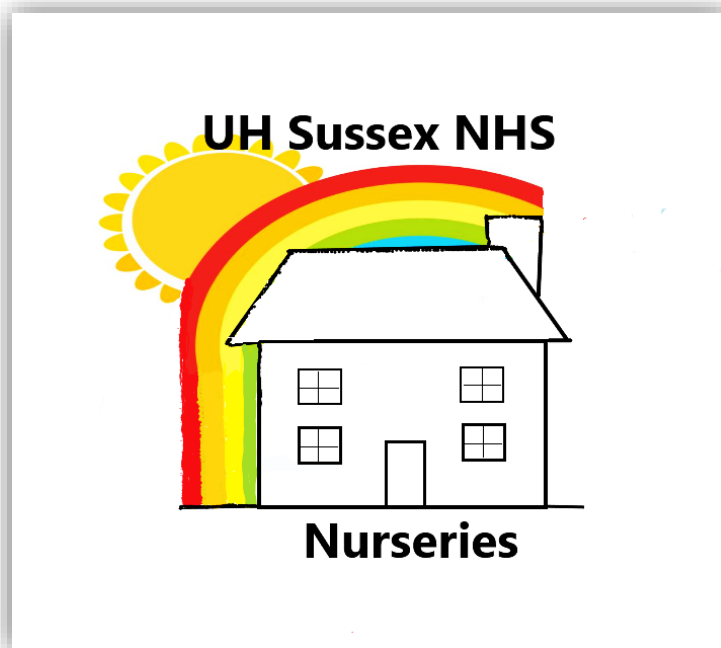


TRUST POLICY

Nursery Handbook – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy



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2.0				

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1. Policy Statement

'The EYFS is about how children learn, as well as how they learn. Effective practice is a mix of different. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other and through adult-guided learning'.

(page 7 EYFS Statutory Framework 2025)

'Providers must have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities'

(3.76 EYFS Statutory Framework 2025)

Equality: Ensuring that individuals or groups regardless of personal characteristics are not treated differently or less favourably to enable them to have the same outcomes.

Diversity: Understanding and recognising that each individual is unique. To respect and celebrating differences in ethnicity, race, religious beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status and physical abilities.

Inclusion: Creating a nursery environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected and valued. To strive at eliminating barriers to support all participation in learning.

Reference of legislation and statutory guidance to support practice in early years settings:

- Equality Act 2010 – The legal framework protects individuals and promotes equality to all. It outlines the nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework 2025 – This is to ensure that all early year's providers promote equal opportunity to learn and develop in an anti-discriminatory environment and anti-discriminatory teaching
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) outlines the Rights of Children, including the access to education and the protection of discrimination.
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2014)

2. Our Aims

University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust workplace nurseries work in accordance with the Trust's Workforce Equality and Inclusive Services Policy. The nurseries believe that as a provider of childcare it has responsibility to provide an environment in which all children can thrive in their learning and development, where they feel their contributions are respected and valued.

We aim to treat all children and adults as their own person valuing their contribution to the setting and committed to actively oppose any form of discrimination.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is a thread that runs through our nurseries, we promote positive role models, by our use of language, teaching and celebrations. All children will have the opportunity to play in an environment that embraces diverse ethnic and cultural groups, non-stereotypical play and an environment that is safe and accessible for the disabled.

We will provide a secure and accessible environment where every child can feel safe, secure and equal.

Our nurseries will promote a non-stereotyping environment where dignity, respect and understanding is at the core of our care and teaching.

The Nursery offers places to all families who work for the Trust and other local Health Authority Services and the general public.

UHSussex NHS FT is committed to equal opportunities both in relation to employment and the delivery of the service it provides.

All Nursery job vacancies will be advertised through the Trusts career page, NHS Jobs website and recruitment platforms such as INDEED.

The nursery will appoint the best person for the position, and all applicants will be treated equally and fairly.

