environment is created through the interactions between the adults and children and adults have an important role to ensure that it is warm and accepting of everyone. When children feel confident in the environment they are willing to try things out knowing their effort is valued.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Setting the Standards for Learning, Development and Care for children from birth to five 2007 DfES

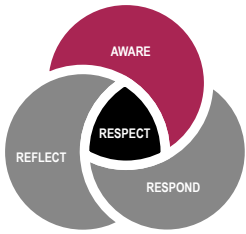
Children, parents, visitors and staff are all unique with their own set of values, beliefs, attitudes and backgrounds. Being aware of these and demonstrating genuine respect and dignity for others supports the development of inclusive relationships and partnerships. By providing equal opportunities through the setting's practices and modelling as part of daily interactions, others will be confident that equality and inclusion are promoted for everyone.



The benefits for everyone of promoting inclusive relationships and partnerships include:

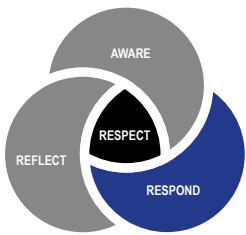
- fostering positive attitudes by celebrating diversity
- learning to value others and treating all with respect through developing tolerance and understanding
- having assurance of value and respect with confidence that discrimination or exclusion are not tolerated
- individuals feeling part of a setting community which celebrates diversity and where everyone is treated fairly
- finding out about different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs.

Working in partnership with others, especially families, is essential to developing anti-discriminatory practice in settings. Everyone should be valued as an individual, with respect and regard for their differing linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds. It is important to be aware that there are several ways of bringing up children and to remain non-judgemental about differences in others' child-rearing practices, whilst ensuring safeguarding remains central to working with others.



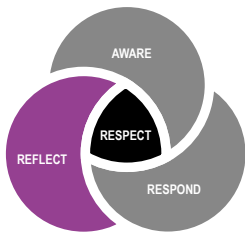
Aware

- Know the benefits of inclusive partnerships in developing anti-discriminatory practice.
- Have knowledge of cultural differences in child-rearing practices.
- Importance of recognising the diversity of the families, community and the staff team.
- Know the range of needs in order to make the setting accessible for everyone.
- The need to treat everyone as an individual with respect and regard for their different backgrounds.



Respond

- Ensure everyone is made to feel welcome in your setting and be mindful of how to sensitively support when required.
- Ensure all parents have the opportunity to discuss their child or any concerns they have, including those who work full time.
- Check that you are pronouncing and spelling others' names correctly.
- Where possible, practitioners speak community languages and translation and interpretation is arranged when necessary.
- Key information is sent home in community languages.
- Make sure written information is accessible to all parents/visitors.
- Plan trips and outings that are accessible and affordable for all families.
- Make full use of the parents' expertise, making an effort to keep them involved as much as they can be.
- Invite visitors of all ages into your setting to share their skills, knowledge and experiences.
- Ensure practitioners are aware of the main beliefs of the major religions and how these impact upon the children and families in your setting.
- Recognise that every family is unique and avoid making assumptions.
- Try to be flexible about keeping places available for children who travel seasonally, and think about providing them with 'activity packs' for while they are away.



Reflect

- Do you take time to consider the quality of relationships with parents/families, community and within the team?
- Do you discuss relationships and partnerships which staff feel could be improved and problem solve how to do this together?
- How do you ensure all children, families and visitors to the setting feel welcomed with consideration given to individual needs of families?
- Do you challenge all discriminatory comments made in relation to parents and use open and honest dialogue to deal with any issues?
- Do you take into account the needs of parents with learning difficulties?
- Does your registration/application form ask for parents' names, rather than mother's and father's names?
- Do you warmly welcome prospective parents of disabled children and demonstrate how your setting celebrates diversity?
- Do you work in partnership with other professionals?
- If a religious belief conflicts with your own beliefs, do you take care not to allow this to negatively affect your relationship with the child's family?
- Wherever possible, are staff allowed to take time off for religious holidays as part of their annual leave, and are they able to do so without feeling that they are causing inconvenience?
- Do you take account of personal, cultural and religious practices when planning staff outings?
- How do you demonstrate that families' linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds are valued and seen as positive assets to the setting?
- How do you let parents know that they can always make their feelings, views and opinions known to the staff, and that these will be dealt with respectfully and taken seriously?

