

Valuing Diversity and Inclusion Policy

At Kingfisher Kindergarten Ltd, we are committed to creating an inclusive, welcoming and respectful environment in which every child and family is valued, respected and supported to reach their full potential.

We recognise that children and their families come from diverse backgrounds and that each child is unique. Families may have different social, economic, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, religious, family and personal circumstances. Children may live with two parents, one parent, same-sex parents, grandparents, other relatives, foster carers or within other family arrangements. Some children may have a disability, special educational need or medical need, while others may experience disadvantage, social exclusion, financial hardship or other barriers to learning and participation.

We understand that a child's individual circumstances can affect their wellbeing, development, learning and attainment. We therefore place inclusion at the heart of our practice and are committed to removing barriers, promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that every child can participate fully in the life of the setting.

Our approach is underpinned by the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which requires providers to promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and to ensure that every child is included and supported. The current EYFS framework also requires practitioners to consider the individual needs, interests and development of each child and to be ambitious for all children.

We recognise that inclusion is the responsibility of every member of staff, not solely the responsibility of individual practitioners. We have a dedicated Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCO/SENCO) and an English as an Additional Language (EAL) Lead who provide specialist leadership, advice and support to staff, children and families.

Kingfisher Kindergarten aims to:

- provide a safe, secure, welcoming and accessible environment in which every child can flourish;
- promote equality of opportunity for all children and families
- value and respect diversity in all its forms
- recognise and celebrate children's individual identities, cultures, languages, beliefs, abilities and family backgrounds
- ensure that all children have equal access to learning, play, resources, experiences and opportunities
- identify children's individual strengths, interests, needs and developmental differences as early as possible
- provide appropriate additional support where children require it
- make reasonable adjustments and adaptations to enable children with disabilities and additional needs to participate fully
- support children with SEND through an appropriate graduated approach
- support children who speak English as an additional language (EAL)
- work in partnership with parents and carers when identifying and meeting children's individual needs
- work collaboratively with external professionals and specialist services where appropriate
- monitor children's individual developmental progress and respond promptly where additional support may be required
- challenge discrimination, stereotyping, prejudice and discriminatory behaviour
- ensure that staff understand and promote inclusive practice
- ensure that the curriculum and environment reflect the diversity of the children and communities we serve
- ensure that all children are supported to develop confidence, self-esteem, independence, resilience and a positive sense of belonging

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We recognise and celebrate the diversity of children, families and communities.

Our practice promotes an environment where:

- children feel valued, respected and listened to
- children's individual identities are recognised and celebrated
- differences are discussed positively and respectfully
- children are encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others
- children learn to recognise similarities and differences between people

- children are supported to develop empathy, kindness, respect and understanding
- discriminatory or prejudicial language and behaviour are challenged appropriately
- resources and experiences reflect a wide range of cultures, communities, abilities, identities and family structures
- all children are encouraged to participate regardless of their individual circumstances or additional needs

We recognise that equality does not always mean treating everyone in exactly the same way. Children may require different approaches, resources, adaptations or levels of support in order to access the same opportunities.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is implemented in accordance with the legislation and statutory guidance applicable to early years provision in England, including:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers. The EYFS requires equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and states that every child, including children with SEND, should be included and supported.
- Equality Act 2010, including the provisions relating to unlawful discrimination and reasonable adjustments. The Act identifies nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004.
- Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3, relating to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, including the statutory guidance relating to early years providers.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, which applies to early education and childcare settings and reinforces expectations around inclusive, anti-discriminatory cultures and challenging racism and discrimination.
- Information Sharing to Safeguard Children and Young People, including the information-sharing duty coming into force on 30 September 2026.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, where applicable.
- Relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures and guidance.

This policy will be reviewed whenever there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or national requirements.

Admissions and Access

Kingfisher Kindergarten is open and accessible to children and families within the community.

