Introduction

What is an ENCo?

An ENCo is an Equalities Named Coordinator. Every early years and childcare setting is recommended to have a named person who has undertaken appropriate training to ensure that they can effectively support and champion equality and diversity in the setting.

Why have an ENCo?

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), 2014 states:

“The EYFS seeks to provide:

- quality and consistency in all early years settings so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- a secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.”

Statutory Framework for the EYFS, Section 3 – Introduction, paragraph 3

Cambridgeshire promotes the ENCo role in all settings as best practice.

What does an ENCo do?

The proactive role of the ENCo will actively ensure that the equalities agenda is highlighted and developed in the setting. At the same time, the ENCo will reflect, evaluate, and continually aim to improve the practice already in the setting.

The role of the ENCo

To raise awareness of equality issues with all setting staff and users including managers, owners, committees, volunteers, parents and children.

- To foster positive relationships with the local community, and develop opportunities for community involvement.
- To help promote, plan, coordinate and implement anti-discriminatory provision for all.
- To support the development, implementation and monitoring of an Equality policy.
• To regularly review the setting’s equality policy and provision using the ENCo audit tool provided in ENCo Handbook.

• Alongside others in the setting, to identify equality and diversity actions to be included in the setting’s action plan.

• To raise awareness of the needs of groups vulnerable to prejudice and discrimination and ensure anti-discriminatory policy and procedures are effective and ensure that strategies are developed to counter the learning of any negative attitudes and behaviour and to unlearn any negative attitudes and behaviour that may already have been learnt.

• To consider whether negative stereotypes, assumptions and judgements might influence attitudes and behaviour.

• To foster a culture where prejudice-related incidents are reported and recorded, taking care to ensure that anyone who witnessed the incident is also involved.

• To ensure all members of staff and volunteers regularly take part in equalities training and individual training needs are continually reviewed.

• To continually review the appropriateness of language and terminology related to equalities and ensure dissemination to all staff.

• To develop current knowledge of equalities legislation and what this means in practice, and to disseminate to colleagues, e.g. by sharing information at staff meetings.

• To ensure that equality and diversity issues are included in staff recruitment and induction procedures.

• To review and influence all policies, ensuring they include equalities issues.

• To ensure that equality and diversity are embedded and reflected in provision and planning for all children and staff.

• To ensure that positive use is made of the links and support that arise from the key person, the child and family carer.

• To encourage staff to be confident, honest and open-minded and to seek advice from the ENCo when they are unsure about an issue.

• To ensure information is accessible for parents who are experiencing either literacy or language difficulties – this may involve form filling, explaining policies, or letters home, etc.

• To review current resources and the range of activities and ensure their relevance to the needs of all children.
• To consider whether any other resources are necessary so that any child arriving tomorrow will see familiar things and feel included.

• To support children and families in transitions, particularly those identified as potentially finding transitions difficult.

• To build trusting partnerships with parents/carers and develop knowledge about the background, general and specific cultural needs of individual children, possibly through home visits.

• To liaise with and work alongside the SENCo who coordinates the provision for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND).

**The specific role of the ENCo with regard to Key Persons**

The ENCo has a responsibility as a representative for the whole setting for the equal chances of all children as detailed above. The role of the Key Person is important for each child. It is fundamentally an equality issue.

• To ensure that training supports and equips the staff who take on the Key Person (KP) role to understand and implement their important work in listening to and representing the families of the children in their small group in respect of equality issues.

• To liaise and work with the Key Person for each child to support every unique child’s special (ethnic, cultural, faith, social preferences, family specialities and talents, etc) requirements or needs.

• To set up regular meetings in non-contact time with KPs and the mentors who are designated to offer *support and supervision* for their complex emotional work with their small group of children and their families. To take forward general equality issues arising from these intimate attachment relationships to inform policy, practice and training for the managers and staff team.
What do we mean by equality and diversity?

The words ‘equality’ and ‘diversity’ are increasingly being used together as a phrase. **Equality** means treating everyone fairly and equally, according to their needs. **Diversity** means that members of the group described are not all the same. For members of a diverse group to be equal, they must all be equally respected and valued, and treated equally. Being diverse does not automatically mean that all members are treated equally – being different does not automatically confer equality. Valuing diversity means ensuring that everyone is treated equally.

Children and young people’s attitudes and sense of personal and collective identity are greatly influenced by their early years and life experiences.

While much of this influence takes place outside settings, there is still an essential role for practitioners in developing children and young people’s attitudes. This should include fostering positive attitudes to equality and diversity and giving young children and adults the skills to identify, challenge and tackle all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

Successful equalities practice depends on providing equal and fair access and provision for all. This creates a sense of belonging and a shared understanding of what you are trying to achieve. It is important to feel respected, valued and cared for. Being equal means feeling you belong.

