Learning Tree Pre School (Swindon) Limited Policies

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Policy statement

We promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
We promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
We promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
We help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
We work with parents to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of safeguarding all our children.

What it means to promote children's rights and entitlements to be '*strong, resilient and listened to'.*

To be strong means to be:
secure in their foremost attachment relationships, where they are loved and cared for by at least one person who is able to offer consistent, positive and unconditional regard and who can be relied on;
safe and valued as individuals in their families and in relationships beyond the family, such as day care or school;
self-assured and form a positive sense of themselves – including all aspects of their identity and heritage;
included equally and belong in our setting and in community life;
confident in their own abilities and proud of their achievements;
progressing optimally in all aspects of their development and learning;
part of a peer group in which they learn to negotiate, develop social skills and an identity as global citizens, respecting the rights of others in a diverse world; and
able to represent themselves and participate in aspects of service delivery that affects them, as well as aspects of key decisions that affect their lives.

To be resilient means to:
be sure of their self-worth and dignity;
be able to be assertive and state their needs effectively;
be able to overcome difficulties and problems;
be positive in their outlook on life;
be able to cope with challenge and change;
have a sense of justice towards themselves and others;
develop a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others; and
be able to represent themselves and others in key decision making processes.

To be listened to means:
adults who are close to children recognise their need and right to express and communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas;

adults who are close to children are able to tune in to their verbal, sign and body language in order to understand and interpret what is being expressed and communicated;
adults who are close to children are able to respond appropriately and, when required, act upon their understanding of what children express and communicate; and
adults respect children's rights and facilitate children's participation and representation in imaginative and child centred ways in all aspects of core services.

1.2. Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy 2025/26

Name of Setting
Learning Tree Pre-School (Swindon) Limited

Name of person responsible for reviewing the policy
Elaine Tucker and Gemma Gill
Date of policy review January 2026
Date next review is due January 2027

Date of any amendments

This policy is reviewed and ratified annually and following updates to national and local guidance and procedures.

Name of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Gemma Gill

Name of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Louise Rose

This is a statutory policy and it forms part of the induction procedure for all new staff/volunteers.

All staff have easy access to this policy and they sign to say they have read and understood its content, annually and each time there is an update.

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Introduction

"The welfare of the child is paramount" – Children Act 1989

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

Principles of this Policy

We aim to provide a high quality setting which is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. We will take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well and ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with them. We will promote good health, manage behaviour and maintain records, policies and procedures.

For the purpose of this policy, the Working Together 2018 definition of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is used and defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Staff at this setting understand that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is of paramount importance and that it is everyone's responsibility, they will be alert to any issues or concerns in the child's life at home or elsewhere and they will maintain a child-centred approach at all times. They will be aware that children with special educational needs or disability are particularly vulnerable to abuse. They will maintain an attitude of, "it could happen here", where safeguarding is concerned and they will always act in the best interest of the child.

The management and staff at this setting are committed to;

- Ensuring that Safer Recruitment practices for checking the suitability of staff and volunteers are followed (refer to the South West Child Protection Procedures (SWCPP)).
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers follow the settings Code of Conduct, Behaviour Policy, the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and the Covid 19 addendum.
- Establishing and maintaining a safe and secure environment.
- Providing support for children who have been abused and taking part in the multi-agency action plan to keep them safe.
- Providing a curriculum and experiences that will enable children to develop the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, including online abuse.
- Ensuring staff and volunteers are able to identify children with potential emerging problems or concerns and implementing strategies early on to avoid escalation (Early Help).
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know the correct procedure for reporting and referring concerns.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the procedures to follow if they have a concern about another adult or a member of staff (Whistleblowing Policy).
- Working in partnership with other agencies. This includes sharing information effectively, attending child protection conferences, core groups and other relevant meetings.

- Working in partnership with parents/carers.

Legislation and Guidance

All safeguarding and child protection procedures follow guidance from the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership (SSP) and the South West Child Protection Procedures (SWCPP). The following legislation and documents will form the basis of all safeguarding and child protection decisions:

- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage – 2021
- The Children Act 2004 and 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners - 2015
- Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services- 2018
- The Prevent Duty-departmental advice for schools and childcare providers – 2015 (updated 2019)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – 2021

This Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy applies to all staff, managers, committee members, students and volunteers in the setting.

Other policies that should be read alongside this policy include:

- Health and Safety
- Intimate Care
- First Aid
- Medicines
- Behaviour Management
- Staff Behaviour Policy (guidance for safer working practice/code of conduct)
- Missing Child
- Online Safety
- Failure to Collect Child
- Site Security
- Risk Assessments
- Equal Opportunities
- Special Educational Needs and Disability
- Outings/Visits
- Emergency Evacuation Procedures
- Concerns/Complaints

The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy (DDSL)

- The EYFS 2021 states; *'a practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in every setting'.*
- The DSL or deputy will be available at all times when children are present, for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns.
- An appropriately qualified and experienced Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has been appointed to fulfil this role and appropriate time and resources, away from other work commitments, has been allocated in order that this role can be carried out effectively.

- The DSL and deputy will attend appropriate training to equip them to fulfil their role and they will refresh their training at least every 2 years. (SSP training page) The DSL and deputy will regularly update their knowledge and skills through attending training, briefing sessions, reading newsletters etc.
- The DSL, Gemma Gill , has overall responsibility for the day-to-day safeguarding and child protection systems in the setting. These responsibilities include;
  - Liaising with other professionals in all agencies, including social services, police and health colleagues.
  - Keeping staff up to date with any changes to national and local policy or legislation.
  - Being a source of support, advice and guidance to any other setting staff, both paid and voluntary, on an ongoing basis and on any specific safeguarding issue as required.
  - Co-ordinating child protection action within the setting, including making referrals as necessary.
  - Maintaining a confidential recording system for safeguarding and child protection concerns.
  - Ensuring all staff, visitors and volunteers are aware of the setting's policies and procedures and their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children.
  - Ensuring all staff, both paid and voluntary, have received appropriate and up to date child protection training.
  - Ensuring their own training is kept up to date by attending appropriate DSL training every 2 years and accessing updates, at least annually, through a variety of methods e.g. bulletins and local meetings.
  - Representing the setting at inter-agency meetings in particular strategy discussions, child protection conferences and core groups.
  - Managing and monitoring the setting's role in early help, child in need and child protection plans.
  - Sharing information with staff about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in their setting have experienced with a view to understanding how to best support these children in the setting.

Staff Responsibilities, Training, Supervision and Safe Working Practice

- All staff have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All members of staff have a duty of care to take appropriate action and work with other services as needed.
- All staff will complete Basic Awareness training, every 3 years (as advised by the SSP). Training will enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way.
- The DSL will ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding updates through staff meetings, email, newsletters etc.
- At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate will be on the premises at all times when children are present, and will accompany children on outings.
- Staff involved in preparing and handling food will receive food hygiene training.
- All staff will have a sufficient understanding and use of English to ensure the well-being of children in their care

Staff Induction

- All new staff receive induction training to help them understand their roles and responsibilities.

- Induction training includes, information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding/child protection procedures, the provider's equality policy, and the health and safety policy.

Staff Supervision

- Staff receive regular supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage. Uninterrupted time will be set aside to ensure supervision sessions are effective for all involved.
- Supervision will be a two-way process, which supports and develops the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group or team and will support staff to improve the quality of the work they do, thus improving outcomes for children as well as achieving agreed objectives. Supervision will also provide an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues, including the safeguarding of children and concerns about an individual or colleague's practice.
- All staff and volunteers will receive regular and planned supervision sessions. Uninterrupted time will be set aside to ensure any supervision sessions effective for both practitioner and management.