We will:

- operate a fair, transparent and accessible admissions process
- ensure that children and families are not unlawfully discriminated against
- provide information in clear and accessible language
- make reasonable adjustments where required
- consider accessibility when communicating with families
- ensure our publicity and promotional materials reflect the diversity of our community and society
- provide families with information about our approach to equality, diversity, inclusion and SEND
- work with parents and carers to understand their child's individual needs before and during admission
- take appropriate steps to enable disabled children to participate fully in the provision
- consider individual communication, sensory, physical, medical, developmental, cultural and linguistic needs
- work with relevant professionals where specialist advice is required

The setting will not unlawfully discriminate against a child or family on the basis of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Inclusive Practice

Inclusion is embedded throughout the setting and is the responsibility of all staff.

We will ensure that:

- all children are welcomed and treated with dignity and respect

- children's individual starting points are recognised
- expectations remain ambitious and appropriate for every child
- activities are adapted where necessary to enable participation
- reasonable adjustments are made for children and adults with disabilities
- the environment is reviewed regularly to identify and reduce barriers to participation
- children have equal access to resources, activities and learning opportunities
- children's interests, strengths and experiences are reflected in planning
- staff use inclusive teaching strategies and interactions
- children's individual communication methods are recognised and supported
- children are given appropriate opportunities to express their views, choices and preferences
- staff actively promote a sense of belonging for every child

The setting uses In the Moment Planning to respond to children's individual interests, developmental needs and learning opportunities. This approach supports our commitment to recognising individuality and ensuring that children receive appropriate challenge, support and extension.

SEND and Additional Needs

Kingfisher Kindergarten Ltd is committed to providing high-quality, inclusive provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The current EYFS requires early years providers to have arrangements in place to support children with SEND, and group providers are expected to identify a SENCO.

We have a dedicated SENDCO/SENCO who works alongside key persons, parents and carers and where appropriate, external professionals.

The SENDCO will:-

- coordinate the setting's SEND provision
- support staff in identifying emerging needs
- advise practitioners on appropriate strategies, adaptations and resources
- work closely with parents and carers
- monitor the effectiveness of support
- coordinate Support Plans where required
- liaise with relevant external professionals
- support referrals to specialist services
- contribute to transition planning
- ensure that reasonable adjustments are considered
- promote inclusive practice throughout the setting
- support staff development and training in relation to SEND

All staff remain responsible for ensuring that children with SEND are included in everyday learning, play and social experiences.

Early Identification and Developmental Progress

We recognise the importance of identifying emerging developmental needs at the earliest opportunity. The setting maintains an individual record of each child's developmental progress. Children's progress is monitored continuously through professional observation, interactions, assessment and knowledge of the individual child.

In addition:

- children's developmental progress is formally reviewed each term
- progress is considered in relation to the child's individual starting point, development, interests, strengths and needs
- staff identify areas of strength as well as areas where additional support may be beneficial
- parents and carers are kept informed of their child's development
- concerns are discussed with parents and carers at the earliest appropriate opportunity
- assessment information is used to inform planning and next steps
- the SENDCO and EAL Lead are involved where appropriate

- progress information is used to identify children who may require additional guidance or support
- the setting reviews the impact of any additional support provided

The EYFS identifies ongoing assessment as an important part of understanding children's interests, knowledge, skills and progress and using this information to shape teaching and learning. While the EYFS does not require written records for all day-to-day formative assessment, Kingfisher Kindergarten Ltd chooses to maintain appropriate developmental records as part of its own assessment and monitoring practice.

Support Plans

Where a child requires additional guidance, support or provision beyond the setting's universal offer, a Support Plan will be put in place.

The Support Plan will be developed in partnership with:

- the child, where appropriate
- parents and carers
- the child's key person
- the SENDCO and/or EAL Lead, where appropriate
- relevant external professionals where involved

The Support Plan will identify, where appropriate:

- the child's strengths and interests
- areas of need
- identified barriers to learning, participation or wellbeing
- desired outcomes
- agreed strategies and adaptations
- additional provision or interventions
- resources or environmental adaptations
- staff responsibilities
- specialist advice
- timescales
- review arrangements

Support will follow a graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do and Review, ensuring that provision is regularly evaluated and adapted according to the child's response and progress. The Department for Education's early years SEND guidance supports this graduated approach where a child requires more help to progress.

Support Plans will be reviewed regularly and at least termly as part of the setting's developmental monitoring, or sooner where the child's circumstances require.

