**Policy on Equal Opportunities**

**Children**

Monique’s nursery aims to demonstrate through its work that it positively values and respects children of all ages, ethnic origins, racial groups, religions, cultures, language or abilities. Children of all ages and genders are positively encouraged by staff to participate in all activities.

We aim to develop healthy, balanced children who have not had limitations imposed upon them as the result of discrimination or stereotyping.  We believe that children who have had the broadest possible range of experiences, within their capabilities, develop into confident and well-balanced individuals who are able to tackle new experiences and challenges with assurance, curiosity, the expectation of success, and an eagerness to learn.  At the nursery, all the children are treated equally and, regardless of gender, race, religion, culture, special need, language or colour, their needs are identified and met as individuals.  Every child has the opportunity and is encouraged to play with various types of toys and activities, has access to a broad and balanced curriculum and participates in all types of appropriate play including individual and group play, active and quiet play, with no stereotyping in any area.

We consider it important to provide a range of experiences and an environment that will instil in the children a positive outlook towards people in our society whom they may see as different from themselves.  Children are encouraged to work with activities appropriate to their needs and preferences – regardless of age, sex, culture or religion.

* Equipment, play materials and images are chosen with the differing needs of children in mind and reflects positively the different groups within the society.

* The building can be adapted if necessary for example ramps for a wheel chair

* The classroom shelves are on the height of children and even a child on wheel chair can access each activity independently.

* If a child has a medical condition, staff receive appropriate training and follow a care plan for the child

* A Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) board can be used to support child in their learning as well as additional support, such as activities set out by a Speech and Language Therapist.

* Books are chosen to meet all the children’s ages and abilities and to reflect the many differing lifestyles in our society.

The Montessori teaching method at Monique’s include children learning to tolerate, respect and celebrate each other’s differences and develop an understanding of diversity beyond their immediate family experience through a range of activities that teach them effectively about people in the wider world. For example parents of different culture are called in the setting to celebrate their festivals and culture with our children.

* Children with additional needs and disabilities are integrated into the setting. Staff make a conscious effort to view the child first, rather than viewing the area of special need. Children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are used as working documents and parents contribute to these plans

We aim to give all our children the opportunity to succeed and reach the highest level of personal achievement.  We also make on going assessments of each child’s progress; EYFS Progress charts are completed three times a year, and the Leuven Scales of Well-Being and Involvement are conducted at regular times throughout the year.  Staff use this information when planning future activities, enabling them to take into account the abilities of all children in the setting.

 Staff ensures that children:

* Feel secure and know their contributions are valued
* Appreciate and value the differences they see in others
* Take responsibility for their own actions
* Participate safely in clothing that is appropriate to their religious beliefs
* Are taught in a way that allows them all to experience success
* Endeavour to use a range of activities and materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
* Have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles
* Have challenging targets that enable them to succeed
* Are encouraged to participate full, regardless of disabilities or medical needs
* Both boys and girls have equal opportunity and are actively encouraged to use all activities.
* Acknowledge festivals celebrated by families in our community and in the wider society through stories, activities, foods and clothing which reflect the diversity of life.

When the attainment of a child falls significantly below the expected level (evidenced through observation and Progress Trackers), staff enable the child to succeed by planning work that is in line with that child’s individual needs.  Where the attainment of the child significantly exceeds the expected level of attainment, staff use appropriate resources and learning styles to extend the breadth of work within the area or areas for which the child shows a particular aptitude. In both cases parents might be involved and help the SENCO and key person to plan the ‘targeted support’ to help in the holistic development and wellbeing of the child. If required external agencies and professionals/experts will also be involved.

**Staff**

It is the policy of this nursery to positively value and respect people regardless of their gender, ethnic origins/racial groups, religions, cultures and linguistic backgrounds.

A member of staff is employed because that person is considered to be the best person for the job.

All staff have an understanding to differential needs in a diverse and multicultural society. Staff attend relevant training where appropriate and seek advice from relevant agencies as appropriate.

Staff respect and value every child and their family, regardless of their racial or sexual background, religious, cultural, dietary, ethnic, linguistic, gender, marital status and philosophical views and/or practice

Staff have positive attitudes to difference and challenge all forms of discrimination within the setting. Staff report and record all incidents that relate to discrimination within the setting.

Risk assessments are carried out by all staff to include and support children of all needs and requirements.

Staff are keen to work in full partnership with other professionals in meeting the needs of children. Parents are fully consulted about issues regarding their child's learning and development.

Staff show sensitivity to children and consider respectfully their needs when planning activities and experiences. The SENCo, Gemma Garsden is clear about her role and disseminates information to colleagues as to how to work with, and plan for children with additional needs and disabilities. She gives her full support to the key person of the SEN child to plan activities for the holistic development and the wellbeing of the SEN child.

Care plans are used to offer additional opportunities for children and not used as preventive barriers.

**Visitors/students and/or parents**

At Monique’s all people are treated equally. This includes different ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, genders, sexual orientations, religious beliefs, educational background or any other aspect of a person’s life.

Discrimination is unacceptable at Monique’s and will not be tolerated. Any individuals (children, staff and parents) who feel discriminated against will receive the full support of the setting.

Festivals and religious events are celebrated and acknowledged respectfully. Monique’s invites parents of different cultures to the setting to celebrate their festivals e.g. Diwali, Chinese New Year, Hanukah. Monique’s believes that this experience will help the children value difference as being positive and accept all differences as an integral part of the daily activities and experiences. This is in support of our Prevent Duty and British Values Policy, which promotes tolerance.