Safe Working Practice

- Staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) work within clear behavioural guidelines (refer to the settings **Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct** and Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children.
- Physical intervention is only used when the child is endangering him/herself or others and such events are recorded and signed by a witness. Staff are made aware of the settings **Behaviour Management Policy** and physical interventions must be in line with the procedures laid out in the policy.
- Staff are made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (email, mobile phones, texting, social network sites etc.) through the setting's **Online Safety Policy** and **Acceptable Use Policy.**
- Staff are made aware of the setting's Whistle-blowing procedure and that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.
  Staff will be directed to read the setting's "Whistleblowing Policy" and made aware that they can
  also contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on 0800 028 0285 or by email to help@nspcc.org.uk to report any concerns they have about other staff in the setting.

Recognising Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and can be caused through either inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm.
Working Together 2018 lists four categories of abuse:

- Physical,
- Emotional,
- Sexual and
- Neglect.

(See appendix 1 for Working Together definitions and possible indicators of abuse).

Staff are aware that;

- Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label, in most cases; multiple issues will overlap with one another.

- Child welfare concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. For example, children may be abused in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or by a stranger. An adult or adults, or another child or children may abuse them. Children may be abused via the internet by their peers, family members or by unknown or in some cases, unidentifiable individuals. In the case of honour-based abuse, including forced marriage and female genital mutilation, children may be taken out of the country to be abused.
- Abuse and neglect can happen over a period of time or be a one-off event. This can have major long-term impacts on all aspects of a child's health, development and well-being.
- The warning signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Children develop and mature at different rates, so what appears to be worrying behaviour for a younger child might be normal for an older child. Parental behaviours may also indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff will also be alert to parent-child interactions or concerning parental behaviours; this could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health.
- It is important to respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family and they recognise that a warning sign does not automatically mean a child is being abused.
- An abused child may often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives.

Other Safeguarding Concerns to be Aware of: (see appendix 2)

- Peer on Peer Abuse (sexual violence and sexual harassment)
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CE)
- Domestic abuse (DA)
- Children missing education (CME)
- Children with family members in prison
- Homelessness
- Private Fostering.
- Bruising or non-explained injury in non-mobile children

Responding to a Disclosure

If a child discloses abuse, staff will respond appropriately:

- We will listen to the child and avoid interrupting except to clarify. We will allow the child to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way.
- We will not interrogate the child, we may ask open-ended questions to clarify the situation, but we will not ask leading questions. Children will only be interviewed by trained Social Workers or Police Officers.
- We will not make any promises to the child about not passing on information. Information may need to be shared to get help in place.
- Information will be recorded accurately, including the timing, setting and those present, as well as what was said.
- The DSL will be informed as soon as possible (within the same working day).

Following a disclosure of abuse, children will be supported by their key person.

Key Person

All children will be allocated a key person with whom they can develop a close relationship and who can tailor opportunities to the individual needs of each child.

Visitors to the Setting

Any visitor to the setting who receives a disclosure of abuse, suspects that abuse may have occurred or is concerned for the safety or welfare of a child **must** report immediately to the DSL or if unavailable to the deputy.

Procedures for Referral

Staff will refer to the SSP's Thresholds Document The Right Help at the Right Time" when assessing a child's level of need (follow link below)

The Thresholds document identifies three levels:

1. Universal – children with no additional needs.
2. Early Help – children with additional needs.
3. Statutory Social Care – children with complex and multiple needs.

All staff have a responsibility to refer a child to Children's social care under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 if they believe or suspect that a child:

- Has suffered significant harm;
- Is likely to suffer significant harm;
- Has a disability, developmental and welfare needs which are likely only to be met through provision of family support services (with agreement of the child's parent).
- Under the Children Act 1989, a Child in Need is a child whose development would be likely to be impaired without provision of services.

MASH Contact Details:

E-mail: Swindonmash@swindon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01793 466903 (during normal office hours which are 8.30am to 4.40pm Monday to Thursday, and 8.30am to 4.00pm Friday)

The Emergency Duty Service (EDS) is available outside office hours on 01793 436699

- A telephone referral will be confirmed in writing using the form RF1 within 48 hours of the initial call and referrers should expect an acknowledgement within 3 working days otherwise they should contact MASH again.
- The referral will be shared and agreed with the parent/carer, and where appropriate with the child/young person, unless to do so could place the child at increased risk of harm, in which case, advice would first be sought from MASH.
- If a child discloses physical or sexual abuse, where the alleged abuser is either a family member or someone resident within the household, MASH will be consulted before informing parents.
- If the child is already subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) the allocated social worker will be contacted, they will advise when, and by whom, the parents should be informed. (See appendix 3 flow chart.)

- Staff will work closely with other agencies to implement the actions of a Child Protection Plan. They will attend all child protection conferences, core groups and strategy meetings to support the child and family as necessary.

Escalation Procedures

In circumstances where staff feel a professional decision is not safe or is inappropriate, they will initially consult with their Safeguarding lead or line manager to –

- Clarify their thinking in order to identify the problem,
- Be specific as to what the concern is about, and what they aim to achieve;
- Evidence the nature and source of their concerns and keep a record of all discussions.

It is expected that most disagreements can be resolved by professionals discussing the concerns and agreeing a way forward to meet the child's needs.

If professional agreement cannot be reached, then the concern should be escalated (Swindon Escalation Policy):

Stage 1: Manager or Safeguarding Lead or Deputy/Designated Professional **within 5 working days.**

Stage 2: Agency SSP representative to Agency SSP Representative **within 5 working days.**

Stage 3: Refer to SSP Executive's **within 5 working days.**

Stage 4: Refer to SSP Independent Chair **within 5 working days.**

Stage 1, 2, 3 & 4 are all formal stages of the escalation process.

Early Help

- Where staff have emerging concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger), they will follow the Early Help process. The process involves staff being alert to emerging problems, discussing their concerns with the DSL and the DSL co-ordinating an appropriate response with the support of other professionals. This may involve undertaking an Early Help Assessment, (EHA) and in some cases, the DSL may take on the role of Lead Professional.
- Early Help cases will be kept under constant review and if the situation does not appear to be improving consideration will be given to a referral to MASH.

Record Keeping – Child Protection

Staff receiving a disclosure of abuse, noticing possible abuse or with a concern about a child, will make an accurate record as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen,

putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated, signed, and discussed with the DSL.

- All hand-written records will be retained, even if they are subsequently typed up in a more formal report.
- Written records of concerns will be kept, even where there is no need to make a referral immediately. Parents/guardians will be notified of all recorded concerns.
- Injuries will be marked on a body map; **photographs will never be taken** (Appendix 4).
- Where concerns do not meet the threshold for a referral to MASH, consideration will be given to the appropriateness of completing an Early Help Assessment.
- All records relating to child protection concerns will be kept in a secure place and will remain confidential. They will not form part of the pupil's developmental records and will be kept separate from other records.
- A chronology will be kept at the front of each individual child protection file. It will be reviewed and updated whenever a new concern is raised or additional relevant information becomes available, noting any action taken.
- The DSL and management will regularly monitor the quality of child protection records.
- Where a child transfers to school or moves to a new setting, child protection documentation will be transferred to the receiving school/setting within 14 days, preferably by hand. If it is not possible to do a face-to-face handover, records will be sent by recorded delivery, with a 'Transfer of Information' sheet in a sealed envelope, **separate from any developmental records.** Postal delivery will be followed up with a telephone conversation.
- Records will be retained in line with Government guidance on the Transfer and Retention of Child Protection Records.

Templates and guidance for keeping child protection records are available on Swindon Hub for Early years

Parental Involvement

We are committed to helping parents/carers understand our responsibility for the safety and welfare of all pupils and our commitment to work in partnership with parents.

- Parents/carers can access the settings Child Protection Policy on our website https://learningtreepreschool.co.uk/ and in the policy folder situated in the entrance hall. Parents will be made aware of the policy during their induction meeting and will be asked to sign a statement to say they understand the setting's child protection responsibilities.
- Child protection or welfare concerns will be openly discussed, with parents/carers. Where a referral to MASH is needed, the agreement of parents/carers will be sought before making the referral. The only time concerns will not be discussed with parents is if staff believe that sharing concerns may place the child at increased risk of harm, then advice would be sought first.
- A lack of agreement from the parent/carer will not stop a referral going ahead.

