



6. Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment & Equipment Policy

Our designated member(s) of staff responsible for this area:

Name(s)

This policy was adopted on

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6.1 Health and Safety - General Standards

Our setting believes that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers.

We aim to make children, parents and staff aware of health and safety issues and to minimise the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

Insurance cover

We have public liability insurance and employers' liability insurance. The certificate for public liability insurance is displayed on our notice board.

Awareness Raising

Our induction training for staff, trainees, students and volunteers includes a clear explanation of health and safety issues so that all adults can adhere to our policy and procedures as they understand their shared responsibility for health and safety. The induction training covers matters of employee well-being, including safe lifting and safe storage of potentially dangerous substances.

Records are kept of these induction training sessions and new staff and volunteers are asked to sign the records to confirm that they have taken part.

Health and safety issues are given to the parents of new children as part of our Prospectus so that they understand the part played by these issues in the daily life of the setting.

As necessary, health and safety training is included in the annual training plans of staff, and health and safety is discussed regularly at staff meetings.

We operate a no smoking policy.

Children are made aware of health and safety issues through discussions, planned activities and routines.

Safety of Adults

Adults are provided with guidance about the safe storage, movement, lifting and erection of large pieces of equipment.

When adults need to reach up to store equipment or to change light bulbs they are provided with safe equipment to do so.

All warning signs are clear and in appropriate languages.

Adults do not remain in the building on their own or leave on their own after dark.

The sickness of staff and their involvement in accidents is recorded. The records are reviewed regularly to identify any issues that need to be addressed.

Chemicals / Dangerous Substances

We keep a record of all substances that may be hazardous to health - such as cleaning chemicals, or gardening chemicals if used. This states what the risks are and what to do if they have contact with eyes or skin or are ingested. It also states where they are stored.

We keep all cleaning chemicals in their original containers and out of the reach of children.

Windows and Doors

Low level windows are made from materials that prevent accidental breakage or are made safe.

Windows are protected from accidental breakage or vandalism from people outside the building.

Windows above the ground floor are secured so that children cannot climb through them.

Doors to classrooms are locked when children are present. We take precautions to prevent unknown persons entering our garden areas.

We take precautions where we can prevent children's fingers from being trapped in doors.

Floors, surfaces and furniture

All floor surfaces are checked daily to ensure they are clean and not uneven, wet or damaged. A daily Safety Checklist is completed by the preschool to make sure that it can operate safely.

Electrical/gas equipment

All electrical/gas equipment conforms to safety requirements and is checked regularly.

Our boiler/electrical switch gear/meter cupboard is not accessible to the children.

Fires, heaters, electric sockets, wires and leads are properly guarded and the children are taught not to touch them.

Storage heaters are checked daily to make sure they are not covered.

There are sufficient sockets to prevent overloading.

The temperature of hot water is controlled to prevent scalds.

Lighting and ventilation is adequate in all areas including storage areas.

Storage

All resources and materials from which children select are stored safely.

All equipment and resources are stored or stacked safely to prevent them accidentally falling or collapsing.

Outdoor area

Our outdoor area is securely fenced.

Our outdoor area is checked for safety and cleared of rubbish before it is used.

Adults and children are alerted to the dangers of poisonous plants, herbicides and pesticides.

Where water can form a pool on equipment, it is emptied before children start playing outside.

Our outdoor sand pit is covered when not in use and is cleaned regularly.

All outdoor activities are supervised always.

Hygiene

We seek information from Health Protection Agency to ensure that we keep up-to-date with the latest recommendations.

Our daily routines encourage the children to learn about personal hygiene.

We have a daily cleaning routine for the setting which includes play room(s), kitchen, rest area(s), toilets and nappy changing areas.

We have a schedule for cleaning resources and equipment, dressing-up clothes and furnishings.

The toilet area has a high standard of hygiene including hand washing and drying facilities.

We implement good hygiene practices by:

- cleaning tables between activities;
- checking toilets regularly and cleaning as required;
- wearing protective clothing - such as aprons and disposable gloves - as appropriate;
- providing sets of clean clothes;
- providing tissues and wipes; and
- ensuring individual use of paper towels and toothbrushes, as appropriate

Activities and resources

Before purchase or loan, equipment and resources are checked to ensure that they are safe for the ages and stages of the children currently attending the setting.