It is vital to ensure that all groups and individuals who make up your community are engaged with your policy and practice so that they feel that they receive fair and equal treatment both as individuals and as members of a group.

**Language**

Words and language change over time, in response to influences such as the changing world and views of what is acceptable and what is offensive. It is because of these changes that sometimes people feel anxious or uneasy about saying the wrong thing which may result in saying nothing. Inclusive language plays an important role in promoting equality.

Having a shared, consistent approach and use of language is important in early years settings. A good way to avoid offence is to talk to children and families, find out how to pronounce names correctly and how they would prefer to be identified.

The following table is not a definitive list of correct terminology but is intended to provide some guidance and support.
 Equality Checklist for the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for any setting to discriminate, either directly or indirectly, because of a ‘protected characteristic’. This includes harassment or victimization. The Act also gives settings a statutory general duty to promote equality.

In carrying out their functions, settings are required to have due regard to the need for:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is made unlawful by Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

All areas of learning contain opportunities for learning directly or indirectly about equality and cultural diversity. Here are some of the many possibilities. Imagine these are statements from a prospective parent, or from OFSTED, looking to find evidence of good Equality practice. What could you mention as evidence for each area in your setting?

| IN PLAY | INDICATORS | EVIDENCE e.g.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The role play area is diverse. At times there is a specific focus on a particular culture/community (e.g. an Asian/White home, a Chinese or Caribbean grocery store etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Dressing-up items, dolls, puppets, ‘Duplo’ and toys generally reflect both people and objects from a diverse and familiar range of backgrounds and those which may be less familiar.</td>
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</table>
3. Situations are created in structured play to explore issues of diversity and include addressing racism, homophobia, sexism and disablism with families from a range of backgrounds, cultures and structures.

4. Opportunities are taken in unstructured play to explore issues to do with inequality, including racism, sexism, homophobia and disablism with families from a range of backgrounds, cultures and structures.

5. Children are encouraged to voice their opinions, discuss with others and work together in solving problems to do with equality and diversity and to challenge inequality sensitively when they are aware of it.

**PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

1. Practitioners and other adults provide a range of positive role models from a variety of communities.

2. Positive images are used, for example, in books and displays, that challenge children’s thinking.

3. There are opportunities in play and learning that take account of children’s particular religious and cultural beliefs.
Cultural confidence and competence continuum

**Cultural Destructiveness**
Is represented by attitudes, policies and practice which are destructive to cultures and consequently to individuals within the culture.

**Cultural Blindness**
Is characterised by a desire to be unbiased but individuals and organisations function with the belief that race, culture, religion, social background makes no difference – we are all the same.

**Cultural Competence**
Is characterised by acceptance and respect for difference. They seek to expand their knowledge of diverse cultures to meet the needs of minority groups.

**Cultural Incapacity**
Is characterised by a lack of skills and capacity to support minorities within their community.

**Cultural Pre-competence**
Is characterised by a wish to respond effectively to culturally diverse groups but are not sure how to do it.

**Cultural Proficiency**
Is characterised by actively educating less informed people and seek to interact and maintain partnerships with diverse groups.
Other important legislation and guidance

The following legislation is included for background purposes, for practitioners’ own awareness and development.

Human Rights Act 1998

Also known as the HRA, it came into force in the United Kingdom in 2000. The Act brings the protections in the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law. All public bodies including publicly funded schools and others have to comply with the Convention rights. The Act sets out the rights and freedoms for individuals including:

- Respect for private and family life
- Right to education.


The Convention applies between states (including the UK) who have ratified it, and the UN to which they must report on their efforts to implement The Convention domestically. It is not directly enforceable by a private individual. It is, however, a useful and all-encompassing version of basic rights children should be able to enjoy.


Note: A summary of the rights under the Convention of the Rights of the Child is included in Section 7 of this ENCo Handbook as Appendix 2.

See also the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.


Children Act 2004

This act legislates for maximising opportunities and minimising risks for all children, focusing services more effectively around the needs of the child and families. It established the Children’s Commissioner and makes provision for services to be provided to and for children and young people by local authorities and other persons; about private fostering, childminding and day care, adoption, review panels, the making of grants as respects children and families, child safety orders, the publication of material relating to children involved in certain legal proceedings and the disclosure by the Inland Revenue of information relating to children.