Suitable People/Safer Recruitment

We endeavour to create a culture of safe recruitment and as part of this, we adopt recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject and identify people who might abuse children.

We adhere to our statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, this includes enhanced DBS checks on all staff and on any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children (including those living or working on the premises)

When employing new staff we follow Safer Recruitment procedures as set out in the South West Child Protection Procedures.

- Interview panels will have at least one person who has completed Safer Recruitment Training. There will be a safeguarding statement in all job advertisements and job descriptions. Any gaps in employment history or unaccounted for periods will be fully investigated. References will be requested prior to interview. At least one reference will be from the applicants' most recent childcare placement.
- We will record information about staff qualifications, identity checks, disqualification and vetting processes (including the Disclosure and Barring Service reference number, the date a disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it) on a central register.
- We will not allow people, whose suitability has not been checked to have unsupervised contact with children.

Disqualification under the Childcare Act

- Staff, students and volunteers are informed during their induction that, under the Childcare Act 2006, they are expected to provide up to date information in relation to any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children, whether received before or during their employment at the setting.
- There is also an expectation that the setting will be informed, if staff relationships and associations, both within and outside the workplace (including online), may have implications for the safety of children in the setting.

Volunteers

A risk assessment will be undertaken for volunteers to determine whether an enhanced DBS check should be applied for. This will depend on the level of activity the volunteer is engaged in and whether they are ever left unsupervised with children.

Managing Allegations

- We recognise that it is possible for staff and volunteers to behave in a way that might cause harm to children and we take seriously any allegation received.
- An allegation may indicate that a member of staff, a volunteer or a member of bank staff has;
  - Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
  - Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child; or
  - Behaved towards a child that indicates he/she would pose a risk of harm to children.
- **As soon as an allegation is made, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted.**
  LADO Team – 01793 463854
  Jon Goddard – 07392103019 (Mon-Wed)
  Rachel Hull – 07824081177 (Thurs-Fri)
  Lado@swindon.gov.uk
- An Allegations Management referral form will need to be completed;
- Ofsted will be informed of the allegation within 14 days.
- Staff/volunteers should report an allegation about a staff member to the owner/manager, unless they are the subject of the allegation. The owner/manager will then proceed as above.

- Where the allegation is against the owner/manager, the staff member/volunteer will contact the LADO as above.
- Where the allegation is against an adult from another agency, for example, bank staff, it is still the responsibility of the setting to ensure the allegation is dealt with appropriately, in conjunction with the agency where applicable.
- An allegation will not be discussed with the alleged perpetrator or other members of staff/committee, unless advised to do so by the LADO.
- In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to protect the child, by contacting the police, before contacting the LADO.
- The setting will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service if at the end of the allegation process a member of staff or volunteer is removed from their position, or if they leave while under investigation.

The Curriculum

- We will provide a curriculum that encourages children to talk and be listened to. Children will be provided with opportunities to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse across all areas of learning. Children will learn that their views are valued and respected.

Online Safety

- Children will be taught about keeping safe online through educating them about safe online procedures and by educating their parents about the dangers of the internet through leaflets, posters, newsletters etc. Where children have access to the internet, we will ensure that they are protected from harmful and inappropriate online material by putting effective monitoring and filtering in place.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

- Staff acknowledge that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges as they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs that may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.
- Staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionally impacted by safeguarding concerns such as bullying. All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour/mood change or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability and be aware that children with SEN and disabilities may not always outwardly display indicators of abuse.

Use of Mobile Phones and Digital Photography

We have a written policy for the acceptable use of mobile phones, cameras and other digital media in our setting.

- The only mobile phone to be used is the work mobile and this must only be used with the permission of the manager. The work mobile will be open to scrutiny at all times
- The work mobile will only be used in designated areas for example not in toilets, changing areas or sleeping areas.
- Staff mobiles and other digital media will be kept in a designated area and will not be carried on a person when children are present. Staff may use appliances in a designated area e.g. a staff room during staff breaks or before and after sessions, when children are not present.

- Visitors, parents, contractors etc. are made aware that phones and other digital media are not to be used in designated areas and that no photographs, videos or audio recordings are permitted in the setting.
- Staff will take photographs of children using the work photographic equipment; no personal equipment will be used. The work photographic equipment will be open to scrutiny at all times.
- Photographs will not be taken in sensitive areas such as toilets or nappy changing areas.
- Written permission will be obtained from parents/carers for appropriate use of photographs/digital images to record children's progress.
- Children's images will only be taken off site, with the prior permission of the manager, in line with the settings policy.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- All staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. We will maintain records and obtain and share information with parents/carers, health professionals, the police, social services and Ofsted as appropriate and in line with "Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners" 2018
- We will enable a regular two-way flow of information with parents/carers, and between providers if a child is attending more than one setting.
- Confidential information and records about staff and children are held securely and only accessible and available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.
- We are aware of our responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) and that this legislation does not limit the sharing of information in order to keep children safe and includes sharing information without consent.
- We will register with the Information Commissioner's Office as appropriate.
- All staff will read the setting's "Confidentiality Policy" as part of their induction procedure. Information will be shared on a strictly "need to know" basis.
- Records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period in line with the settings retention of records policy.
- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The DSL will only disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a "need to know" basis.
- All staff will be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets that might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

Security

- Staff are responsible for maintaining awareness of the safety and security of buildings and grounds and for reporting any concerns that become known. Risk assessments are completed as appropriate.
- Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into the setting. Visitors will sign into the appropriate book Any individual who is not known or identifiable will be challenged for clarification and reassurance.
- The setting will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent/carer/other) who threatens security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the site.

Complaints

- We operate within a whole-setting community ethos and we welcome comments from children, parents/carers and others about areas that may need improvements as well as comments about what we are doing well.
- The setting has a **Complaints Procedure** available to parents/carers, children and members of staff who wish to report concerns. This can be found in the registration pack and on our website.
- All reported concerns are taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with under the specific **Procedures for Managing Allegations against Staff.**

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis; however, amendments will be made as and when necessary throughout the year.
Staff are informed about all amendments.

Appendix 1 – Working Together 2018 Definitions of Abuse and Possible Indicators

Physical Abuse

A form of abuse that may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Physical Abuse

- Bruises and abrasions around the face
- Damage or injury around the mouth
- Bi-lateral injuries such as two bruised eyes
- Bruising to soft area of the face such as the cheeks
- Fingertip bruising to the front or back of torso
- Bite marks
- Burns or scalds (unusual patterns and spread of injuries)
- Deep contact burns such as cigarette burns
- Injuries suggesting beatings (strap marks, welts)
- Covering arms and legs even when hot
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Injuries need to be accounted for; inadequate, inconsistent or excessively plausible explanations or a delay in seeking treatment should signal concern.

Failure to Thrive

- Child's weight/height falling below expected centile
- Skin dry and pale and hair thin and straw like
- Lack of energy, listless and lack of concentration
- Refuses food but drinks a lot of juice, vomiting and diarrhoea
- Failure to meet developmental milestones

- Behavioural problems

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meets the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Emotional Abuse

- Over reaction to mistakes
- Lack of self-confidence/esteem
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harming
- Eating disorders
- Extremes of passivity and/or aggression
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Unwillingness or inability to play
- Excessive need for approval, attention and affection

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Adult males do not solely perpetrate sexual abuse. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual

activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Sexual Abuse

- Sudden changes in behaviour and school performance
- Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate
- Self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide
- Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal
- Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
- Regression to younger behaviour for example thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby
- Distrust of familiar adults e.g. anxiety of being left with relatives, a child minder or lodger
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Depression and withdrawal
- Fear of undressing for PE
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Fire setting

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment;
- Respond to a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inadequate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at School
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor relationship with peers
- Compulsive stealing and scavenging
- Rocking, hair twisting and thumb sucking
- Running away
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Low self esteem

Appendix 2: Specific Safeguarding Issues

Children Missing Education (pre-school sessions)

Staff will be aware that children's non-attendance, particularly repeatedly, can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. Early intervention will be taken to identify the risk of any underlying safeguarding concerns and the settings policy for following up on non-attenders will be followed. The setting will have at least two, up to date, emergency contacts for a child.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

'*Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology*.' (DfES Feb 2017)

Staff at our setting identify that CSE involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) because of engaging in sexual activities.

