

Health and safety policy

Statement of intent

This 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/carers, staff and volunteers.

Aim

We aim to make children, parents/carers, staff and volunteers 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.

Methods

Designated Health and Safety Officer: The Designated Health and Safety Officer is **Emma Guy**. She is competent to carry out these responsibilities. She has undertaken health and safety training and regularly updates her knowledge and understanding.

Risk assessment: Risk assessment is carried out to ensure the safety of children, staff, parents/carers, and visitors. Risk assessments are monitored and reviewed by those responsible for health and safety.

Insurance cover: We have public liability insurance and employers' liability insurance. The certificate for public liability insurance is displayed in the entrance lobby.

Awareness raising: Our induction training for staff and volunteers working with children includes a clear explanation of health and safety issues so that all adults are able to adhere to our policy and understand their shared responsibility for health and safety. As necessary, health and safety training is included in the annual training plans of staff, and health and safety is discussed regularly with staff. Children are made aware of health and safety issues through discussions, planned activities and routines.

The manager ensures staff have adequate training in health and safety.

Smoking, vaping, alcohol and substance abuse: Smoking or vaping is not allowed on the premises. Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. Practitioners taking medication which they believe may affect their ability to care for children should seek medical advice and inform the manager. See the Employment and Recruitment Policy for further details.

Supervision: All children are supervised by adults at all times. See the Staffing and Safeguarding policies.

The sections below set out further health and safety details in specific situations and should be read in conjunction with the relevant policies where indicated.

Risk assessment

Risk assessment means: *Taking note of aspects of your workplace and activities that that could cause harm, either to yourself or to others, and deciding what needs to be done to prevent that harm, making sure this is adhered to and is updated when necessary.*

The law does not require that all risk be eliminated, but that 'reasonable precaution' is taken. This is particularly important when balancing the need for children to be able to take appropriate risks through physically challenging play. Children need the opportunity to work out what is not safe and what they should do when faced with a risk.

Our risk assessment process includes: (i) checking for hazards and risks indoors and outside, and in our activities and procedures. Our assessment covers potential risks for both adults and children; and (ii) deciding which areas need attention and developing a plan that specifies the action required, the timescales for action, the person responsible for the action and any funding required.

We maintain lists of health and safety issues, which are checked:

- Daily: before the session begins. This is reviewed and amended when practices change or issues become apparent.
- Annually: when a full risk assessment is carried out.
- Individual risk assessments are carried out for new or one-off activities where appropriate and for offsite activities.

The manager ensures that staff members carry out risk assessments for work practice including:

- changing children and intimate care of young children and older children
- arrivals and departures
- preparation and serving of food/drink for children, including children with allergies and special dietary needs or preferences
- cooking activities with children
- supervising outdoor play and indoor/outdoor climbing equipment
- Sleeping children
- assessment, use and storage of equipment for disabled children
- visitors to the setting who bring equipment or animals as part of children's learning experiences
- following any incidents involving threats against staff or volunteers
- following any accident or incident involving staff or children.

The manager ensures that staff members carry out risk assessments for off-site activities, such as children's outings, including:

- forest school
- home visits; and
- other off-site duties such as attending meetings, banking etc.

Building and equipment safety

General maintenance and cleaning

The manager ensures that checks/work to premises are carried out and records kept:

- Electrical safety by a qualified electrician.
- Fire precautions to check that all fire-fighting equipment and alarms are in working order.
- Heating systems cleaned and checked.
- Toilets not in use are checked to ensure the U-bend does not dry out and are flushed every week. Taps not in use are run for several minutes every two to three days to prevent infections such as Legionella.

We regularly seek information from the Environmental Health Department and the Health Authority to ensure that we keep up to date with the latest recommendations.

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

We regularly clean resources and equipment, dressing-up clothes and furnishings.

Entrances and approach to the building

- Entrances and approaches are kept tidy and always uncluttered.
- All gates and external fences are childproof and safe.
- Front doors are kept locked and shut, or a locked gate put into position to aid ventilation. Back doors are kept locked shut at all times where they may lead to a public or unsupervised area.
- The identity of a person not known to members of staff is checked before they enter the building.
- A member of staff is available to open and close the door and to greet arrivals, say goodbye to parents/carers, and to make sure that doors and gates are shut.
- Where building works or repairs mean that normal entrances/exits or approaches to the building are not in use, a risk assessment is conducted to maintain safety and security whilst the changes are in place.
- Systems are in place for the safe arrival and departure of children.
- The times of the children's arrivals and departures are recorded.
- All visitors to the setting sign in and out of the building. The arrival and departure times of volunteers and visitors are recorded.

