

Inclusion and Equality Policy

EYFS STATUTORY FRAMEWORK FOR GROUP AND SCHOOL -
BASED PROVIDERS - EFFECTIVE 1 SEPTEMBER 2026

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Ringle Rainbow Nursery takes great care to treat each individual as a person in their own right, with equal rights and responsibilities to any other individual, whether they are an adult or a child. We are committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families according to their individual needs. Discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, race, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, ethnic or national origin, or political belief has no place within the setting, all staff are aware that they can and will challenge this.

A commitment to implementing our inclusion and equality policy will form part of each employee's job description. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the Leadership Team at the earliest opportunity. Appropriate steps will then be taken to investigate the matter and if such concerns are well-founded, disciplinary action will be invoked.

This policy reflects the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework effective 1 September 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 as supplementary safeguarding good-practice guidance. We recognise that inclusive, anti-discriminatory and culturally informed practice is integral to safeguarding, children's welfare and high-quality early years provision.

The legal framework for this policy is based on:

- Special Education Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 2015
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Childcare Act 2006
- Children Act 2004
- Care Standards Act 2002
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

The Ringle Rainbow Nursery staff are committed to:

- Recruiting, selecting, training and promoting individuals on the basis of occupational skills requirements. In this respect, We will ensure that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, sex, gender reassignment, disability, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and pregnancy or maternity which cannot be justified as being necessary for the safe and effective performance of their work or training
- Providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or are deemed disadvantaged according to their individual circumstances, and our ability to provide the necessary standard of care
- Striving to promote equal access to services and projects by taking practical steps, (wherever possible and reasonable) such as ensuring access to people with additional needs and by producing materials in relevant languages and media for all children and their families
- Providing a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and all contributions are valued
- Including and valuing the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality, inclusion and diversity
- Providing positive non-stereotypical information
- Continually improving our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality, inclusion and diversity
- Regularly reviewing, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive practices to ensure they promote and value diversity and difference and that the policy is effective and practices are non-discriminatory
- Making inclusion a thread, which runs through the entirety of Ringle Rainbow, for example, by encouraging positive role models through the use of toys, imaginary play and activities, promoting non-stereotypical images and language and challenging all discriminatory behaviour

Admissions/service provision

Ringle Rainbow Nursery is accessible to all children and families in the local community and further afield.

We will strive to ensure that all services and projects are accessible and relevant to all groups and individuals in the community within targeted age groups.

We will make reasonable adjustments for disabled children, parents/carers, staff and applicants where required by the Equality Act 2010. For children with SEND, we will work in partnership with parents/carers, the SENCO and relevant professionals, have regard to the SEND Code of Practice, and

ensure that children are supported to access and participate in the EYFS curriculum and nursery life as fully as possible.

Recruitment

Our recruitment practices follow the safer recruitment and suitability requirements of the EYFS and relevant legislation, with KCSIE 2026 retained as supplementary good-practice guidance. Recruitment includes appropriate suitability and background checks, clear safeguarding responsibilities, and equality and non-discrimination throughout the process. Reasonable adjustments will be considered for disabled applicants and equality monitoring may form part of our recruitment and retention strategy.

All members of the selection group will be committed to the inclusive practice set out in this policy and will have received appropriate training in this regard.

Application forms will not include questions that potentially discriminate against the grounds specified in the statement of intent.

Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.

At interview, no questions will be posed which potentially discriminate against the grounds specified in the statement of intent. All candidates will be asked the same questions, and members of the selection group will not introduce nor use any personal knowledge of candidates acquired outside the selection process. Candidates will be given the opportunity to receive feedback on the reasons why they were not successful.

Under the Equality Act 2010 you can only ask questions prior to offering someone employment in the following circumstances:

- You need to establish whether the applicant will be able to comply with a requirement to undergo an assessment (i.e. an interview or selection test)
- You need to establish whether the applicant will be able to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the work concerned You want to monitor diversity in the range of people applying for work
- You want to take positive action towards a particular group – for example offering a guaranteed interview scheme
- You require someone with a particular disability because of an occupational requirement for the job.