Staff recognise that children at risk of CSE need to be identified and issues relating to CSE should be approached in the same way as protecting children from other risks. Staff are aware that sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation may involve varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexting, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse or recognise this as abusive.

This may apply to children, parents/carers, older siblings, staff or other members of the setting community.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CE)

Staff recognise that that criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable young adults is a form of harm, it is geographically widespread and may include drug networks or gangs grooming and exploiting children and young adults to carry drugs and money from urban areas to sub-urban and rural areas (County Lines exploitation). These cases will be referred to children's social care through the usual channels. Staff should also consider whether a child is at risk from extra familial abuse or exploitation.

'Honour Based' Violence (HBV), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage

Staff will be aware that HBV encompasses a range of crimes that have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital

mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. It may also include non-violent forms of abuse.

FGM comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs.

A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without valid consent of one or both parties where duress is a factor. Forced marriage is not a religious or cultural issue - it is a human rights abuse.

Staff are alert to the risks and indicators of HBV/FGM and Forced Marriage and they are aware that they are all forms of abuse (regardless of the motivation) with long-lasting consequences and cases must be reported and escalated through the usual channels.

For further information, including details of training staff should visit the SSP website links below.

https://safeguardingpartnership.swindon.gov.uk/info/3/workers_and_volunteers/10/workers_and_volunteers/9

https://safeguardingpartnership.swindon.gov.uk/info/3/workers_and_volunteers/10/workers_and_volunteers/8

Radicalisation and Extremism

Staff realise that they have a duty to protect children from radicalisation and any form of violent extremism in line with the "Prevent Duty" (June 2015). Any concerns will be reported to the DSL.

In fulfilling this duty, the setting will work closely with the SSP and will have regard to:

- Assessing the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This will be based on an understanding, shared with partners, of the potential risk in the local area. The setting will protect children from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies in place to identify children at risk, and intervening as appropriate;
- Staff training so that staff have the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups. Staff should know where and how to refer children for further help;
- Online safety policies will ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet by establishing appropriate levels of filtering;
- Promoting fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. These values are already implicitly embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Additional information about responding to online radicalization and extremism can be found in the settings **Online Safety Policy.**

Further information and details of training can be found on the SSP website; https://safeguardingpartnership.swindon.gov.uk/info/3/workers_and_volunteers/10/workers_and_volunteers/14

Peer on Peer Abuse (sexual violence and sexual harassment)

This is most likely to include, but is not limited to, bullying, gender-based violence, sexual assaults, sexting, intimate personal relationships between peers as well as hazing-type violence and rituals. Sexual harassment can include sexual comments, remarks and/or jokes and may take place online or in person, and may be standalone or be part of wider abuse. Peer on peer abuse can occur within an intimate partner relationship.

This form of abuse should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Staff will be alert to this form of abuse and aware that this form of abuse must be reported through the usual channels.

Domestic Abuse (DA)

Staff recognise that all children who witness domestic abuse are being emotionally abused and this can cause "significant harm." Domestic abuse will always be referred to MASH. DA is defined as any violent or abusive behaviour used by one person to dominate and control another within a close personal or family relationship. Children can witness DA in a variety of ways, they may be in the same room and get caught up in an incident, perhaps trying to defend the victim, they may be in a different room but able to hear abuse taking place and witness injuries caused by the abuse, or they may be asked to take part in verbally abusing the victim.

Children with Family Members in Prison

Staff recognise that there are negative consequences for these children and they are at risk of poor outcomes so appropriate support will be put in place (https://www.nicco.org.uk/)

Homelessness

Staff will be aware that being homeless or being at risk of being homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL will direct families to the Local Housing Authority for support and a referral will be made to children's social care if deemed necessary.

Private Fostering

Staff will be aware that they have a mandatory duty to report any child in a "private fostering" arrangement, to the Local Authority.
Private fostering is defined as an arrangement whereby a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if the child has a disability) is placed for 28 days or more in the care of someone who is not the child's parent(s) or a 'connected person'

Bruising and injuries to non-mobile children

Bruising is the most common injury in physical child abuse and a common injury in non-abused children, the exception to this being in non-mobile infants where accidental bruising is rare (<1%).
Any bruising, fractures, bleeding and other injuries such as burns in a non-mobile should be treated as a matter of concern.
Refer to guidance on Swindon Safeguarding Partnership website

Appendix 3

Sharing / recording concerns

An individual with concerns about a child records these and shares these with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Gemma Gill or the deputy DSL Louise Rose as soon as possible.

Consideration

The DSL will consider the information, in the context of any other concerns/disclosures and decide on next steps. Where possible this should be done in consultation with others in the safeguarding team. Parents/carers should be involved at this stage, **unless to do so may place the child at increased risk of significant harm, in which case advice should be sought from MASH (01793 466903).**

Referral to MASH (multi-agency safeguarding hub)

The DSL will make a telephone referral to **MASH on 01793 466903 f**ollowed up within 24 hours by a written referral, using **form RF1** (SSP website)

The RF1 form must be signed and dated by the referrer.

If a child discloses physical or sexual abuse where the

No referral to children's social care

Actions will be agreed to monitor the child and support the child/ family where needed.

An Early Help Assessment (EHA) should be considered at this stage.

Children's social care consideration

Children's social care decides within 1 working day what action will be taken, including if an assessment is needed and will **feedback to the referrer** (within 72 hours**).** This decision will be made using the **Swindon Threshold document,**

No further action required (Level 1)

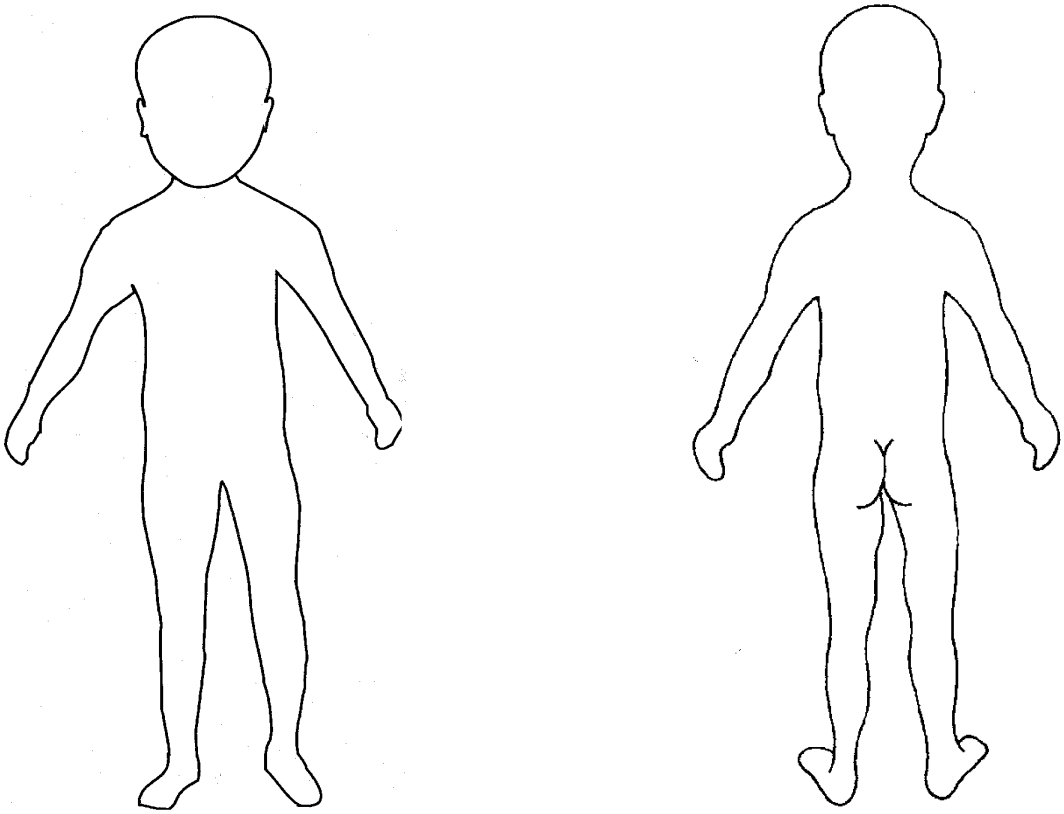
Early Help Assessment (Level 2)
Refer to the Early Help Hub