Working with External Specialists

We recognise that some children may require advice or support beyond the expertise available within the setting. Where appropriate, and in partnership with parents and carers, we will engage with external professionals and specialist services to ensure that children receive appropriate support.

This may include, depending on the child's individual needs:

- the local authority Early Years SEND team or Area SENCO
- health visitors
- speech and language therapists
- occupational therapists
- physiotherapists
- paediatricians
- educational psychologists
- Portage or early intervention services
- specialist teachers
- hearing or visual impairment services
- children's social care and family support services
- other appropriate health, education or specialist professionals

The setting will implement relevant professional recommendations wherever reasonably possible and appropriate. We will work collaboratively with parents, carers and professionals to ensure that support is coordinated, appropriate and focused on positive outcomes for the child. Where information needs to be shared with external professionals, this will be undertaken in accordance with safeguarding, data protection and information-sharing requirements.

Our aim is to ensure that children receive the right support at the right time and are enabled to achieve their full potential.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We recognise and value multilingualism as an important part of children's identity and development.

The setting has a dedicated EAL Lead who supports staff in meeting the needs of children who speak English as an additional language.

We will:-

- value and respect children's home languages
- encourage families to share words, songs, stories and cultural experiences from home
- use visual prompts, gestures, objects, photographs and other communication strategies where appropriate
- ensure that children have meaningful opportunities to develop their English
- avoid assuming that limited English indicates a developmental delay
- work with parents and carers to understand the child's language development in their home language
- provide resources that reflect children's languages and cultures
- encourage children to use their home language within the setting where appropriate
- ensure that EAL is not treated as a barrier to participation or inclusion

The EYFS requires providers to give children sufficient opportunities to develop their English and states that, where a child has limited English, practitioners should explore their skills in their home language with parents and carers when considering whether there may be a language delay.

Curriculum and Learning Environment

Our curriculum promotes positive attitudes towards diversity and inclusion.

We will ensure that:

- books, toys, displays and other resources positively reflect a wide range of cultures, ethnicities, religions, abilities and family structures
- children see themselves and their families represented within the setting
- stereotypes are avoided
- discriminatory or derogatory images and materials are not used
- children are supported to understand similarities and differences
- local and culturally relevant events and celebrations are acknowledged appropriately
- children are encouraged to develop respect and empathy
- activities are adapted to meet individual developmental and learning needs
- children with SEND are fully included in the curriculum
- children with EAL have full access to learning
- sensory, physical and communication needs are considered when planning experiences
- reasonable adjustments are made where necessary
- the environment is reviewed regularly to ensure that barriers to participation are identified and addressed

The EYFS requires practitioners to be ambitious for all children and to consider each child's individual needs, interests and development when planning learning experiences.

Valuing Families and Family Diversity

We welcome and value the diversity of family structures and lifestyles represented within our setting.

We recognise families may include:

- one-parent families
- two-parent families
- same-sex parents
- stepfamilies
- blended families

- foster families
- adoptive families
- kinship families
- grandparents or other relatives as primary carers
- other family arrangements

We will:

- use inclusive language when communicating with families
- avoid making assumptions about family structures
- encourage all parents and carers to participate in their child's learning and development
- respect the individual circumstances of families
- value parents' and carers' knowledge of their children
- provide opportunities for families to share their cultures, languages, traditions and experiences;
- make reasonable adjustments to communication where required
- work sensitively with families experiencing financial hardship, disadvantage or other difficulties

Food, Religion and Culture

We work in partnership with parents and carers to meet children's dietary requirements arising from:

- medical needs
- allergies and intolerances
- religious requirements
- cultural practices
- individual dietary preferences

The setting will make reasonable efforts to accommodate dietary requirements safely and appropriately.

Children will be introduced to a range of foods and will be encouraged to respect different cultural approaches to food, mealtimes and eating.

Preventing and Responding to Discrimination

Discrimination, harassment, bullying, prejudice and victimisation are not acceptable at Kingfisher Kindergarten. Staff will challenge inappropriate behaviour promptly, sensitively and appropriately.