Children and Families Act 2014 (incorporates Support and Aspiration 2011)

The Act received royal assent on 13 March 2014. Implementation is from September 2014. It brings changes to the law to give greater protection to vulnerable children, better support for children whose parents are separating, a new system to help children with special educational needs and disabilities, and help for parents to balance work and family life.

SEND Act 2001 and SEN Code of Practice (Para.4:15)
This Act sets out the rights of children with special educational needs and disabilities, their parents/carers, the duty of the local authority, schools and pre-schools. It promotes the early identification of special educational needs within early years settings. It remains operational until the end of August 2014.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 (0 – 25 years)
Statutory guidance for organisations that work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013

Early Years Foundation Stage (2014)
This legislation states the requirements that must be met by all settings working with children up to the age of 5 years.
http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/

Conducting early years inspections, Ofsted 2014
Provides guidance for inspecting registered early years provision required to deliver the EYFS. ‘Judging progress’ paragraph 23 states:
‘The inspector must judge: whether adults have appropriately high expectations for children. In particular, the inspector must judge:
- whether children are performing at typical levels of development and
- whether gaps for children who are disadvantaged are narrowing.’
http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/conducting-early-years-inspections

Cambridgeshire County Council Local Agreement for Childcare Providers
This document sets out the recommendations of the local authority in relation to equality and diversity, and is reviewed periodically. The Local Agreement states an intention to ‘Actively seek to improve outcomes for all children in order to narrow the attainment gap’ and recommends each childcare provider on the Ofsted Early Years Register and the Childcare Register (compulsory) to have a designated person who has attended training that is updated every three years for:
- special needs (Special Educational Needs Coordinator – SENCo)
- equalities (Equalities Named Coordinator – ENCo)
Available online at: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/eyc
Guidance for writing an Early Years and Childcare Equality Policy

Policy statement
A policy statement is a summary of what equalities means in your setting. When writing yours, consider:

- The unique child and individual needs
- Valuing difference and diversity
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Inclusion
- Challenging discrimination
- Fostering good relationships
  - Staff
  - Children
  - Families
  - Wider community
- Staff training and keeping up to date with legislation and best practice.

It may look something like this:
Our setting is committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity for all. We seek to challenge prejudice and discrimination and to create an anti-bias environment in which all children have a sense of belonging. We recognise that each child is unique and aim to meet their individual needs in order for them to achieve their full potential. We promote and encourage positive attitudes and relationships between all our children, families and the wider community.

The diversity of families in our setting
To meet your obligations under the Equality Act you need to describe the make-up of families in your setting. When describing the make-up of your setting, consider:

- The location of your setting
- The diversity and backgrounds of your families
  - Faiths
  - Ethnicity
  - Languages
  - Socio-economic make-up, e.g. proportion of families on benefits, working, etc.
  - Children with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND)
  - Children learning English as an additional language (EAL).
It may look something like this:

The setting is registered for 50 children and currently has 39 on roll. Typically each year we have a higher proportion of boys to girls. The setting’s intake is predominantly White British but in recent years there has been an increase in children from minority ethnic groups, currently 15% of all pupils. Subsequently the percentage of children for whom English is an additional language has risen to 10%. 1.6% of our children have a statement of special educational needs, 10% of our children are SEND.

By publishing this information, we demonstrate our commitment to the specific duty within the Equality Act 2010.

Recognising and respecting difference and diversity

When writing a short paragraph to describe the setting’s commitment to valuing diversity, these are some of the factors to consider:

- Religious beliefs and practices
- Diverse lifestyles
- Linguistic diversity
- Dietary preferences and requirements
- Cultural differences
- The timing of activities and meetings
- Equalities and barriers to access and participation
- Special Educational Needs (SEND).

It may look something like this:

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same. Our policies, procedures and activities promote equality and we challenge discriminatory behaviour and language. Nevertheless they take into account differences of life experience, background and individual needs and the types of barriers and disadvantages that people may face.

We respect the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, children and families, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Admissions and transitions

When writing a short paragraph to describe the setting’s admissions and transitions procedures for all children, these are some of the factors to consider:

- Consultation and partnership with parents/carers
- Systems
- Advertising
- Inclusion
- Any flexible payment system and available grants
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EYFS</th>
<th>EYFS requirement</th>
<th>Examples of practice</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Intro. Para 3 | Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers. | - Name of ENCo displayed.  
- Name of SENCo displayed.  
- Names of Key Person groups displayed.  
- Support for parents with individual needs (e.g. EAL, SEN/D).  
- Information from home prior to child starting.  
- Home visits with the child assigned Key Person.  
- Active supervision and support of Key Person Approach.  
- Meetings with individual parents/carers to discuss child’s well-being. | | |
| Intro. Para 3 | Quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind. | - Reasonable adjustments made for individual children.  
- Activities differentiated to support individual children.  
- Monitoring children’s | | |
### Intro. Para 3

A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.