At the heart of any positive working relationship lies a genuine respect for the families of the children in your setting. It recognises that the family and parents in particular are the most important element in a child's life.

A Guide for working with parents of children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) 4 Children (p4)



Inclusive environments and approaches

Inclusive environments and approaches develop through a process of responding to and embracing diversity. It involves reflecting on practice and provision, giving careful consideration to the indoor and outdoor environment, resources provided and approaches used.

A rich and varied environment support children's learning and development. It gives children the confidence to explore and learn in a secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces.

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Setting the Standards for Learning, Development and Care for children from birth to five 2007 DfES

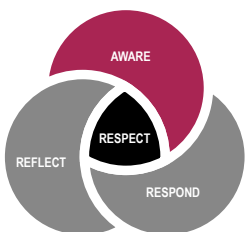
The way in which adults interact and use the environment is fundamental. Through their interactions they convey messages about how they value diversity and provide important models for children about using and valuing the diversity of resources in their environment. Ensuring that resources reflect the diversity of families and backgrounds and that they are actively used in positive and informed ways, supports understanding of diversity and the setting's commitment to inclusion.



The benefits for everyone of developing inclusive environments and approaches include:

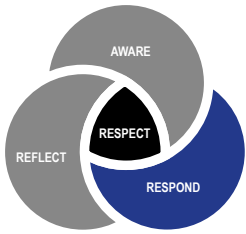
- removing barriers to children’s learning and ensuring play opportunities are accessible to all children
- developing and understanding of a variety of cultures, diverse backgrounds and a range of family groupings
- respecting and valuing the range of linguistic backgrounds
- developing a positive attitude to diversity
- creating positive images that reflect the diversity of society.

The process of regularly reflecting on and auditing the environment provides a useful way of considering how the setting is developing an inclusive environment. This helps the setting to clearly communicate its commitment to equality and diversity.



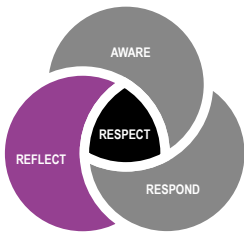
Aware

- Children have a right to equal access and full participation in all the available opportunities for learning, experiences and resources.
- The need to remove barriers to learning and ensure that play opportunities are accessible to all children.
- That adults have an essential role providing good role models for children to promote involvement and participation.
- Understanding the importance of reflecting diversity in all resources and valuing and celebrating diversity through interactions.



Respond

- Provide displays that value and celebrate diversity showing people from diverse backgrounds, family groupings, ethnicity and cultures.
- Ensure books and resources have positive images of disabled children and adults, reflect cultural and ethnic diversity and reflect a variety of family groupings including same gender relationships.
- Use pictures showing positive role models including people from a range of ethnic backgrounds and both sexes participating in a full range of professions.
- Provide songs, rhymes and musical instruments from a wide range of cultures.
- Have dolls and puppets that reflect a variety of ethnic backgrounds with realistic skin colours and features.
- Provide a variety of opportunities and resources for role play and have dressing up clothes and cooking utensils that reflect the variety of cultures.
- Provide resources that appeal to the full range of senses so children can explore through all their senses.
- Provide a range of flexible and open ended resources that encourage exploration and experimentation.
- Ensure there is adequate space for children to move round the environment taking account of the range of mobility and physical skills.
- Ensure there are choices of more active areas and quieter spaces.
- Ensure boys and girls have equal access to all activities and resources.
- Celebrate and acknowledge different faiths and cultures.
- Invite individuals from all parts of the community into your setting.
- Introduce foods from different cultures at snack time and during cooking activities.
- Provide a language rich environment that reflects community languages for example in books, audio stories, multilingual signs and welcome posters.
- Value children's home languages and learn and use a few words from home language.
- Support parents who have English as an additional language to access language in the environment.