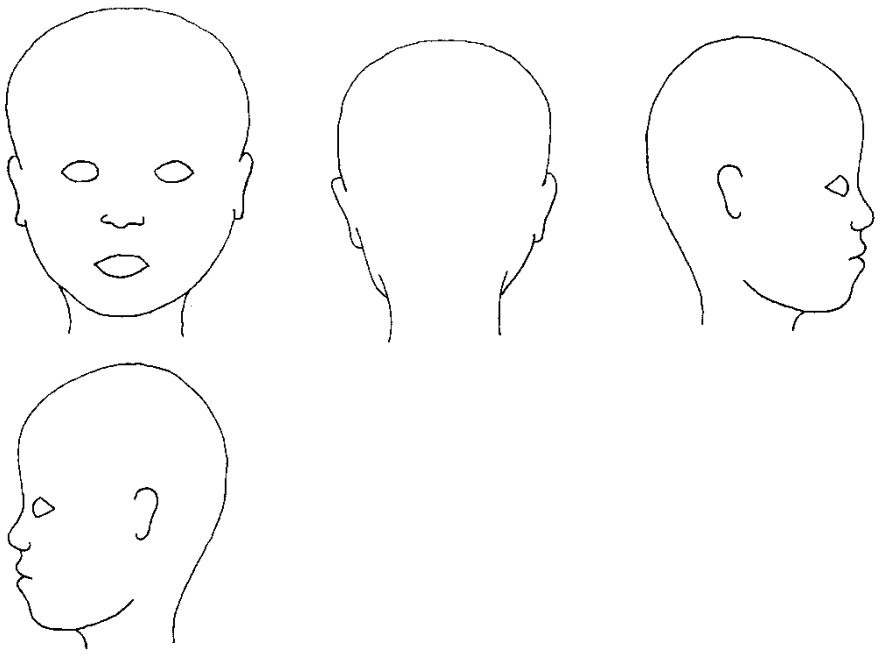
Statutory Intervention (Level 3)

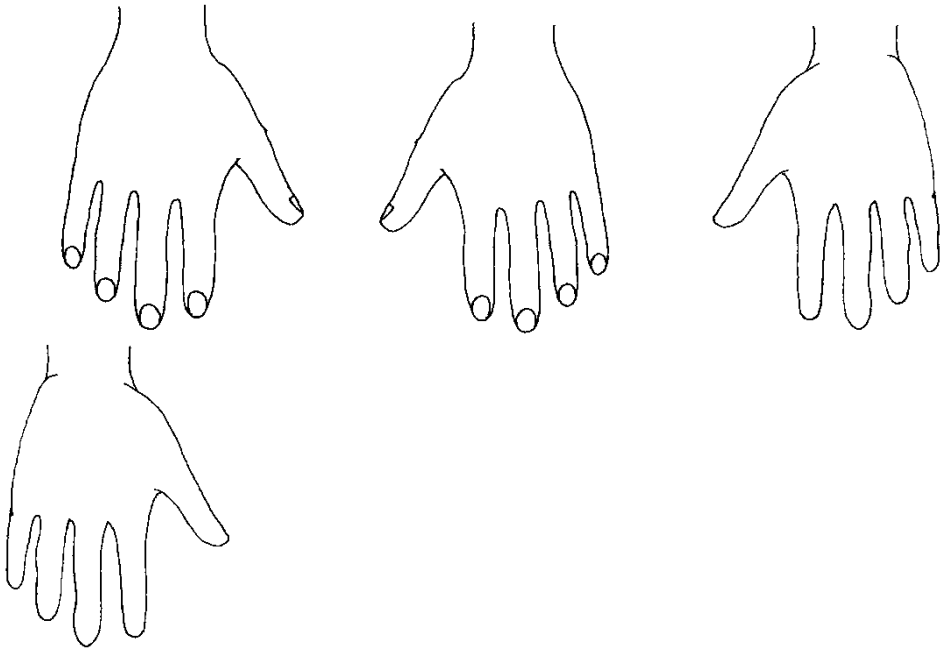
Children's social care agrees to assess, it could be a section 17 or section 47 assessment

If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should always press for re-consideration (see SSP Escalation Policy)

Appendix 4







Appendix 5: National Support Organisations

- NSPCC: Provide advice and support if you're worried about a child www.nspcc.org.uk
- Child Line: Provide Information, advice and support for children www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: Provide support for families that are struggling www.familylives.org.uk
- Crime Stoppers: Report information to prevent www.crimestoppers-uk.org
- Victim Support: Support for victims of crime www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Kidscape: Parent Advice Line www.kidscape.org.uk
- The Samaritans: 24 hours support helpline www.samaritans.org
- Mind: Provide support with mental health www.mind.org.uk
- NAPAC Support for People Abused in Childhood www.napac.org.uk
- MOSAC: Support for parents of children who have been sexually abused www.mosac.org.uk www
- Respond: supports people with learning disabilities, autism or both www.respond.org.uk

- Mencap: Advice and support for people with learning disabilities www.mencap.org.uk
- Refuge: Help for women and children who have experienced domestic abuse www.refuge.org.uk
- Women's Aid: Help and support in relation to domestic abuse https://www.womensaid.org.uk/
- Men's Advice Line: Support for men who experience domestic abuse www.mensadviceline.org.uk
- Forced Marriage Unit: Forced marriage guidance https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage
- Lucy Faithfull Foundation: Advice and guidance around preventing child sexual abuse www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk
- Stop it Now!: Advice and guidance around preventing child sexual abuse www.stopitnow.org.uk
- Parents Protect: www.parentsprotect.co.uk
- CEOP: Advice and guidance in relation to online sexual abuse or child exploitation www.ceop.police.uk
- Marie Collins Foundation: Support for children who suffer online abuse or exploitation www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): Report online crimes www.iwf.org.uk
- Child net International: www.childnet.com
- UK Safer Internet Centre: support for professionals, parents/carers and children to make the internet a safer place. www.saferinternet.org.uk
- Parents Info: Help and advice for families in relation to the digital world www.parentinfo.org
- Internet Matters: Helping carers keep children safe online www.internetmatters.org
- Net Aware: NSPCC keeping children safe online www.net-aware.org.uk
- Parent Port: Report concerns around inappropriate content on the media https://www.bbfc.co.uk/about-us/news/parentport-helps-parents-keep-children-safe-online
- Get safe Online: Free advice in relation to staying safe online www.getsafeonline.org
- Professional Online Safety Helpline: www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline
- Educate against Hate: Government advice in relation to safeguarding children against radicalisation www.educateagainsthate.com
- Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit: Report online material promoting terrorism or extremism www.gov.uk/report-terrorism
- True Vision: Report hate crime www.report-it.org.uk

1.3 Looked after children

Policy statement

Learning Tree Pre-school are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff in our provision are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Children become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most looked after children will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has an impact on their emotional well-being. Most local authorities do not place children under five with foster carers who work outside the home; however, there are instances when this does occur or where the child has been placed with another family member who works.
We place emphasis on promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to. Our policy and practice guidelines for looked after children are based on two important concepts, attachment and resilience. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives, as the foundation for resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and enable the development of positive dispositions for learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

Principles
The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC..
We offer places for two, three and four-year-olds who are in care to ensure they receive their entitlement to early education. We expect that a child will have been with a foster carer for a minimum of one month and that they will have formed a secure attachment to the carer. We expect that the placement in the setting will last a minimum of six weeks.
We will always offer 'stay and play' provision for a child who is three to five years old who is still settling with their foster carer, or who is only temporarily being looked after.
Where a child who normally attends our setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer, we will continue to offer the placement for the child.