The commitment to implementing the nurseries equal opportunities policy will form part of the job description.

The nursery staffs recognise the importance of their role by promoting an understanding of the principles of equality and freedom from discrimination on the grounds of nationality, religion, culture, race, gender, sexuality, physical ability, marital and parental status, health, social class or age.

3. Nursery Admission

Our setting is a workplace setting open to all NHS staff. We have a small number of places for general public use.

We advertise our service widely.

We base our admission policy on a fair system (please refer to our Admission Policy)

We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion or social background, such as being a member of a Travelling community or an asylum seeker

We do not discriminate against disabled children. Consideration needs to be given to any reasonable adjustments required to include any child who may have a disability or special educational needs

4. Provision and Family Partnership

UHSussex Nurseries believe that engaging with families establishes strong collaborative relationship. We welcome all family structures respecting the unique value each one brings.

During the admission process to our nurseries, we will spend time asking for information about the family structure, spoken language at home and preferred language used in the nursery. We will discuss the family's beliefs, values and celebrations so we can respect and acknowledge these within our planning of the curriculum.

We welcome children with Special Educational Needs and value the contribution they bring to our settings. We believe with the support of the family as the primary carer we can respond to each child's unique strengths, interests, abilities and needs by creating opportunities to enable them to thrive and achieve.

5. Provision and Practice

The nursery staff will furthermore use the Early Years Statutory Framework (EYFS) to demonstrate:

- All children, regardless of race, religion, gender, disability or social status will be cared for equally.
- We are committed to providing positive, learning and a loving environment, free from prejudice, discrimination and fear in which all children and their families feel accepted, respected, valued and nurtured.
- Monitoring our actions and language regarding working with all the children's parents and visitors, other professionals and each other.
- Responding to discriminatory behaviour remarks professionally and appropriately. When this does occur, it will be dealt with in a sensitive manner; the feelings of the victim[s] and the person[s] who is responsible will be discussed to overcome their prejudices. Parent/carers of all children concerned will be informed of such incidents, although the children involved will not be named.
- Providing when necessary written information in alternative languages or alternative formats such as Braille if required.

- Nursery staff will be aware that some children have additional needs and are proactive in ensuring action is taken when a child is identified. The nursery staff will refer to the Special Educational Needs and Disability policy.
- The Nurseries have individual 'Local Offer' document available in the nursery and on our website to support children and their families with additional SEND support
- The nursery recognises the importance of training as a key factor in the implementation of effective equal, diverse and inclusive policy with staff.

6. Care and Education

This policy aims to ensure that all children benefit from quality care, teaching and learning to enable all children to reach their potential. We believe that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is at the core of our nurseries.

- We will provide an environment that is accessible to all to enrich their learning opportunities
- Include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity
- Equipment, such as books, posters, displays and other resources will reflect a variety of cultures and abilities to promote self-identities. These will endeavour to enhance the child's self-image and home/life experiences, giving children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity in our multi-racial society.
- We will show respectful awareness of all the special days and major events in the lives of the children at the nursery and in our society as a whole. We welcome diversity of backgrounds from which children come. We will aim to acknowledge all festivals which are celebrated by the families involved within the nursery and if a family who celebrates a festival which is not familiar to the nursery, they will be invited to share their festivals if they wish.

Children will be encouraged to welcome a range of different festivals, together with stories, celebrations and special foods and clothing as part of diversity of life.

- Bilingualism and multilingualism are seen as positive attributes to learning. We are aware of the importance for a child to maintain their home language, therefore we will find out about the languages our families speak and provide educational resources to support development in home language. All children regardless of their stage of learning English as an additional language will have full access to the EYFS curriculum. If required, we will use the home language script in the nursery on labels to identify areas of play and we will encourage the involvement of parents in developing resources.