This includes addressing:

- direct discrimination
- indirect discrimination
- discrimination arising from disability
- failure to make reasonable adjustments
- discrimination by association
- discrimination by perception
- harassment
- victimisation
- racist language or behaviour
- homophobic or discriminatory language
- discriminatory comments relating to disability
- religious or cultural prejudice
- stereotyping
- discriminatory behaviour towards children, families, staff, volunteers or visitors

Any discriminatory behaviour by a member of staff will be addressed through the setting's disciplinary procedures where appropriate. Discriminatory behaviour by parents, carers or visitors will be addressed promptly and professionally. Offensive materials, threatening behaviour, name-calling or openly discriminatory behaviour on or around the setting's premises will not be tolerated. Where necessary, an individual may be asked to leave the premises or may be restricted from entering the premises, in accordance with the setting's procedures.

Any safeguarding concern arising from discriminatory behaviour will be managed under the setting's safeguarding procedures.

Employment and Staff

Kingfisher Kindergarten Ltd is committed to fair and inclusive employment practices.

We will:

- advertise vacancies fairly and transparently
- assess applicants against clear and relevant criteria
- welcome applications from people from all background
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants and employees where required
- ensure job descriptions reflect the setting's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
- ensure recruitment and selection processes are fair and accessible
- comply with employment and equality legislation
- challenge discriminatory behaviour in the workplace
- ensure that staff are treated with dignity and respect

Any lawful exceptions permitted by relevant legislation will only be applied where appropriate and necessary.

Staff Training and Professional Development

We recognise that effective inclusion requires staff to have the knowledge, confidence and skills to understand and respond to children's individual needs. We will provide and encourage appropriate training and professional development in areas including:

- equality, diversity and inclusion
- SEND
- inclusive teaching and learning
- early identification of developmental differences
- EAL and multilingual development
- communication and language
- supporting children with disabilities
- reasonable adjustments
- supporting children's emotional wellbeing
- cultural awareness
- anti-discriminatory practice
- safeguarding
- relevant medical or specialist care where required

The SENDCO and EAL Lead will support colleagues through advice, modelling, information sharing and professional development.

Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments

We aim to make our environment as accessible and inclusive as reasonably possible.

We will consider reasonable adjustments in relation to:

- physical access
- communication
- sensory needs
- learning resources
- routines
- activities
- the learning environment
- transitions
- dietary requirements
- medical needs
- participation in the wider life of the setting

The EYFS specifically requires providers to follow their legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, including provisions concerning reasonable adjustments. Where an access issue is identified, we will take appropriate action to reduce or remove the barrier wherever reasonably possible.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise parents and carers as important partners in supporting children's development.

We will:

- share information about children's progress

- listen to parents' and carers' views and concerns
- include parents and carers in Support Plans
- seek relevant information about children's interests, development, culture, language and individual needs
- involve parents and carers when additional support is being considered
- work together to identify appropriate strategies
- involve parents and carers in reviews
- share relevant professional recommendations
- support families to access appropriate external services where required

The EYFS places importance on partnership working between practitioners and parents and carers and requires practitioners to address learning and development needs in partnership with families and relevant professionals.

Monitoring Children's Progress

The setting will maintain a clear overview of children's individual development.

Progress will be:

- observed and assessed as part of everyday practice
- recorded within the setting's individual developmental records
- reviewed formally each term
- considered in relation to each child's starting point
- discussed with parents and carers
- used to inform planning and next steps
- monitored by the leadership team
- monitored by the SENDCO where SEND or emerging additional needs are identified
- monitored by the EAL Lead where a child is learning English as an additional language

Where progress is slower than expected, practitioners will consider whether adaptations, additional support or specialist advice may be required. The purpose of monitoring is not to compare children unfairly, but to understand each child's individual progress and ensure that appropriate support and challenge are provided.

Complaints and Concerns

Parents and carers are encouraged to raise any concerns regarding equality, inclusion, discrimination or access with the setting in the first instance.

All complaints will be:

- taken seriously
- dealt with fairly and sensitively
- investigated appropriately
- recorded where necessary
- managed in accordance with the setting's Complaints Procedure Policy

Where a concern relates to safeguarding, it will be managed in accordance with the setting's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

This policy was adopted by Kingfisher Kindergarten Ltd

Date to be reviewed

Annually

Signed on behalf of the provider

La-Ryne van der Westhuizen

Role of signatory

Owner