



Inclusion Policy

Policy Statement

Grace Park Montessori values and respects the ability, individuality and cultural background of all children by providing each child with the opportunities they need to reach their full potential as active learners within an inclusive ethos/culture. We aim to actively promote equality of access and participation and eliminate discrimination on grounds of, gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Travelling Community. This policy represents the agreed principles and commitment for inclusion, in line with Early Childhood Care and Education National Inclusion Charter.

Principle

This policy is underwritten by the *Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations, 2016* and by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Articles 29 & 30), the Disability Act 2005 and the Special Needs Legislation – EPSEN Act 2004.

Rationale

We are committed to working in partnership with parents to support children's ability, identity, cultural background and sense of belonging. We support families in their parenting role and respecting their values and beliefs about childrearing. We support children in respecting difference and we foster each child's critical thinking in order to confront bias and discrimination. We implement a curriculum that meets the individual needs and emerging interests of the child under *Síolta, The National Quality Framework* (2006) and *Aistear: The National Curriculum Framework* (2009) and we respond to children's diverse and individual learning needs and styles through an emerging curriculum

Procedure

All staff will be mindful that early childhood practitioners are role models for the children and the early childhood service. Children will do as we do.

We welcome all children regardless of ability, disability, medical needs, family responsibility, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, language, sexuality, religion or belief, gender, multiple birth status, family status etc. and aim to provide play and learning opportunities, experiences and activities in which all children can participate.

We aim to provide a stimulating, challenging and inclusive environment where all children can fully participate explore, play and learn together. We want all children to have the best possible learning opportunities and experiences. We welcome and actively promote inclusive practices and diversity, aiming to make the preschool accessible to all families who wish to use it.

All children in Grace Park Montessori are supported to:

Have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles

Feel secure and know that their contributions are valued

Participate fully, having particular regard for and being cognizant of children with a variety of disabilities

Respect the purpose for which other children's aids or assistive technology are intended.

Know they belong and are valued as unique individuals and feel strong and confident about their identity

Know their cultural backgrounds are respected and valued and learn in groups that allow them all to experience success

Engage with materials and experiences that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds, gender and ability (visitors, books, music, musical instrument, cooking activities, craft, clothing, multicultural dolls, multicultural jigsaws, games, play equipment, posters and other props.

Families attending the centre are supported to

Consult with the service about the care of each child to minimize conflict between the service's philosophy and family values.

Be involved in policy and procedure development to ensure cultural sensitivities are included.

Participate in the service's programme and to introduce their culture's food, art, music, language, celebrations and dress to the other children in the service.

Dealing with Instances of Discrimination

The first step in handling incidents involving discrimination is to recognize and acknowledge what is happening. All children are informed that name-calling or physically hurting someone is unacceptable.

When an incident occurs (a hurtful remark is made) the children are encouraged to learn from the incident. The response to the incident will reference the rules of the pre-school, as appropriate.

Staff will endeavour to determine the underlying reason for incidents involving exclusion or conflict.

Staff will recognize when it is an 'adult' issue (repeating what they've heard) and will identify appropriate actions for addressing the issue with the child's parents or guardians.

An incident should be considered from the perspective of all individuals involved. If necessary, appropriate actions will be taken, at circle time or in group discussions in order to address incidents witnessed by children who were not involved. By showing empathy and by expressing our feelings appropriately we help children to express their feelings.

Any person who believes that he or she is discriminated against can follow the procedures set out in our Complaints Policy. This policy should be read in conjunction with our:

- Staff Training Policy
- Supervision policy and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints policy

The Inclusion Co-Ordinator within our service is: Jozefa (Jo) Chrobak

Signed by: _____

**Józefa Chrobak
Directress**

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| Reviewed on: | 14 January 2023 |
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