- Observation and monitoring of groups of children to ensure no stereotypes and assumptions are being made about the children’s progress.
- Regular feedback from every child’s key person to identify any that need special attention or support.

### 1.7

For children whose home language is not English, providers must take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and progress.

- Ongoing communication systems with parents/carers, e.g. informal discussion when arriving/collecting.
- Systems to share children's interests between home and the setting.
- Time made for observation of every child to ensure access to these learning opportunities.

- Welcome poster.
- Resources labelled.
- Bilingual books.
- Story tapes.
- Appropriate staffing.
- Demonstrate that children...
How do we demonstrate our commitment to equalities to Ofsted?

From September 2012 Ofsted early years inspections of provision registered to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage will be using a new evaluation schedule.

As an ENCo you should familiarise yourself with the legal requirements that you must comply with.

In addition to national requirements, settings in Cambridgeshire sign up to the Local Agreement for Childcare Providers. The Local Agreement outlines Cambridgeshire County Council’s responsibilities and the expectations that the County Council has of providers.

The following documents will support your self-evaluation for your ENCo role and ensure that all aspects of equality and diversity are discussed and addressed:

- Conducting early years inspections (Ofsted, reference no: 120087)
- Evaluation schedule for inspections of registered early years provision (Ofsted, reference no: 120086)
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014)
- Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- ‘Understanding the revised Early Years Foundation Stage’ by Helen Moylett and Nancy Stewart
- Local Agreement for Early Years and Childcare Providers in Cambridgeshire (2012)
## Section 7: Appendices

### Appendix 1: Useful websites for equalities and inclusion

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>What?</th>
<th>Where?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service (CREDS)</strong> website – translations, key words, school system and pamphlets</td>
<td><a href="https://www.learntogether.org.uk/services/creds/Pages/Welcome.aspx">https://www.learntogether.org.uk/services/creds/Pages/Welcome.aspx</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn a language</td>
<td><a href="http://www.newburypark.redbridge.sch.uk">http://www.newburypark.redbridge.sch.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrating the diversity of languages and culture</td>
<td><a href="http://www.language.e2bn.org/">http://www.language.e2bn.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words and scripts</td>
<td><a href="http://www.omniglot.com/">http://www.omniglot.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International music and culture</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mamalisa.com/?t=eh">http://www.mamalisa.com/?t=eh</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalogue of resources</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rompa.com">www.rompa.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Resources for speaking, listening, autistic spectrum disorders</td>
<td><a href="http://www.specialdirect.com">www.specialdirect.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensory resources</td>
<td><a href="http://www.exploreyoursenses.co.uk">www.exploreyoursenses.co.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hardware and software computer resources for children with special educational needs</td>
<td><a href="http://www.inclusive.co.uk">www.inclusive.co.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Language programme using signs and symbols</td>
<td><a href="http://www.makaton.org">www.makaton.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbols for accessible communication</td>
<td><a href="http://www.widget.com">www.widget.com</a></td>
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| Websites with free downloadable labelling ideas | www.instantdisplay.co.uk  
| | www.twinkl.co.uk  
| | www.displays.tpet.co.uk |
| ‘Creative Footsteps to Inclusive Education in the Early Years’  
(A manual for training staff in early years settings on how to create and maintain inclusive and multi-cultural environments.) | http://www.globalcentredevon.org.uk/early-years  
Tel: 01392 438811 |
<p>| CINTRA (Cambridge-based translation service) | <a href="http://www.cintra.org.uk">www.cintra.org.uk</a> |
| National Children’s Bureau (national children’s charity) | <a href="http://www.ncb.org.uk">www.ncb.org.uk</a> |
| Save the Children (national children’s charity) | <a href="http://www.savethechildren.org.uk">www.savethechildren.org.uk</a> |
| Stonewall (national lesbian, gay and bisexual charity) | <a href="http://www.stonewall.org.uk">www.stonewall.org.uk</a> |
| Show Racism the Red Card (UK anti-racism educational charity) | <a href="http://www.srtrc.org">www.srtrc.org</a> |</p>
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<tr>
<th><strong>sexYOUality</strong> (charity promoting the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered young people in Cambridgeshire)</th>
<th><a href="http://www.syacambs.org">www.syacambs.org</a></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Save Childhood Movement</strong> (national movement aiming to protect children from inappropriate developmental and cultural pressures and to fight for their natural developmental rights)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.savechildhood.net">www.savechildhood.net</a></td>
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