Windows

- Low level windows are made from materials that prevent accidental breakage or are made safe.
- All blinds fitted with cords are secured by cleats. There are no dangling cords.

Doors

- We take precautions to prevent children's fingers from being trapped in doors.

Floors

- All surfaces are checked daily to ensure they are clean and not uneven or damaged.
- Floors are properly dried after mopping up spills.

Electrical equipment

- All electrical equipment conforms to safety requirements and is regularly PAT and Socket tested.
- Our boiler/electrical switchgear/meter cupboard is not accessible to the children.
- Children are taught not to touch fans, fires, heaters, electric sockets, wires and leads.
- The boiler is checked regularly to make sure it is well ventilated and is serviced annually.
- 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.
- There are no trailing wires.

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.

Equipment 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.
- We make safe and separate from general use any areas that are unsafe because repair is needed.
- Sand is clean and suitable for children's play.
- Physical play is constantly supervised.
- Children are taught to handle and store tools safely.
- Children learn about health, safety and personal hygiene through the activities we provide and the routines we follow.

Outdoor area

- Our outdoor area is securely fenced.
- Our outdoor area is checked for safety and cleared of rubbish, animal droppings and any other unsafe items before it is used.
- Adults and children are alerted to the dangers of poisonous plants, herbicides and pesticides.
- Play bark is provided under climbing equipment.
- Where water can form a pool on equipment, it is emptied before children start playing outside.
- We check that children are suitably attired for the weather conditions and type of outdoor activities.
- Suncream is applied and hats are worn during the summer months.
- If a paddling pool is used, a risk assessment is conducted, and consideration given to the needs of disabled children or those less ambulant.
- Broken equipment or outdoor toys are removed and reported to the manager.
- All outdoor activities are supervised at all times.

Kitchen (see also the Food Hygiene Policy)

- Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.
- A clearly marked and appropriately stocked First Aid box is kept in the kitchen.
- All surfaces are clean and non-porous.
- The kitchen is kept clean and in a good state of repair:
 - All work surfaces are washed regularly with anti-bacterial agent.
 - Inside of cupboards are cleaned regularly.
 - Cupboard doors and handles are cleaned regularly.
 - Fridge and freezer doors are wiped down regularly.
 - Any repairs needed are recorded and reported to the manager.
- Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials are stored out of children's reach.
- When children take part in cooking activities, they:
 - are supervised at all times
 - are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water; and
 - do not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment.

Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH)

- Our staff implement the current guidelines of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH).
- We keep a record of all substances that may be hazardous to health - such as cleaning chemicals, or gardening chemicals if used and where they are stored.
- Hazardous substances are stored safely away from the children.
- We carry out a risk assessment for all chemicals used in the setting.
- We keep the chemicals used in the setting to the minimum in order to ensure health and hygiene is maintained.
- Environmental factors are taken into account when purchasing, using and disposing of chemicals.

- All members of staff are vigilant and use chemicals safely.
- Protective gloves are available for staff to wear when using cleaning chemicals.

Outings, visits and forest school

Off-site activities

- All off site activity has a clearly identified educational purpose with specific learning and development outcomes.
- An excursion will not go ahead if concerns are raised about its viability at any point.
- Parents/carers, are informed of an outing and staff check that consent forms on children's registration were signed.
- We assess the risks for each local venue used for regular activities, which is reviewed regularly.
- There is a designated lead for each excursion who is clear about their responsibility as designated lead. A minimum of two staff accompany children on outings. Children are specifically allocated to each member of staff/volunteer; that member of staff/volunteer is responsible for supervising their designated children for the duration of the exercise.
- Parents/carers, who accompany us on outings are responsible for their own child only. Where parents/carers, have undergone vetting with us as volunteers, they may be included in the adults to child ratio and have children allocated to them.
- Our manager and all staff taking part in the outing sign off every risk assessment.
- Children with allergies or other specific needs have a separate risk assessment completed.
- We take a mobile phone on outings, as well as supplies of tissues, wipes, medicines required for individual children, and a mini first aid kit. 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. We apply sun cream to children as needed and ensure they are dressed appropriately for the type of outing and weather conditions.
- We provide children with 'high viz' vests to wear that contain the setting name.
- Parents/Carers are required to transport their own children to outings requiring transport.

