

Sun Protection Policy

At Ringle Rainbow, we take every precaution necessary to provide the best possible care for all children in our care. This includes protecting children from the sun and helping them develop an understanding of sun safety.

Children and staff enjoy our outdoor spaces throughout the year. During periods of hot weather or high UV levels, however, we take additional precautions because young children may not recognise when they are becoming too hot or when their skin is being damaged by the sun.

Children can be exposed to harmful UV rays even when it is cloudy or does not feel particularly hot. However, sunlight also provides health benefits, so we aim to achieve a safe and appropriate balance between outdoor play, sun protection and children's wellbeing.

Heat and Sun-Related Health Risks

Heat-related illness can range from mild heat stress to potentially life-threatening heatstroke. The most common risks associated with hot weather are:

- dehydration
- sunburn
- heat exhaustion
- heatstroke

All staff must remain alert to signs that a child may be becoming too hot or dehydrated. Children who wear nappies may show signs of dehydration through dark urine or fewer wet nappies.

Heat Stress

Children experiencing heat stress may appear out of character or show signs of discomfort and irritability. Symptoms may become worse with physical activity and, if not addressed, can develop into heat exhaustion or heatstroke.

Staff will:

- move the child to a cooler or shaded area
- encourage the child to drink water
- reduce physical activity
- monitor the child closely
- inform the parent/carer if there are concerns about the child's wellbeing.

Heat Exhaustion

Signs of heat exhaustion can include:

- tiredness

- dizziness
- headache
- nausea
- vomiting
- excessive sweating
- pale, clammy skin
- weakness or feeling unwell

If a child shows signs of heat exhaustion, staff will:

1. Stop physical activity and move the child to a cool, shaded or indoor area.
2. Remove unnecessary clothing.
3. Encourage the child to drink cool water if they are alert and able to drink.
4. Cool the child with cool water, for example by sponging or spraying them with cool water.
5. Use cool packs wrapped appropriately around areas such as the neck and armpits where appropriate.
6. Continue to monitor the child closely.

If symptoms do not improve, are worsening, or staff are concerned about the child, medical advice will be sought.

Heatstroke

Heatstroke is a medical emergency and can be life-threatening. It can occur when the body is no longer able to regulate its temperature.

Signs of heatstroke may include:

- confusion or unusual behaviour
- lack of coordination
- seizures (fits)
- loss of consciousness
- a very high body temperature
- hot, red skin, which may be sweaty or dry
- a fast heartbeat
- fast or shallow breathing
- vomiting or diarrhoea

If staff suspect that a child is suffering from heatstroke, they will:

- call **999 immediately**
- move the child to a cool place
- remove unnecessary clothing
- begin cooling the child while waiting for emergency services
- continue to monitor the child and follow the instructions given by emergency services.

High Temperatures and UV Rays

During periods of high temperatures or high UV levels, Ringle Rainbow will follow current guidance from the NHS and GOV.UK regarding keeping children safe in hot weather.

[NHS – Sunscreen and sun safety](#)

[GOV.UK – Looking after children during hot weather](#)

During periods of high temperature and/or high UV levels, we will:

- provide regular access to drinking water
- encourage children to drink regularly throughout the day
- provide additional water breaks
- encourage children to play in shaded areas
- make use of indoor areas during the hottest parts of the day where appropriate
- avoid unnecessary strenuous physical activity during very hot weather
- encourage children to wear a suitable sun hat when outdoors
- ensure appropriate sun cream is available and applied with parental/carer permission
- monitor children for signs of overheating, dehydration and sunburn.

Where possible, outdoor activities will be planned around the hottest parts of the day and UV levels.

Sun Hats and Suitable Clothing

Children will be encouraged to wear a suitable sun hat when playing outdoors in sunny weather.

Parents/carers should provide:

- a sun hat that provides good protection for the face, ears and neck
- suitable, loose-fitting clothing
- additional protective clothing where appropriate, particularly for longer outdoor activities.

Children should not be left without appropriate sun protection during outdoor play.