- The nurseries will endeavour to meet medical, cultural, religious and dietary needs as well as respecting personal/lifestyle choices. Snacks and party teas will also reflect the cultural, religious and dietary needs of all children. Should you wish your child not to participate in birthday celebrations or festive celebrations please inform the nursery manager when your child is first admitted into the nursery. If staffing levels permit, your child will be cared for separately whilst celebrations take place. On some occasions this may not be possible and therefore you will be requested to make alternative arrangements for your child. The nursery staff will inform you in advance when celebrations occur.
- Nursery equipment and play materials will also be provided to extend the children's knowledge and development skills. The equipment will be used in such a way that will not stereotype according to gender, disability, social status, and will reflect the multi-cultural/multilingual community in a positive way.
- Encouraging children through play equipment and activities to explore acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.
- The EYFS Curriculum in the nurseries will endeavour to be Non-Gender Specific. Resources will be closely monitored to see that they do not rely on gender stereotypes.

Nursery staff will use language demonstrating non-gender specific roles such as Police Officer, Fire Fighter and use resources to show equality of gender in professional roles such as a Doctor, Nurse, Scientist and Construction Industry.

- Nursery staff will respect family structures and use language and resources that does not indicate a 'family' means two heterosexual members. Staff will support children to feel confident in their exploration of roles and gender for example Daddy stays at home and looks after me whilst Mummy is at work.
- Language used in documentation and information leaflets does not indicate that a family means two parents, or a mother and father.
- Nursery staff will avoid using gender specific language, however the referral of 'Boys' or 'Girls' may occur during circle time discussions.
- Ensure the EYFS curriculum values and celebrates Identity and Diversity.
- Nursery staff and children will not be denied fair and equal treatment of their gender identity.

Learning Through Play and Non-Gender Play

Young children enjoy role-play and dressing up which is normal and healthy exploration. By exploring different roles helps a child to learn about the world, relate to other people and understand 'themselves' better.

- The nurseries will endeavour to provide resources which reflect non-gender specific roles.
- Encourage both boys and girls to feel confident in their exploration of the nursery role play area and not give gender specific roles.
- Where possible Nursery staff to avoid using gender specific language and avoid grouping boys/girls together or referring to resources that are 'gender specific'

7. Employment

'Providers must follow their legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 including the fair and equal treatment of practitioners regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation'

3.29 EYFS Statutory Framework 2025

University Hospitals Sussex NHS Trust will ensure that recruitment, progressions and management processes comply with Equality law and avoid bias.

- Posts are advertised on University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust website, NHS Jobs and other recruitment engines such as INDEED.
- All applicants are judged against criteria required, outlined in the Post's advert, Job Description and Job Specification.
- The shortlisting process is a minimum of two senior managers scoring against the specific criteria.
- The interview process requires the candidate to spend time being observed in a playroom interacting with staff and children.

There is also a formal interview of specific questions relating to the role and the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

For roles of a higher position further assessments will be required such as literacy / mathematical and I.T tasks.

- Candidates may be required to attend a second interview.
- All job descriptions include a commitment to valuing equality, inclusion and respecting diversity as part of their specifications.

- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post. The NHS has 6 pre-employment check
 - Identity checks
 - Criminal record checks (from the Disclosure and Barring Service)
 - Work health assessments
 - Professional registration and qualification checks
 - Right to work checks standard
 - Employment history and reference checks (minimum of 3 years)
- There are clear routes for staff to request 'Reasonable Adjustments' (Disability Policy, Access to Work & Reasonable Adjustments Guidance)
- To provide safe routes to raise concerns about discrimination, exclusion or unfairness. The Trust has a Speak Up Guardian and Freedom to Speak Up Policy which protects individuals under the Employment Rights Act 1996, and as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Staff have training opportunities to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practice.
- Employees of the nurseries to adhere to all University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust Policies and Ofsted.

8. Links to other Trust policies

UHSN006 Nursery Handbook - Admissions Policy

UHSN015 Nursery Handbook - Learning, Play and Care Policy

UHSN031 Nursery Handbook - Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy