

## Valuing Diversity Policy Statement

First Step is committed to making sure it provides equality of opportunity through service delivery and employment. First Step's approach to Equality and Diversity is based on the principle of inclusion (increasing the diversity of people actively involved in and contributing to the development of sustainable communities).

First Step as part of the community, will aim to influence, promote and maintain the equal treatment of all members within its community.

First Step will ensure that our services are fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children and families. We recognise that children and their families come from diverse backgrounds. All families have needs and values that arise from their social and economic, ethnic and cultural or religious backgrounds.

Children grow up in diverse family structures that include two parent and one parent families. Some children have two parents of the same sex. Some children have close links with extended families of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, while others may be more removed from close kin, or may live with relatives or foster carers.

Some children have needs that arise from disability or impairment, or may have parents who are affected by disability or impairment. Some children come from families who experience social exclusion or severe hardship; some have to face discrimination and prejudice because of their ethnicity, the languages they speak, their religious or belief background, their gender or their impairment.

We understand that these factors affect the well-being of children and can impact on their learning and attainment. Our service is committed to anti-discriminatory practice, to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families. We aim to:

- provide a secure and accessible environment in which all of our children can flourish and in which all contributions are considered and valued;
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse family structures, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people;
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity;
- challenge and eliminate discriminatory actions;
- make inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities of the setting;  
and
- foster good relations between all communities.