The layout of play equipment allows adults and children to move safely and freely between activities.

All equipment is regularly checked for cleanliness and safety and any dangerous items are repaired or discarded.

All materials, including paint and glue, are non-toxic.

Sand is clean and suitable for children's play.

Physical play is constantly supervised.

Children are taught to handle and store tools safely.

Children who are sleeping are checked regularly.

Children learn about health, safety and personal hygiene through the activities we provide and the routines we follow.

Any faulty equipment is removed from use and is repaired. If it cannot be repaired it is discarded.

Large pieces of equipment are discarded only with the consent of the manager.

6.2 Maintaining children's safety and security on premises

Our setting maintains the highest possible security of our premises to ensure that each child is safely cared for during their time with at the preschool.

Children's personal safety

We ensure all employed staff have been checked for criminal records by an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Baring Service.

Adults do not normally supervise children on their own.

All children are supervised by adults always.

Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults are present.

We carry out risk assessment to ensure children are not made vulnerable within any part of our premises, nor by any activity.

We have a set of rules for children to use to help keep them safe in the preschool. These are constantly reminded to the children and children are taught to respect themselves, others and their environment.

Security

Systems are in place for the safe arrival and departure of children.

The times of the children's arrivals and departures are recorded.

The arrival and departure times of adults - staff, volunteers and visitors - are recorded.

Our systems prevent unauthorised access to our premises.

Our systems prevent children from leaving the premises unnoticed.

The personal possessions of staff and volunteers are securely stored during sessions.

6.3 Supervision of children on outings and visits

Children benefit from being taken out of the setting to go on visits or trips to local parks or other suitable venues for activities which enhance their learning experiences. Staff in our setting ensure that there are procedures to keep children safe on outings; all staff and volunteers are aware of and follow the procedures below.

Parents are always asked to sign specific consent forms before any outings and this details the venue, date and time of the outing.

A risk assessment is carried out for each venue before an outing takes place. The risk assessment is made available to parents on request.

Our adult to child ratio is high, normally one adult to three children, depending on their age, sensibility and type of venue as well as how it is to be reached.

Named children are assigned to individual staff to ensure each child is individually supervised, to ensure no child goes astray, and that there is no unauthorised access to children.

Staff take a mobile phone on outings, as well as supplies of tissues, wipes, spare clothing and nappies, medicines required for individual children, a mini first aid kit and water. The amount of equipment will vary and be consistent with the venue and the number of children as well as how long they will be out for.

Staff take a list of children with them with contact numbers of parents/carers, accident book and a copy of our Missing Child Policy.

A minimum of two staff should accompany children on outings and a minimum of two should remain behind with the rest of the children, but more may be required to maintain adult to child ratios.

6.4 Risk assessment

Our setting believes that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff, trainees, students and volunteers by assessing and minimising the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

This policy is based on risk assessment processes which follow five steps as follows:

1. Identification of risk: Where is it and what is it?
2. Who is at risk: Childcare staff, children, parents etc.?
3. Assessment as to the level of risk as high, medium, low. This is both the risk of the likelihood of it happening, as well as the possible impact if it did.
4. Control measures to reduce/eliminate risk: What will you need to do, or ensure others will do, to reduce that risk?
5. Monitoring and review: How do you know if what you have said is working, or is thorough enough? If it is not working, it will need to be amended, or maybe there is a better solution.

Our risk assessment process covers adults and children and includes:

- Determining where it is helpful to make some written risk assessments in relation to specific issues, to inform staff practice, and to demonstrate how we are managing risks if asked by parents and/or carers and inspectors;
- checking for and noting hazards and risks indoors and outside, and in our premises and for activities;
- assessing the level of risk and who might be affected;
- deciding which areas need attention; and
- developing an action plan that specifies the action required, the time-scales for action, the person responsible for the action and any funding required.

Where more than 5 staff and volunteers are employed, the risks assessment is written and reviewed regularly.