Forest School

A separate Forest School risk assessment is conducted, and Forest School standard procedures are followed at all times. The designated lead is an appropriately trained Forest School practitioner.

Toilets and nappy changing

An adult who has not had a DBS check will not change a nappy or help a child with toilet needs unsupervised.

Where practical, a child's privacy will be respected, but the priority should be clear protection from possible abuse. For these reasons the door to the children's toilet area will be left open. Children using the toilet unsupervised may choose to close the door of the cubicle. Where adult supervision is required or requested, this door should be left open.

Toilets are child sized but potties, training seats and step-ups are available if needed. All equipment will be cleaned regularly.

Nappies should be changed on the changing table. Other children will be encouraged to give the child being attended to appropriate privacy. The changing mat should be wiped clean before and after use with anti-bacterial wipes.

Parents/carers, will be made aware that they should provide disposable nappies and wipes for their child, also that they should provide spare clothes for a child who is toilet training in case of accidents. It will be made clear to parents/carers, that there is no discrimination against children who are not yet potty/toilet trained.

When attending to a child who has accidentally wet or soiled themselves the adult should attempt to help them in the cubicle, if this is not possible then the changing area should be used. The child should have the soiled clothes removed and then be cleaned respecting their privacy. They should be dressed in their own spare clothes or spare clothes provided by pre-school. The child should be reassured and comforted.

Health and hygiene policy and practise should be followed when changing nappies and dealing with a child who has wet or soiled him/herself. In particular the adult should: wear disposable gloves throughout, wrap and dispose of soiled nappy and gloves into an outside bin immediately, wrap soiled and wet clothes securely to give back to parents/carers, wet soiled toilets and floors should be cleaned, wash their hands afterwards.

Specific issues

Sleeping children

- We check children who are sleeping at regular intervals of at least every fifteen minutes. This is recorded with the times checked and the initials of the person undertaking the check.
- Sleeping children are within sight and/or hearing of staff.
- Nappies are changed and heavier clothing removed before sleep/rest time. Hair accessories that may come loose or detach are removed.
- If children fall asleep in-situ, it may be necessary to move or wake them to make sure they are comfortable.

Food and drink (see also the Food and Drink Policy and Food Hygiene Policy)

- Staff who prepare and handle food receive appropriate training and understand and comply with food safety and hygiene regulations. All staff who prepare food have undertaken the Food Allergy Online Training.
- Food is prepared by staff according to the Safer Eating guidance, this guidance is shared with parents/carers.
- We operate systems to ensure that children do not have access to food/drinks to which they are allergic: a list of all children with known food allergies or dietary needs will be updated at least once a term and clearly displayed for all staff.
- Food is purchased from reputable suppliers. Pre-packed food is checked for allergen ingredients.
- Parents/carers, are requested not to bring food that contains nuts. Staff check packets to make sure they do not contain nuts or nut products.
- All food and drink is stored appropriately.
- Adults do not place hot drinks or food within reach of children.
- Snack and meal times are appropriately supervised and children do not walk about with food and drinks.
- Tables are cleaned before and after mealtime.
- We will inform Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises, as soon as possible and within 14 days of the incident occurring.

Jewellery and accessories

- Our staff do not wear jewellery; fashion accessories; or have long sharp nails that may pose a danger to themselves or children.
- Parents/carers, must ensure that any jewellery worn by children poses no danger; particularly earrings which may get pulled, bracelets which can get caught when climbing or necklaces that may pose a risk of strangulation.
- Hair accessories that may pose a choking hazard to other children should they become detached should be removed if members of staff consider this to be a possibility.

Animals

- Animals visiting the setting are free from disease and safe to be with children, and do not pose a health risk. The owner of the animal maintains responsibility for it in the setting. The owner carries out a risk assessment detailing how the animal is to be handled and how any safety or hygiene issues will be addressed.
- Children wash their hands after contact with animals.
- Outdoor footwear worn to visit farms are cleaned of mud and debris and should not be worn indoors.