Procedures

The designated person for looked after children is the designated child protection co-ordinator.
Every child is allocated a key person before they start and this is no different for a looked after child. The designated person ensures the key person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs. The designated person and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and his or her family and ensure that appropriate information is gained and shared.
The setting recognises the role of the local authority children's social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes, especially with regard to the birth parent's or foster carer's role in relation to the setting, without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
At the start of a placement there is a professionals meeting to determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates the child's learning needs. This plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks and three months. Thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.
The care plan needs to consider issues for the child such as:
their emotional needs and how they are to be met;
how any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed;
their sense of self, culture, language(s) and identity – and how this is to be supported;
their need for sociability and friendship;
their interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway; and
how any special needs will be supported.
In addition the care plan will also consider:
how information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored;
what contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact. If this is to be at the setting, when, where and what form the contact will take will be discussed and agreed;
what written reporting is required;
wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child's return home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in planning; and
with the social worker's agreement, and as part of the plan, the birth parent(s) should be involved in the setting's activities that include parents, such as outings and fun-days etc alongside the foster carer.
The settling-in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same as for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. It is even more important that the 'proximity' stage is followed until it is visible that the child has formed a sufficient relationship with his or her key person for them to act as a 'secure base' to allow the gradual separation from the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases, so time needs to be allowed for it to take place without causing further distress or anxiety to the child.
In the first two weeks after settling-in, the child's well-being is the focus of observation, their sociability and their ability to manage their feelings with or without support.

Further observations about communication, interests and abilities will be noted to form a picture of the whole child in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage prime and specific areas of learning and development.
Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's file and discussed with the foster carer.
If the concerns are about the foster carer's treatment of the child, or if abuse is suspected, these are recorded in the child's file and reported to the child's social care worker. Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.
The transition to school will be handled sensitively. The designated person and/or the child's key person will liaise with the school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the looked after child's birth parents.

1.4 Uncollected child

Policy statement

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult by their expected collection time, I put into practice agreed procedures. The child will receive a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible.

I inform parents/carers of my procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Procedures

Parents are asked to provide the following specific information when their child starts attending my setting, which is recorded on my Registration Form:

Home address and telephone number - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour or close relative.

Place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable).

Mobile telephone number (if applicable).

Names, addresses, telephone numbers and signatures of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting, for example a childminder or grandparent.

Who has parental responsibility for the child.

Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child.

On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they inform me in writing of how they can be contacted.

On occasions when parents, or the persons normally authorised to collect the child, are not able to collect the child, they provide me with written details of the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child. I agree with parents how to verify the identity of the person who is to collect their child.

Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform so that I can begin to take back-up measures. My contact telephone number is01793 313929

If a child is not collected at their expected collection time, I follow the procedures below:

The child’s file is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.

If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work.

If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child - and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Registration Form - are contacted.

All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers.

The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in their file.

If no-one collects the child within 30 minutes of their expected collection time and there is no named contact who can be contacted to collect the child, I apply the procedures for uncollected children.

If we have any cause to believe the child has been abandoned I contact the local authority children's social care team:
If the children's social care team is unavailable [or as our local authority advise] we will contact the local police] Referral Team 466903

After an additional 15 minutes if the child has not been collected, we will contact the above statutory agencies again.

The child stays at the setting in the care of two of our fully-vetted workers, one of whom will be our manager or deputy manager until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social care worker, or by another person specified by social care.

Social care will aim to find the parent or relative. If they are unable to do so, the child will become looked after by the local authority.

Under no circumstances will I go to look for the parent, nor leave the setting premises with the child.

I ensure that the child is not anxious and I do not discuss my concerns in front of them.

A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.

Depending on circumstances, I reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked.

Ofsted may be informed: *0300 123 1231*

The local Pre-school Learning Alliance office/Development Worker may also be informed: *Ceri McAteer 01793 465740 07771478011*

1.5 Missing child

Policy statement

Children's safety is our highest priority, both on and off the premises. Every attempt is made, through the implementation of our outings procedure and our exit/entrance procedure, to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

Procedures

Child going missing on the premises

As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the relevant member of staff alerts our setting manager.
The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
Our manager will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden.
Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
If the child is not found, our manager calls the police immediately and reports the child as missing. If it is suspected that the child may have been abducted, the police are informed of this.
The parent(s) are then called and informed.
A recent photo and a note of what the child is wearing is given to the police.
Our manager talks to our staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
Our manager contacts our director and reports the incident. Our director comes to the provision immediately to carry out an investigation, with our management team where appropriate.

Child going missing on an outing

This describes what to do when our staff have taken a small group on an outing, leaving our manager and/or other staff back in our setting premises. If our manager has accompanied children on the outing, or for a sole childminder, the procedures are adjusted accordingly. What to do when a child goes missing from a whole group outing may be a little different, as parents usually attend and are responsible for their own child.

As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the staff members on the outing ask children to stand with their designated carer and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
One staff member searches the immediate vicinity, but does not search beyond that.
Our senior staff member on the outing contacts the police and reports that child as missing.
Our manager is contacted immediately (if not on the outing) and the incident is recorded.
Our manager contacts the parent(s).
Our staff take the remaining children back to the setting as soon as possible.
According to the advice of the police, a senior member of staff, or our manager where applicable, should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.
A recent photo and a description of what the child is wearing is given to the police.

Our manager contacts our [chair, director or owner] and reports the incident. Our director comes to our premises immediately to carry out an investigation, with our management team.
Our staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.

The investigation
Ofsted are informed as soon as possible and kept up-to-date with the investigation.
Our director, carries out a full investigation, taking written statements from all our staff and volunteers who were present.
Our manager, together with our director speaks with the parent(s) and explains the process of the investigation.
The parent(s) may also raise a complaint with us or Ofsted.
Each member of staff present writes an incident report detailing:
The date and time of the incident.
Where the child went missing from e.g. the setting or an outing venue.
Which staff/children were in the premises/on the outing and the name of the staff member who was designated as responsible for the missing child.
When the child was last seen in the premises/or on the outing, including the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
What has taken place in the premises or on the outing since the child went missing.
The report is counter-signed by the senior member of staff and the date and time added.
A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
If the incident warrants a police investigation, all our staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff and parents. Children's social care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted are advised.
The insurance provider is informed.

Managing people
Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
Our staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
They may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid.
Our manager ensures that any staff under investigation are not only fairly treated, but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame our staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at our manager.
When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff one of whom is our manager and the other should be our [chair or another representative of the management committee, director or owner]. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against our staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.
The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. Our remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs

and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly, but also reassure them.
In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, our staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. Our director will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
Our staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

1.6 E Safety including use of mobile phone and cameras

Policy statement

We at Learning Tree Pre-school take steps to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of mobile phones and cameras/devices with cameras in the setting.

