**Equality and Diversity Policy**

Liberty in the Wild Ltd



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| **Approved by:** | Kamilla Woodburn-Minott and Liz Crowford |  |
| **Last reviewed on:** | April 2024 | |
| **Next review due by:** | April 2025 | |

**Our Vision and Aims for Equality and Diversity**

At Liberty in the Wild, our core values are Nothing Ventured, Nothing Gained...Never forgotten. We will treat everyone fairly; celebrating and meeting different needs so that all members of our centre community are free to live, learn and achieve their potential.

We aim to:

* Maintain and promote a working partnership between the centre, parents and community which fosters respect, honesty, truth, co-operation and tolerance
* Help the children understand the world in which they live, have mutual respect for the values of others and work together as a team
* To ensure that everyone, whatever their needs and capabilities, is included and catered for
* To value each individual and recognise and respond to the needs of all children
* **Defining Equality and Diversity**

**2.1 Equality**

Equality is about fairness and equality of opportunity and advancing equality of opportunity involves treating people differently. People should not be treated the same.  Some people may need extra help or adjustments to be part of the centre community; this includes teachers, support staff, administration or cleaning staff employed at the centre as well as pupils, parents/carers and the advisory board.

Relating to the Equality Act (2010) there are nine ‘protected characteristics’ these are:

* age
* disability
* gender reassignment
* marriage / civil partnership
* pregnancy / maternity
* race
* religion and belief
* sex
* sexual orientation

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

Under the general duty centre must exercise ‘due regard’ in respect of the protected characteristics to:

* Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
* Advance equality of opportunity
* Foster good relations between different groups

**2.2 Diversity**

Diversity is about valuing people as individuals and learning from our differences. Our differences can be visible and non-visible.  Promoting diversity we can meet difference needs creatively to ensure opportunities are available to all and potential is fulfilled.  Promoting a diversity friendly centre culture we are able to meet our centre’s aims and objectives more efficiently.

Culture is about the way we behave towards one another – the directors, advisors, all employees in the centre, parents/carers, pupils and the whole centre community. It is about how we treat one another and respect our differences.  Promoting diversity and a diversity friendly culture helps to create a more productive centre community.

* **Purpose and Scope of the Policy**

This policy sets out Liberty in the Wild's commitment to promoting equality and diversity.

We believe that it is our responsibility to promote equality and diversity wider than the nine characteristics (areas) covered by legislation.  We work to remove barriers and we will not unfairly discriminate on any grounds.

We do this by:

* Making appropriate changes to teaching resources
* Supporting children’s emotional needs through play therapy and drawing and talking therapy
* Providing a curriculum, which promotes positive understanding of different characteristics, recognises the contribution that individuals and groups with protected characteristics make to society, and challenges stereotyping and discrimination
* Monitoring and reviewing of this policy will take place annually and will be made accessible through the centre website or will be made available in an alternative format as requested

The policy applies to:

* The Directors
* Advisory board
* Staff
* Parents/carers
* Pupils (as appropriate)
* Visitors
* Volunteers
* Work experience
* Multi-agency Professionals
* Contractors
* **Roles and Responsibilities**

All members of Liberty in the Wild's community, members of the advisory board, staff, pupils, parents/carers and visitors all have a part to play in implementing this policy, promoting diversity and equality, challenging inappropriate behaviour or practice to remove barriers and avoiding discrimination.

To promote the understanding of this responsibility will:

* Ensure all Stakeholders are made fully aware of our Equality and Diversity Policy and how it affects their work
* Ensure pupils and visitors to our centre are clear about the expectations to our commitment to promoting equality and diversity
* Provide training/development and updates as appropriate
* Review our equality objectives and actions to ensure all relevant activity remains relevant and meets the identified needs and priorities of our centre

In addition, the Directors have the responsibility for overseeing, agreeing, monitoring and reviewing of the centre’s equality objectives, and related activity.

**4.1 Breaches of Policy**

Liberty in the Wild Ltd views any form of discrimination as a serious act of misconduct. Any allegation of a breach in the policy will be investigated by the Directors or where appropriate, the board of advisors.  This may lead to disciplinary or other appropriate action being taken.

* **Monitoring and review**

Liberty in the Wild Ltd has specific duties under the Equality Act (2010) to publish information about the diversity of our centre community and the work we are doing to promote equality.

We will review this information annually.

* **Bullying and Diversity incidents**

**6.1 Pupils**

Liberty in the Wild Ltd believes all pupils should be safe and feel valued for themselves, whatever characteristics they may have. Bullying and harassment of pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors by pupils on the basis of their identity (including a perceived characteristic, and by association with a protected characteristic) is unacceptable.  Incidents will be logged, investigated and appropriate actions taken to prevent future incidents and to support the victim as outlined in the centre’s anti-bullying Policy.

**6.2 Staff and advisory board**

Liberty in the Wild Ltd views any form of discrimination undertaken by adults as serious acts of misconduct. Any such breaches could result in disciplinary action being taken and in the case of harassment, might call for police involvement.

* **Diversity Complaints**

Liberty in the Wild Ltd takes seriously all complaints; where a complaint is related to equality/diversity issues, the centre procedure for dealing with complaints will apply. This procedure will be made accessible through the centre website or will be made available in an alternative format as requested.  Complaints should be made to the Directors or Chair of the Advisory Board.