Fire Safety and First Aid

Fire safety (see also the Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation Policy)

- Fire doors are clearly marked, never obstructed and easily opened from inside.
- Smoke detectors/alarms and fire fighting appliances conform to BSEN standards, are fitted in appropriate high-risk areas of the building and are checked as specified by the manufacturer.
- Our emergency evacuation procedures are:
 - clearly displayed in the premises;
 - explained to new members of staff and volunteers and are clearly displayed in the room; and
 - practised regularly at least once every six weeks.
- Records are kept of fire drills and the servicing of fire safety equipment.
- A fire safety risk assessment is carried out by a competent person in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

First aid and medication (see also the Administration of Medicine Policy)

Parents/carers, consent to emergency medical treatment on registration.

At least one member of staff with current first aid training is on the premises or on an outing at any one time. The first aid qualification includes first aid training for infants and young children and is approved by the local authority.

Our first aid kit:

- complies with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981;
- is regularly checked by a designated member of staff and re-stocked as necessary;
- is easily accessible to adults; and
- is kept out of the reach of children.

For minor injuries and accidents, First Aid treatment is given by a qualified first aider; the event is recorded in the setting's Accident Record book. Parents/carers, are normally informed when they collect their child, unless the child is unduly upset, or members of staff have any concerns about the injury.

An ambulance is called for children requiring emergency treatment. First aid is given until the ambulance arrives on scene. The registration form is taken to hospital with the child. Parents/carers, or carers are contacted and informed of what has happened and where their child is being taken to.

Ofsted are notified as soon as practically possible but within 14 days of any injury or incident requiring treatment by a general practitioner or hospital doctor, or the death of a child or adult.

We use our management system Family to record and monitor accidents. All staff have access to this and know how to use it. Reports are reviewed at least half termly to identify any potential or actual hazards.

When there is any injury requiring general practitioner or hospital treatment to a child, parent, volunteer or visitor or where there is a death of a child or adult on the premises, we notify local child protection agencies and make a report to the Health and Safety Executive using the format for the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR).

Safety of staff and volunteers

The setting is responsible for protecting the health and safety of all staff and volunteers in its services and has a duty of care in relation to their physical and emotional well-being.

Manual handling

- Staff are provided with guidance about the safe storage, movement, lifting and erection of large pieces of equipment. All staff comply with risk assessment and have a personal responsibility to ensure they do not lift objects likely to cause injury.
- Members of staff bring the setting manager's attention to any new risk, or situations where the control measures are not working.
- Risk assessments may need to be changed for some individuals, such as pregnant women, or staff with an existing or previous injury or impairment.

Hygiene

Staff have access to single use gloves and aprons and are given appropriate training on when to use protective clothing.

Staff personal safety

- Staff must not remain in the building on their own or leave on their own after dark without informing the manager/another member of staff. Where possible, the last two members of staff in the building leave together after dark.
- If taking cash to the bank, members of staff are aware of personal safety. The manager carries out a risk assessment and develops an agreed procedure appropriate to the setting, staff and location.
- If a parent or visitor appears to be angry, mentally agitated, or possibly hostile, two members of staff will lead them away from the children to an area less open but will not shut the door behind them. Staff will try to empathise and offer to discuss the issue(s) of concern. If the person makes threats and continues to be angry, members of staff make it clear that they will not be able to discuss the issue until the person stops shouting or being abusive. If threats continue, members of staff will explain that the police will be called.
- Home visits are done at the manager's discretion following all relevant health and safety considerations, including:
 - Recording each home visit in the diary with the name and address of the family being visited, prior to the visit taking place.
 - Staff inform the manager or senior member of staff in the setting when they are leaving to do the home visit and what time they are expected to return.
 - Staff carry a mobile phone with them when going out on a home visit.

- If there is reasons for staff to feel concerned about entering premises on a visit, they do not do so.

Threats and abuse towards staff and volunteers

Violence, threatening behaviour and abuse against staff are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Where such behaviour occurs, we will take all reasonable and appropriate action in support of our staff and volunteers.

Any staff member or volunteer who feels under threat or has been threatened, assaulted, or intimidated in the course of their work must report this immediately to their manager who will follow the setting manager’s procedures and guidance for responding.

Records

Staff sickness and their involvement in accidents is recorded. The records are reviewed termly to identify any issues that need to be addressed. Full records are kept of any incident involving violence, threatening behaviour or abuse against any staff member or volunteer.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Woodland Corner
Held on (date) 17 th September 2025	
Signed on behalf of the Management Committee	Jess Brown
Role of signatory (e.g. chairperson etc.)	Chairperson
Review date	September 2026