Health and disability considerations in recruitment

The nursery considers whether applicants are suitable to fulfil the requirements of the early years role safely and effectively. Health or disability must not be used as a reason for

unlawful discrimination. Where relevant, reasonable adjustments will be considered in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

A disability or long-term health condition does not, by itself, make a person unsuitable to work in early years. Decisions will be individual, evidence-based and focused on the intrinsic requirements of the role and safeguarding children.

Health-related questions before a job offer will only be asked where permitted by the Equality Act 2010, for example to establish whether an applicant can take part in an assessment, whether reasonable adjustments are needed, or whether they can carry out a function intrinsic to the role. Any post-offer health information will be handled confidentially.

Staff

It is the policy of Ringle Rainbow Nursery not to discriminate in the treatment of individuals. All staff are expected to co-operate with the implementation, monitoring and improvement of this and other policies. All staff are expected to challenge language, actions, behaviours and attitudes which are oppressive or discriminatory on the grounds as specified in this policy and recognise and celebrate other cultures and traditions. All staff are expected to participate in equality and inclusion training.

All staff are expected to understand and apply current safeguarding principles that promote equity and anti-oppressive practice. Staff should also be familiar with intersectional factors that may increase vulnerability, including but not limited to socio-economic status, cultural background, SEND, and experiences of trauma or neglect.

Training

We recognise the importance of training as a key factor in the implementation of an effective inclusion and equality policy. We will strive towards the provision of inclusion, equality and diversity training for all staff on a regular basis.

- Training includes updated guidance from KCSIE 2025 on recognising and addressing discriminatory behaviour or unconscious bias.
- Inclusion training will now incorporate understanding the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma-informed practice in an inclusive setting.

Early learning framework

Early learning opportunities offered in Ringle Rainbow Nursery help to encourage children to develop positive attitudes to people who are different from them. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

Practitioners also actively embed trauma-informed approaches and are encouraged to consider the role of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) in shaping children's

development and behaviour. Respecting the whole child and their unique background is at the heart of our pedagogy.

We do this by:

- Making children feel valued and good about themselves
- Ensuring that all children have equal access to early learning and play opportunities
- Reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources
- Avoiding stereotypical or derogatory images in the selection of materials
- Acknowledging and celebrating a wide range of religions, beliefs and festivals
- Creating an environment of mutual respect and empathy
- Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable
- Ensuring that all early learning opportunities offered are inclusive of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Ensuring that children whose first language is not English have full access to the early learning opportunities and are supported in their learning
- Working in partnership with all families to ensure they understand the policy and challenge any discriminatory comments made
- Ensuring the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met
- Identifying a key person to each child who will continuously observe, assess and plan for children's learning and development
- Helping children to learn about a range of food and cultural approaches to meal times and to respect the differences among them.

Information about Ringle Rainbow, its activities and their children's development will be given in a variety of ways according to individual needs (written, verbal and translated), to ensure that all parents can access the information they need.

Wherever possible, meetings will be arranged to give all families options to attend and contribute their ideas about the running of Ringle Rainbow.

Dealing with Discriminatory Behaviour

At Ringle Rainbow Nursery we do not tolerate discriminatory behaviour and take action to tackle discrimination. We believe that parents have a right to know if discrimination occurs

and what actions Ringle Rainbow Nursery will take to tackle it. We follow our legal duties in relation to discrimination and record all incidents any perceived or actual relating to discrimination on any grounds and report these where relevant to children's parents and the registering authority.

DEFINITION AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Types of discrimination

- **Direct discrimination** occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic
- **Discrimination by association** occurs when there is a direct discrimination against a person because they associate with a person who has a protected characteristic
- **Discrimination by perception** occurs when there is a direct discrimination against a person because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic
- **Indirect discrimination** can occur where a provision, criterion or practice is in place which applies to everyone in the organisation but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic and that provision, criterion or practice cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim
- **Harassment** is defined as 'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual'
- **Victimisation** occurs when an employee is treated badly or put to detriment because they have made or supported a complaint or raised grievance under the Equality Act 2010 or have been suspected of doing so.

