**Inclusion and Equality Policy - Exploring Nature**

**1. Introduction**
At Exploring Nature, we are committed to creating an inclusive, respectful, and supportive environment where everyone is treated equally, regardless of their background, identity, or individual needs. We believe that nature-based learning should be accessible to all children, families, and individuals, and we aim to foster a sense of belonging for everyone involved in our sessions.

We are dedicated to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of our work, including our activities, communication, and interactions. This policy outlines our commitment to inclusion and equality, and the steps we take to ensure that our programs are open, fair, and welcoming to all.

**2. Equality of Opportunity**
Exploring Nature is committed to providing equal opportunities to all individuals, ensuring that everyone has access to our outdoor learning sessions regardless of:

* Race, ethnicity, or national origin
* Disability or special educational needs (SEN)
* Gender, gender identity, or gender expression
* Age
* Religious or cultural background
* Sexual orientation
* Socioeconomic status
* Any other characteristic that could lead to discrimination or exclusion.

We aim to ensure that all participants, regardless of their background or personal circumstances, are able to engage with and enjoy our programs fully. We are committed to adapting our services to meet the needs of participants and remove any barriers to participation.

**3. Accessibility**
We recognize that individuals have different needs, and we are committed to providing accessible learning opportunities for all. This includes making reasonable adjustments to ensure that all participants can fully engage in our outdoor activities, whether they have physical, sensory, learning, or other specific needs. We will work closely with parents, carers, and guardians to ensure that appropriate support is in place for participants who require additional assistance.

Our outdoor spaces, activities, and resources are regularly assessed to ensure they are safe, accessible, and suitable for all participants.

**4. Creating an Inclusive Environment**
We believe that inclusion goes beyond simply providing access to our sessions. We aim to create a welcoming, nurturing, and respectful atmosphere where all participants feel valued and supported. This includes:

* Encouraging diverse perspectives, experiences, and voices in our sessions.
* Fostering positive relationships among participants and between participants and staff.
* Ensuring that all activities are designed to be engaging and accessible to everyone, regardless of ability.
* Promoting an understanding of different cultures, backgrounds, and experiences through our outdoor learning programs.
* Providing opportunities for all children to express themselves and share their ideas.

**5. Staff Training and Awareness**
All staff and volunteers at Exploring Nature receive training on equality, diversity, and inclusion as part of their professional development. This training ensures that staff members are aware of their responsibilities in creating an inclusive environment, recognizing and addressing bias, and supporting individuals with different needs. Staff will be equipped to manage any issues related to discrimination, exclusion, or inappropriate behavior and to respond effectively to the diverse needs of participants.

**6. Anti-Discrimination and Harassment**
Exploring Nature has a zero-tolerance policy toward any form of discrimination, bullying, or harassment. We believe that everyone has the right to participate in our activities without fear of being treated unfairly or disrespectfully. Discriminatory language, behavior, or actions will not be tolerated and will be dealt with immediately. We encourage all participants, parents, carers, and staff to report any concerns or incidents of discrimination so that they can be addressed promptly.

**7. Supporting Participants with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**
We are committed to supporting children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and making reasonable adjustments to ensure that our programs are fully inclusive. This may include:

* Providing additional support through trained staff or volunteers.
* Adjusting the structure of activities or sessions to suit individual needs.
* Ensuring that any physical environment or materials used are accessible.
* Maintaining close communication with parents or guardians to ensure we can meet each child's needs effectively.

We encourage parents or guardians to share any information regarding their child’s SEN requirements when booking a session so that we can tailor our approach to meet their specific needs.

**8. Challenging Discrimination and Bias**
We are dedicated to promoting equality and challenging discrimination, prejudice, and bias in all forms. We recognize that everyone has a part to play in fostering an inclusive environment, and we aim to encourage participants to develop a positive attitude towards others, regardless of their differences. This includes:

* Discussing themes of equality, fairness, and respect in our sessions.
* Encouraging understanding and appreciation of diversity in nature, people, and cultures.
* Offering opportunities for children to learn about and engage with different perspectives.

**9. Commitment to Continuous Improvement**
We are committed to regularly reviewing and improving our policies, practices, and activities to ensure that Exploring Nature remains an inclusive and equal environment for all. We value feedback from parents, carers, staff, and participants and use it to identify areas where we can improve.

**10. Reporting and Complaints**
If you feel that you or your child has been treated unfairly or excluded from our services, we encourage you to contact us directly. We take all concerns seriously and will investigate and address any complaints in a fair and timely manner. You can reach us at:

**Evelyn Bibbon**
Email: **Evelyn@exploringnature.uk**
Phone: **07942145586**

We are committed to resolving any concerns promptly and ensuring that all participants are treated with fairness and respect.

**11. Conclusion**
At Exploring Nature, we believe that every individual, regardless of background or ability, should have the opportunity to benefit from the positive experiences that outdoor learning provides. By embracing diversity and promoting equality, we aim to create a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone feels empowered to explore, learn, and grow.

Thank you for your commitment to making Exploring Nature a place of equality, diversity, and inclusion. We look forward to welcoming you and your family to our sessions!