Applying Sun Cream

Ringle Rainbow will provide sun cream as stated in our Fees and Admissions Policy.

The nursery sun cream will:

- be **at least SPF 50**
- be stored appropriately

- be within its recommended use period and not more than 12 months old once opened, where applicable
- be checked regularly to ensure it remains suitable for use.

Parents/carers may provide their own sun cream if they prefer.

Parent/carer-provided sun cream must:

- be **at least SPF 50**
- be clearly labelled with the child's **full name**
- be in its **original packaging**
- have the ingredients clearly displayed
- be checked to ensure it does not contain nuts or ingredients that the setting has identified as unsuitable for the child
- be within its expiry/use-by period and suitable for use.

We will not accept sun cream that has been transferred into another container or is not in its original packaging.

When will sun cream be applied?

Parents/carers are asked to apply sun cream to their child **before bringing them to nursery**, particularly during periods of high UV levels or hot weather.

Where possible, sun cream should be applied **15–30 minutes before the child goes outside**, following the instructions on the product.

At nursery, staff will apply sun cream:

- **before children go outside when sun protection is required**, if parental/carer permission has been provided
- to exposed areas of skin, following the manufacturer's instructions
- **at least every two hours when children remain outdoors**, or as directed by the specific product
- after water play, swimming or activities where the sun cream may have been washed or rubbed off
- after heavy sweating, where appropriate
- before extended outdoor activities such as forest school, where additional protection may be required.

Staff will check the child's skin and ensure that exposed areas are adequately protected before extended periods of outdoor play.

Sun cream will not replace other forms of sun protection such as shade, suitable clothing and sun hats.

Permission to Apply Sun Cream

Parents/carers will be required to complete a consent form giving Ringle Rainbow permission to apply sun cream to their child.

Parents/carers may choose for:

- Ringle Rainbow's nursery sun cream to be used; or
- their own suitable sun cream to be provided and used.

There will be a clear record of children who do not have permission to use the nursery sun cream. If staff are unsure whether a child has permission to use nursery sun cream, and the parent/carer has not provided an alternative, staff will contact the parent/carer for clarification before applying it. If sun cream cannot be applied because appropriate permission or suitable sun cream is not available, staff will take additional measures to reduce the child's exposure to direct sunlight, including using shade and suitable clothing, and will contact the parent/carer where necessary.

Staff Applying Sun Cream

When applying sun cream, staff will:

- follow the manufacturer's instructions
- wear disposable gloves or wash or sanitise their hands appropriately between children
- use a clean pair of gloves for each child
- avoid contact with the child's eyes, mouth and broken or irritated skin
- report any suspected reaction to the designated staff member and parent/carer immediately.

Children will be encouraged to participate in applying their own sun cream where developmentally appropriate, while staff will ensure that adequate protection is provided.

Water and Hydration

Fresh drinking water will be available to children throughout the day.

During hot weather, staff will:

- encourage children to drink regularly
- provide additional water breaks
- monitor children for signs of dehydration
- ensure water is readily accessible during outdoor activities
- take additional water supplies on outings and forest school activities where necessary.

Shade and Outdoor Play

Staff will encourage children to use shaded areas when playing outdoors.

During the hottest parts of the day, normally between **11am and 3pm**, children will be encouraged to play in shaded areas or, where appropriate, spend time indoors.

This may be adjusted depending on the weather, UV levels, local conditions and current NHS/GOV.UK guidance.

Outdoor play will continue wherever it can be carried out safely, as outdoor learning and physical activity are important for children's development and wellbeing.

Safeguarding and Children's Wellbeing

Outdoor play and sun safety support children's learning, particularly within **Physical Development**, while helping children develop self-care skills and an awareness of their own health and wellbeing.

Where a child shows symptoms of heat exhaustion, heatstroke, dehydration or significant sunburn, staff will assess the situation and take appropriate action.

The DSL will be informed where the child's welfare may be at risk, in accordance with the setting's safeguarding procedures.

Parents/carers will be informed of any significant concerns or incidents involving their child.

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Reviewed by: C L Baldock