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity.

Incidents may involve a small or large number of persons, they may vary in their degree of offence and may not even recognise the incident has discriminatory implications; or at the other extreme their behaviour may be quite deliberate and blatant.

Examples of discriminatory behaviour are:

- Physical assault against a person or group of people
- Derogatory name calling, insults and discriminatory jokes
- Graffiti and other written insults (depending on the nature of what is written)
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing badges and insignia and the distribution of discriminatory literature
- Threats against a person or group of people pertaining to the nine protected characteristics listed above
- Discriminatory comments including ridicule made in the course of discussions
- Patronising words or actions.

OUR PROCEDURES

We tackle discrimination by:

- Expecting all staff at Ringle Rainbow Nursery to be aware of and alert to any discriminatory behaviour or bullying taking place in person or via an online arena
- Expecting all staff to intervene firmly and quickly to prevent any discriminatory behaviour or bullying, this may include behaviour from parents and other staff members
- Expecting all staff to treat any allegation seriously and report it to the Ringle Rainbow Nursery Leadership Team. Investigating and recording each incident in detail as accurately as possible and making this record available for inspection by staff, inspectors and parents where appropriate, on request. The Ringle Rainbow Nursery Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that incidents are handled appropriately and sensitively and entered in the record book. Any pattern of behaviour should be indicated. Perpetrator/victim's initials may be used in the record book as information on individuals is confidential to Ringle Rainbow.
- Ensuring any online bullying or discriminatory behaviour is tackled immediately
- Informing: the parents of the child(ren) who are perpetrators and/or victims should be informed of the incident and of the outcome, where an allegation is substantiated following an investigation
- Excluding or dismissing any individuals who display continued discriminatory behaviour or bullying, but such steps will only be taken when other strategies

have failed to modify behaviour. This includes any employees where any substantiated allegation after investigation will incur our disciplinary procedures.

We record any incidents of discriminatory behaviour or bullying to ensure that:

- Strategies are developed to prevent future incidents
- Patterns of behaviour are identified
- Persistent offenders are identified
- Effectiveness of Ringle Rainbow Nursery policies are monitored
- A secure information base is provided to enable Ringle Rainbow Nursery to respond to any discriminatory behaviour or bullying.

If the behaviour shown by an individual is deemed to be radicalised, we will follow our procedure as detailed in our Safeguarding Policy in order to safeguard children and families concerned.

Ringle Rainbow Nursery staff

We expect all staff to be alert and seek to overcome any ignorant or offensive behaviour based on fear or dislike of distinctions that children, staff or parents may express.

We aim to create an atmosphere where the victims of any form of discrimination have confidence to report such behaviour, and that subsequently they feel positively supported by the staff and Leadership Team.

It is incumbent upon all members of staff to ensure that they do not express any views or comments that are discriminatory; or appear to endorse such views by failing to counter behaviour, which is prejudicial in a direct manner. We expect all staff to use a sensitive and informed approach to counter any harassment perpetrated out of ignorance.

Monitoring & Review

The Inclusion and Equality Policy is reviewed at least annually, and sooner where legislation, statutory guidance, safeguarding learning or the needs of the setting change. Staff and families are encouraged to contribute through feedback. The Leadership Team ensures that relevant changes to the EYFS, Working Together to Safeguard Children and supplementary KCSIE guidance are considered and embedded in practice.

Digital Inclusion

We are mindful of digital inequalities and the risk of exclusion through lack of access to technology or digital literacy. Where digital resources are used (including AI tools integrated into nursery systems), we ensure equitable access and inclusive representation across all content. Staff are trained to recognise bias in digital content and ensure online safety for all children.

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