Procedures

Personal Mobile Phones
Personal mobile phones belonging to members of staff with the exception of the managers are not used in the rooms occupied by the children during working hours. Personal mobile phones are stored in staff lockers. In the event of an emergency, personal mobile phones may be used in the privacy of the staff room with permission from the manager. This must not take up an unreasonable amount of time.
Members of staff ensure that the telephone number of the setting is known to immediate family and other people who need to contact them in an emergency.
If members of staff take their own mobile phones on outings, for use in the case of an emergency, they must not make or receive personal calls as this will distract them.
Members of staff will not use their personal mobile phones for taking photographs of children on outings.
Parents and visitors are requested not to use their mobile phones or any device containing a camera whilst on the premises or on outings where children are or may be present. Visitors will be advised of a quiet space where they can use their mobile phone, where there are no children present.

Cameras and videos
Members of staff must not bring their own cameras into the setting.
Photographs and recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons, i.e. to record their learning and development, or for displays within the setting.
Photographs of children are only taken on equipment belonging to the setting.
If the press are invited into the setting to publicise a specific event, written parental permission is sought for all pre-school children in the photograph, unless this is granted no publicity will take place.
Camera and video use is monitored by the setting manager.
Where parents request permission to photograph or record their children at special events, permission will first be gained from all parents for their children to be included.
Photographs and recordings of children are only taken of children if there is written permission to do so.

1.7 Acceptable Use Policy

Aims

The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) will aim to:

• safeguard children and young people by promoting appropriate and acceptable use of information and communication technology (ICT).

• outline the roles and responsibilities of all individuals who are to have access to and/or be users of, work-related ICT systems.

• ensure all ICT users have an acute awareness of risk, a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse and the sanctions that may be applied.

Roles and responsibilities

Registered person

The registered person is to have overall responsibility for ensuring online safety will be considered an integral part of everyday safeguarding practice. This will include ensuring:

• early years practitioners and their managers will receive the appropriate training, guidance, time and resources to effectively implement online safety policies and procedures.

• clear and rigorous policies and procedures are to be applied to the use/non-use of personal ICT equipment by all individuals who affect or come into contact with the early years setting. Such policies and procedures are to include the personal use of work-related resources.

• the AUP is to be implemented, monitored and reviewed regularly, and for ensuring all updates are to be shared with relevant individuals at the earliest opportunity.

• monitoring procedures are to be open and transparent.

• allegations of misuse or known incidents are to be dealt with appropriately and promptly, in line with agreed procedures, and in liaison with other agencies, where applicable.

• effective online safeguarding support systems are to be put in place, for example, filtering controls, secure networks and virus protection.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be a senior member of the management team who is to have relevant, current and practical knowledge and understanding of safeguarding, child protection and online safety. Access to an individual holding this role is to be available at all times, for example, a designated deputy. The DSL will be responsible for ensuring:

• agreed policies and procedures are to be implemented in practice.

• all updates, issues and concerns are to be communicated to all ICT users.

• the importance of online safety in relation to safeguarding is to be understood by all ICT users.

• the training, learning and development requirements of early years practitioners and their managers are to be monitored and additional training needs identified and provided for.

• an appropriate level of authorisation is to be given to ICT users. Not all levels of authorisation will be the same - this will depend on, for example, the position, work role and experience of the individual concerned. In some instances, explicit individual authorisation must be obtained for specific activities where, deemed appropriate.

• any concerns and incidents are to be reported in a timely manner in line with agreed procedures.

• the learning and development plans of children and young people will address online safety.
• a safe ICT learning environment is to be promoted and maintained.

Early years practitioners and their managers will ensure:

• the timely reporting of concerns in relation to alleged misuse or known incidents, subject to agreed procedures.
• ICT equipment is to be checked before use and all relevant security systems judged to be operational.
• awareness will be raised of any new or potential issues, and any risks which could be encountered as a result.
• children and young people are to be supported and protected in their use of online technologies – enabling them to use ICT in a safe and responsible manner.
• online safety information is to be presented to children and young people as appropriate for their age and stage of development.
• children and young people will know how to recognise and report a concern.
• all relevant policies and procedures are to be adhered to at all times and training undertaken as is to be required.

Children will be encouraged to:

• be active, independent and responsible learners, who will contribute as appropriate to policy and review.
• abide by the Acceptable Use Agreement as to be approved by peers, early years practitioners and their managers, parents and carers.
• tell a familiar adult about any access of inappropriate content, material that makes them feel uncomfortable or contact made with someone they do not know, straight away, without fear of reprimand (age and activity dependent).

Parents and carers are to be encouraged to sign Acceptable Use Agreements and to share responsibility for their actions and behaviours. This will ensure a consistent message is to be communicated to all.

A copy of an Acceptable Use Agreement is to be provided to parents and carers on enrolment of their child at the early years setting. This will be reviewed on an annual basis thereafter. It will be an expectation that parents and carers will explain and discuss the Acceptable Use Agreement with their child to ensure that it is to be clearly understood and agreed. Records of all signed agreements are to be kept on file.

Parents and carers will also be required to sign additional Acceptable Use Agreements if they are to undertake any voluntary work within the early years setting and/or participate on associated trips or visits. Further agreement is to be sought if parents and carers are to be given remote access to ICT systems, such as a learning environment, electronic portfolio or remote webcam.

Acceptable use by early years practitioners and their managers.

Early years practitioners and their managers should be enabled to use work-based online technologies:

• to access age appropriate resources for children and young people;
• for research and information purposes;
• for study support.

All early years practitioners and their managers will be subject to authorised use as agreed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Authorised users will have their own individual password to access a filtered internet service provider. Users are not generally permitted to disclose their password to others, unless required to do so by law or where requested to do so by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All

computers and related equipment are to be locked when unattended to prevent unauthorised access.
All early years practitioners and their managers are to be provided with a copy of the Acceptable Use Policy and a copy of the Acceptable Use Agreement, which they must sign, date and return. A signed copy is to be kept on file.
The use of personal technologies will be subject to the authorisation of the DSL, and such use will be open to scrutiny, monitoring and review.

In the event of misuse by staff.
Should it be alleged, that an early years practitioner or manager is to have misused any ICT resource in an abusive, inappropriate or illegal manner, a report is to be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the registered person immediately. Should the allegation be made against the DSL, a report is to be made to a senior manager and the registered person. Procedures are to be followed as appropriate, in line with the Safeguarding Policy. Should allegations relate to abuse or unlawful activity, Children's Social Care, the Local Authority Designated Officer, Ofsted and/or the Police will be notified as applicable.

Acceptable use by children
Children and young people will be informed of the behaviours which will be deemed unacceptable. This will allow children and young people to take some degree of responsibility for their own actions.
In the event that a child or young person should accidentally access inappropriate material, it must be reported to an adult immediately. Appropriate action is to be taken to hide or minimise the window. The computer will not be switched off nor will the page be closed, as it may be necessary to refer to the site during investigations to allow effective filters to be put in place to prevent further inadvertent access.

Acceptable use by parents and carers
Partnership working with parents and carers should be considered essential practice for promoting an agreed and consistent message which will define acceptable and unacceptable behaviours. Parents and carers will therefore be asked to sign an Acceptable Use Agreement in order to promote this shared message.
Parents and carers are to be encouraged to contribute to the Acceptable Use Agreement and should be advised to use it should their child access similar technologies at home. Should parents or carers wish to use personal technologies, such as cameras within the setting environment, authorisation must be obtained from the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Specific guidelines for the use of such technologies must be followed.

Acceptable use by visitors, contractors and others
All individuals who affect or come into contact with the early years setting are to be expected to behave in an appropriate and respectful manner. No such individual will be permitted to have unsupervised contact with children and young people. All guidelines in respect of acceptable use of technologies must be adhered to. The right to ask any individual to leave at any time is to be reserved.

Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults' procedures

Digital Screen and Technology Policy (EYFS 2026 Compliant)

1. Policy Purpose and Statement

At Learning Tree Pre-School (Swindon) Limited, we recognize that technology plays a significant role in modern life. However, our primary goal is to prioritize active, physical, real-world learning and social interaction. In line with the EYFS 2026 statutory framework safeguarding and welfare updates, this policy details how digital technology and screens are managed in our setting. We ensure that any screen exposure is strictly limited, heavily supervised, and delivers clear educational value.