We maintain lists of health and safety issues, which are checked daily before the session begins as well as those that are checked on a weekly and termly basis when a full risk assessment is carried out.

6.5 Fire safety and emergency evacuation

Our setting ensures the premises present no risk of fire by ensuring the highest possible standard of fire precautions. The person in charge and staff are familiar with the current legal requirements. Where necessary we seek the advice of a competent person, such as our Fire Officer, or Fire Safety Consultant.

The basis of fire safety is risk assessment. These are carried out by a 'competent person'.

The manager is sufficiently competent to carry out the risk assessment and this will be written where there are more than five staff and will follow the Government Guidance *Fire Safety Risk Assessment – Educational Premises (HMG 2006)*.

The setting carries out a fire safety risk assessment that applies to the building and this is reviewed annually.

Fire doors are clearly marked, never obstructed and easily opened from the inside.

Smoke detectors/alarms and firefighting appliances conform to BS EN standards, are fitted in appropriate high risk areas of the building and are checked regularly.

Our emergency evacuation procedures are:

clearly displayed in the premises;
explained to new members of staff, trainees, students, volunteers and parents; and
practised regularly, at least once every 6 weeks (minimum half termly).

Records are kept of fire drills and the servicing of fire safety equipment.

Emergency evacuation procedure

Every setting is different and the evacuation procedure will be suitable for each setting. Practice drills are carried out to familiarise staff and children with our procedures and teaches:

- How children are familiar with the sound of the fire alarm.
- How the children, staff and parents know where the fire exits are.
- How children are led from the building to the assembly point.
- How children will be accounted for and who by.
- How long it takes to get the children out safely.
- Who calls the emergency services and when, in the event of a real fire.
- How parents are contacted.

The fire drill record book must contain:

- Date and time of the drill.
- How long it took.
- Whether there were any problems that delayed evacuation.
- Any further action taken to improve the drill procedure.

You will be notified when a fire drill has taken place.

6.6 Animals in the setting

Children learn about the natural world, its animals and other living creatures, as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. This may include contact with animals, or other living creatures, either in the setting or in visits. We aim to ensure that this is in accordance with sensible hygiene and safety controls.

Animals in the setting as pets

Before taking an animal as a pet into the preschool, we would take account of the views of parents and children when selecting the animal or creature.

We would carry out a risk assessment with a knowledgeable person accounting for any hygiene or safety risks posed by the animal or creature.

We would ensure that suitable housing for the animal or creature is provided, and ensure this is cleaned out regularly and is safe.

We would ensure the correct food is offered, at the right times.

We would make suitable arrangements for weekend and holiday care for the animal or creature, if necessary.

Where necessary, we would register the animal or creature with the local vet and take out appropriate pet care health insurance.

Where necessary, we would make sure all vaccinations and other regular health measures, such as de-worming, are up-to-date and recorded.

Children are taught correct handling of all animals or creatures.

Children wash their hands after handling animals or creatures and do not have contact with animal soil or soiled bedding.

Where necessary, staff wear disposable gloves when cleaning housing or handling soiled bedding.

If animals or creatures are brought in by visitors to show to the children, they are the responsibility of the owner.

The Manager and Owner carry out a risk assessment, detailing how the animal or creature is to be handled and how any safety or hygiene issues will be addressed.

Visits to Farms

Before a visit to a farm, a risks assessment is carried out – this may take account of safety factors listed in the farm’s own risk assessment, which should be viewed.

The outings procedure is followed.

Children wash their hands after contact with animals.

Outdoor footwear worn to visit farms is cleaned of mud and debris and should not be worn indoors.

6.7 No-smoking

Our setting complies with health and safety regulations and the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage in making our setting a no-smoking environment - both indoor and outdoor.

All staff, parents and volunteers are made aware of our no-smoking policy.

We display no-smoking signs.

The No-smoking policy is stated in our information for parents.

Staff who smoke do not do so during working hours, unless on a break and off the premises.

Staff who smoke during their break make every effort to reduce the effect of the odour and lingering effects of passive smoking for children and colleagues.