**Equality & Diversity Policy**

**Purpose of Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Rainbow Nursery meets the needs of its stakeholders by ensuring equal access to the setting regardless of individual circumstances.

The nursery is aware that social and cultural circumstances can disadvantage certain groups in society. We also recognise that there is direct and indirect discrimination that can affect assessment for childcare places, recruitment, and promotion and training opportunities. Rainbow Nursery is committed to equal opportunities to meet the needs of the families that we work with, the staff that we employ and the community in which we are based through enhancing awareness and understanding of others.

The Equality Act (2010), and subsequent revisions, makes it illegal to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their race or ethnicity, their disability, gender or sexual orientation, their age or religion. Rainbow Nursery will exercise due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This will include both direct and indirect discrimination.

**Responsibility**

All members of staff have a responsibility to ensure that their own practice reflects the policies and procedures of Rainbow Nursery. In addition, all members of staff have a responsibility to identify their own training needs that may occur when working with children and young people and families.

The manager has a responsibility to ensure that all practices in the nursery adhere to this policy and the Inclusion policy. The manager also has a responsibility to ensure that where training needs have been identified, indirectly or indirectly, all members of staff have an opportunity to have these needs met.

**Child’s Experience**

All children in the nursery will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. All activities will be developed and made available in a way that offers all children the opportunity to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination - this means that there will be no activities exclusive for girls/boys or children of any race, or children excluded due to their needs. Staff will foster relationships with children that respect and appreciate their individuality, needs, culture and approach. Staff will always communicate with and about children in a respectful and positive way. Rainbow Nursery will, where possible, meet the needs of all children by putting in extra support where possible such as language interpreters, educational support or physical adjustments to the environment. Rainbow Nursery will take the approach of learning from its own community - for example where a child is experiencing a festival or important event in their home life, staff will work in partnership with the family and child to learn and appreciate this and bring the experience into nursery for others to celebrate alongside the child.

**Family’s Experience**

Rainbow Nursery will encourage the involvement of parents by making them welcome and by respecting the differences in families, their language and culture, and by supporting them to contribute in a meaningful and authentic way. We will ensure that systems are in place to allow all parents with a physical disability to access the service. We will use a variety of communication approaches in order to reach all parents. We will be sensitive to any parent with limited reading skills that impact on form filling and understanding written communications, and will support them in a manner that preserves their dignity. Translations will be used where possible. English speaking parents who have a home language that is not English may be asked to pass non-confidential information to others who share their home language, or to act as interpreters in suitable situations. A varied time, place and manner in which meetings are conducted will ensure that all families are enabled to attend, contribute and have equal opportunity to be involved in the running of the setting.

**Staff’s Experience**

Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training and any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination. All job applicants and others (such as volunteers, third party workers) will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any grounds. Rainbow Nursery will be proactive in seeking to minimise any restrictions or limitations staff may experience due to disability. We will put appropriate support mechanisms in place and where possible will make any necessary adaptations. Rainbow Nursery hosts a proactive and responsive Bullying policy and Whistle-Blowing policy to support staff who may be experiencing direct or indirect discrimination to report their concerns for investigation.

**Racism and Sexism**

Rainbow Nursery is committed to developing awareness within the setting of the needs of those who face discrimination and the effects of discrimination on society. Thus, racist, and sexist comments are dealt with in a sensitive and tactful manner in order that positive discussion promotes understanding.

Rainbow Nursery understands that different people will have different attitudes regarding racism and sexism and different understandings of what constitutes a racist or sexist action or comment. All members of staff will use their own informed judgement in deciding the way any situations are dealt with. If a member of staff is unsure as to the way they should deal with a situation, they should report the issue to the manager who will advise them on the action that should be taken.

Rainbow Nursery believes that members of staff should act as positive role models for the children, therefore if a member of staff is concerned that colleagues are behaving in an unacceptable manner regarding racism or sexism this should be reported to the manager who will deal with the issue through the appropriate channels, members of staff should note that the nursery operates a zero tolerance policy on discriminatory behaviour, any member of staff who behaves in a discriminatory manner may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

**Sexual Harassment**

Rainbow Nursery believes that all employees are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect whilst at work and when representing the setting in any capacity outside of the setting. As such we will not tolerate the sexual harassment of one employee by another. For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined as "unwanted conduct directed towards an employee by a fellow employee which is of a sexual nature, or which is based on the person's gender, and which is regarded as unwelcome and offensive by the recipient”. This may include but is not limited to:

* Unwanted Physical Contact
* Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, suggestions, or pressure to participate in social activity outside work, where is has been made clear this is not welcome
* Conduct, which is intimidating, physically or verbally abusive, including the display of explicit material, the use of sexually explicit humour and comments of a sexual nature whether directed specifically at any individual or not.
* Suggestions that sexual favours may further an employee's career or that refusal may hinder it.

Rainbow Nursery regards sexual harassment as a form of intimidation, which has the effect of insulting and demeaning the employee against whom it is directed and is therefore unacceptable. All complaints will be dealt with by the manager if appropriate who will assess the complaint and agree on the action to be taken. If the complaint relates to the manager, the member of staff is welcome to contact the Board of Directors who will assist them.

**Date Completed: October 2023**

**Review Date: October 2024**

*This policy will be monitored in line with relevant legislation and good practice guidelines.*