Reflect

- Does the environment provide for individual needs and full access to all learning opportunities to ensure participation for all children?
- How do you adapt your provision to support difference and meet diverse needs of children and adults?
- How often do you audit the environment and do you use tools such as the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS), Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS) and Sustained Shared Thinking and Emotional Well-being Scale (SSTEW)?
- How do you introduce the diversity of culture, customs and family groupings in everyday learning?
- How does your environment and interactions demonstrate that the setting values families' linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds?
- How do you celebrate the diversity of the setting's community?
- Do you take active steps to ensure that resources in all areas of learning are inclusive and reflect ethnic, cultural and family diversity?



Glossary of terms

Additional Needs

In Tower Hamlets the Integrated Early Years Service use the term 'additional needs' instead of 'special educational needs' (used in the SEND Code of Practice 2015) in order to avoid language which labels children as different or separate from other children.

Ageism

Prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of a person's age.

Disability

Where a person has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

Disablism

This term refers to prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of disability.

Family

This term is used to refer to any combination of two or more persons who are bound together by ties of mutual consent, birth and/or adoption or placement. In the context of this guidance, a family will include children. Each family is self-defined: i.e. the family members decide who makes up "our family".

Homophobia

Dislike of or prejudice against homosexual people.

Institutional racism

This is the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.

Racism

This is conduct, words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their culture, nationality or ethnic origin. It can be subtle or overt, intentional or unwitting. It can be personal, for example name calling, abuse, harassment or violence.

Stereotyping

This term refers to labelling people in an over-generalised way based upon their belonging to a particular group.

Equal opportunities

Equality of opportunity is about treating all people fairly, with dignity and respect, in order to maximise their chances of success in all areas of life. Providing equal opportunities means preventing or taking action against discrimination on the grounds of any difference.

Parents

This term is used throughout to refer to parents and carers. The use of the plural does not imply an expectation that there will be two parents or carers, nor is there an assumption that two parents be of the opposite sex.

Harassment

The Equality Act 2010, defines harassment as, unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person, or in a way that is sexual in nature.

Victimisation

The Equality Acts defines victimisation as:

- Treating a person unfavourably because they are taking (or might be taking) action under the Equality Act or supporting somebody who is doing so.
- Discrimination by someone who wrongly perceives them to have a protected characteristic.
- Discrimination because they are associated with a person with a protected characteristic. This includes the parent of a child with additional needs or someone who is caring for another person.

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4 Children ***Guide for working with parents of children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)***

Links and other sources of information

BBC Schools and Religion Resources

Information about customs and cultures can be found from these sites.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions>

Developing Inclusive Play - Barnardos

'I want to Play Too' - Developing inclusive play and leisure for disabled young children and young people.

www.barnardos.org.uk/i_want_to_play.pdf

Disabled Go is a free website that lists venues and provides information about levels of accessibility.

www.disabledgo.com/towerhamlets

Diversity In Diction: A Guide to the appropriate use of Language

A guide to appropriate use of language in relation to the equality strands developed by the TUC

[www.srtrc.org/uploaded/language%20guide\(1\).pdf](http://www.srtrc.org/uploaded/language%20guide(1).pdf)

Equality Act 2010 can be found at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

KIDS are a national charity providing a wide range of support services to disabled children, young people and their families.

www.kids.org.uk

Pre-School Learning Alliance

www.pre-school.org.uk

Stonewall

Resources include posters, stickers and other resources to highlight Different Families, Same Love, guidance on challenging homophobic language and much more.

www.stonewall.org.uk

The Learning Exchange - Family Action's network for schools and childcare providers in England.

Family Action was funded by the Department for Education in 2015-16 to support early years settings to develop inclusive school-based childcare provision for 0-5s with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

<http://www.learning-exchange.org.uk/>