



Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

1. Purpose & Scope

This policy governs the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) across Ringle Rainbow Nursery. AI may support administrative and professional tasks, but it must be used safely, transparently and proportionately, with appropriate human oversight. AI must never replace professional judgement, safeguarding decision-making, direct observation of children, or the relationships and interactions that underpin high-quality early years practice.

2. Context & Guidance

We have regard to:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), effective 1 September 2026
- DfE guidance on generative artificial intelligence (AI) in education
- DfE early years guidance on screen use and internet safety
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 as supplementary safeguarding good-practice guidance
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, as amended by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) guidance on AI and data protection
- Ofsted's current early years inspection framework, toolkit and guidance

These sources inform our safe, ethical and proportionate approach to AI.

3. Acceptable Uses of AI

AI may be used by authorised staff for appropriate administrative and professional support, such as drafting non-sensitive communications, summarising non-personal information, generating ideas for activities or resources, and supporting analysis where an approved system provides this functionality.

AI-generated content must always be checked by a competent member of staff for accuracy, appropriateness, bias and safeguarding implications before it is relied upon or shared. AI must not be used as a substitute for staff observations, assessment, professional judgement or decisions about a child's welfare, development, SEND needs or safeguarding.

In line with DfE early years guidance, children will not be encouraged to use generative AI tools or AI-enabled toys directly. Any future proposal for direct child use must be separately risk-assessed against current DfE guidance before introduction.



4. Transparency & Oversight

- Staff remain accountable for all work produced or supported by AI.
- AI-generated information is treated as a draft or support tool and is subject to meaningful human review.
- The nursery will be transparent with parents where AI is used in a way that materially affects the processing of their or their child's personal information.
- No significant decision about a child, parent or member of staff will be made solely by automated means without the safeguards required by data protection law.
- Personal, special category or safeguarding information must not be entered into public or unapproved external AI tools.

5. Data Protection & Privacy

- AI use must comply with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.
- Staff must follow the principles of lawfulness, fairness, transparency, purpose limitation, data minimisation, accuracy, storage limitation, integrity and confidentiality.
- A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) will be completed where proposed AI processing is likely to result in a high risk to individuals, and privacy risks will be considered before any new AI system or feature is introduced.
- Only approved systems may process nursery information. Staff must use the minimum information necessary and must not upload confidential child, family, staff or safeguarding records into unapproved AI services.
- Where automated decision-making or profiling is used, the nursery will apply the appropriate legal safeguards, including meaningful human involvement where required and routes for individuals to question or challenge decisions.
- AI-related personal data processing will be reflected in the nursery's Privacy Notice where required.

6. Equity, Bias & Safeguarding

- AI outputs may contain errors, fabricated information, inappropriate assumptions or bias and must be critically reviewed.
- AI must never determine whether a safeguarding referral should be made, whether an allegation is substantiated, or what safeguarding action should be taken.
- Any information suggesting that a child may be at risk of harm must be considered by staff and reported immediately through the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.
- Safeguarding concerns are escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Jack Nash, or Deputy DSLs Charlotte Baldock and Penny Reidy.
- Staff must not use AI to create, alter or manipulate images, audio or video of children, families or staff, or to generate material that could misrepresent a real person or event.
- Any suspected AI-related data breach, harmful content, misuse or safeguarding incident



must be reported immediately to the Nursery Manager and DSL and managed under the relevant safeguarding, data protection and incident procedures.

7. Staff Training & Responsibilities

- Staff who are authorised to use AI will receive appropriate guidance on safe use, confidentiality, data protection, accuracy, bias and safeguarding risks.
- Staff must understand the limitations of AI and verify outputs before use.
- Staff must not use personal AI accounts or unapproved AI applications to process nursery information.
- Staff remain professionally responsible for any content they approve, record or communicate, regardless of whether AI assisted in producing it.
- AI use may be discussed through supervision, staff meetings and safeguarding or data-protection reviews where appropriate.

8. Third-Party AI Providers

- New AI systems, features or providers must be approved by nursery leadership before use.
- The nursery will consider the purpose of the system, information it processes, security arrangements, data retention, international transfers, supplier terms, whether data is used to train AI models, age appropriateness, accessibility, bias, safeguarding risks and the level of human oversight.
- A DPIA and/or other risk assessment will be completed where required.
- Contracts and data-processing arrangements will be reviewed where a provider processes personal information on the nursery's behalf.
- Consent will not be treated as the only lawful basis for processing; the appropriate lawful basis will be identified for each use in accordance with data protection law.

9. Review & Governance

- This policy will be monitored by the Nursery Leadership Team and DSLs.
- AI use will be reviewed when systems, legislation, statutory guidance or safeguarding risks change and at least annually.
- Any AI system that cannot be used safely, lawfully, transparently or with appropriate human oversight will not be introduced or will cease to be used.
- Policy date: 1 September 2026.
- Next review date: 1 September 2027, or sooner if legislation, statutory guidance or nursery practice changes.



Policy date: 01/09/2026 Review date: 01/09/2027 By: P Reidy