2. Age-Specific Screen Time Limits

- **Under 2s:** A strict zero-screen policy applies. Children under two years old will not be exposed to television, tablets, computers, or interactive whiteboards.
- **Ages 2 to 5:** Digital screen use is strictly capped at a maximum of 15 to 20 minutes per day per child. Screen time is never used as a passive time-filler or a behavior management tool.

3. Educational Context and Supervision

- **Active Co-Viewing:** Staff must actively engage alongside children whenever a screen is in use. Screens must never be used for passive viewing.
- **Curriculum Alignment:** Technology (such as looking up a picture of an animal or watching a short phonics clip) must explicitly support the current learning theme or a child's specific interest.
- **Physical Alternatives:** Staff will always prioritize physical resources (e.g., real books, hands-on objects, outdoor exploration) over a digital alternative wherever possible.

4. Safeguarding and Device Security

- **Filtering and Monitoring:** All setting-owned devices used by children are locked down with strict parental controls. Internet access is restricted to pre-approved, child-safe educational platforms.
- **Personal Devices:** Staff, volunteers, and visitors are strictly prohibited from using personal mobile phones, smartwatches, or tablets in the presence of children or in the learning rooms. Personal devices must be stored securely in lockers.
- **Setting Devices:** Only setting-owned cameras and tablets may be used to take photographs or videos for learning journals. These devices must never leave the premises unless authorised for an official outing.

5. Promoting Physical and Mental Well-being

- **Blue Light & Sleep Protection:** To protect children's natural sleep cycles, no digital screens will be used during meal times, wind-down times, or within one hour before scheduled sleep or nap times.
- **Posture and Movement:** Screen activities must not encourage prolonged sitting. Staff will ensure children maintain good posture and balance screen use with active physical play.

6. Partnership with Parents

We share our screen time limits with parents and offer guidance on managing healthy digital habits and e-safety at home if requested

Date Policy Implemented: ___01/09/2026_____

1.8 Key person supervision

Staff taking on the role of key person must have supervision meetings in line with this procedure.

Structure

- Supervision meetings are held every 4-6 weeks for key persons. For part-time staff this may be less frequent but at least every 6-8 weeks.
- Key persons are supervised by the setting manager or deputy.
- Supervision meetings are held in a confidential space suitable for the task.
- Key persons should prepare for supervision by having the relevant information to hand.

Content

The child focused element of supervision meetings must include discussion about:

- the development and well-being of the supervisee's key children and offer staff opportunity to raise concerns in relation to any child attending. *Safeguarding concerns must always be reported to the designated safeguarding lead immediately and not delayed until a scheduled supervision meeting*
- reflection on the journey a child is making and potential well-being or safeguarding concerns for the children they have key responsibility for
- promoting the interests of children.
- coaching to improve professional effectiveness based on a review of observed practice/teaching
- reviewing plans and agreements from previous supervisions including any identified learning needs for the member of staff

- During supervision staff can discuss any concerns they have about inappropriate behaviour displayed by colleagues but must never delay until a scheduled supervision to raise concerns.
- Staff are reminded of the need to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children that have occurred during their employment. New information is referred immediately to the designated officer/line manager/childminder agency.

Recording

- Key person supervision discussions are recorded and retained by the supervisor and a copy provided to the key person.

- The key person and supervisor must sign and date the minutes of supervision within 4-6 weeks of it happening and disagreements over recorded content must be minuted.
- Each member of staff has a supervision file that is always stored securely.
- Concerns raised during supervision about an individual child's welfare may result in safeguarding concerns not previously recognised as such, these are recorded on 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form and placed on the child's file. The reasons why the concerns have not previously been considered are explored.
- Additional safeguarding or welfare decisions made in relation to a child during supervision are recorded on the individual case file. The supervisor (if not the designated safeguarding lead) should ensure the recording is made and the designated safeguarding lead is notified.

Checking continuing suitability

- Supervisors check with staff if there is any new information pertaining to their suitability to work with children. This only needs to be recorded on the supervision meeting record.
- Where staff are on zero hours contracts or are employed as and when needed, their line manager completes the staff suitability self-declaration form quarterly, and/or at the beginning of every new period of work.
- Regarding the use of agency staff/support workers/self-employed persons there is an expectation that as part of the agreement with agencies they have sought information regarding their employee's suitability to work with children. Line managers must review this regularly.
- The position for students on placement is the same as that for agency staff

Exceptional Circumstances

Where exceptional circumstances prevent staff from conducting supervision as outlined in this procedure, the line manager is informed in writing, a copy placed on the supervision file and the appropriate actions agreed to ensure that the setting meets its obligations within the EYFS**.**

Further guidance

Recruiting Early Years Staff (Alliance Publication)

People Management in the Early Years (Alliance Publication)

1.9 Social networking

Social networking:
Policy on the Personal Use by Staff/Students and Other Third Parties

The Internet provides a number of benefits in which Learning Tree Pre-school staff may wish to participate. However, when someone is identified with Learning Tree Pre-school or discusses their work, they are expected to behave appropriately when on the Internet.

The Internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances.
However, the principles set out in this document should always be followed. If in any doubt then details should be discussed with the Manager.
The intention of this note is not to stop staff from conducting legitimate activities on the
internet, but serves to flag-up those areas in which conflicts can arise.

EYFS key themes and commitments

Staff at Learning Tree Pre-school, are in a professional position and are responsible for the care and education for Early Years children. Therefore they:
Must not engage in any activities which may harm the welfare of children or adults in connection with the setting.
Must not engage in activities on the Internet which might bring Learning Tree Pre-school or its associated employees into disrepute.

Social Networking Sites
Social networking sites provide a great way for people to maintain contact with friends.
However, through the open nature of such sites, it is also possible for third parties (including, Learning Tree Pre-school parents) to access this information.
Social networking sites allow photographs, videos and comments to be shared with thousands of other users. However, it is not appropriate to share work related information whether written or pictorial in this way. Please refer to our Confidentiality Policy.

Under no circumstance should comments be made about Learning Tree Preschool, it’s staff or children on the Internet. Staff member should respect the privacy and the feelings of others
If a staff member believes something has been written which gives rise to concerns within this, or any other, policy this must be discussed with the pre-school manager.
Staff should not be friends with current parents on social networking sites. This is to protect yourself and the setting for allegations that may occur.
Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action.
This policy was adopted at a meeting of Learning Tree Pre-school

1.10 Online Learning journey

EYFS Requirements

- This policy satisfies the Safeguarding & Welfare Requirements -
- This policy satisfies the Learning & Development Requirements -

Every Child Matters

This policy supports the following aspects of Every Child Matters :-

Enjoy & Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution

Statement of Intent

We believe that assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Practitioners will respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share.

Aim

Learning Tree Pre-school aims to ensure that all children attending the setting have a personal Learning Journey which records photos, observations and comments, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage, to build up a record of each child's achievements during their time with us.

Procedures/Policy

- Learning Tree Pre-school uses an online Learning Journey system (Aquila) allowing staff and parents to access the information from any computer via a personal, password-protected login.
- Staff access allows input of new observations and photos or amendment of existing observations and photos.
- Parent access allows input of new observations and photos or the addition of comments on existing observations and photos – parent log-ins do not have the necessary permission to edit existing material.
- Parents logging into the system are only able to see their own child's Learning Journey.
- Parents are asked to sign a consent form giving permission for their child's image to appear in other children's Learning Journeys, and to protect images of other children that may appear in any photos contained in their child's Learning Journey.
- The Learning Journey is started once the child has started Pre-school. During the first term, entries will be made more frequently as staff get to know the children.
- Observations are written in the present tense.

- Learning Tree Pre-school gives staff non-contact time to update their data. Staff are also encouraged to use quiet times and end of the day times to update the data.
- Photographs that are taken in the Aquila app are not saved to the device. Any photo that is taken and stored on the device are uploaded as soon as possible to Aquila and then deleted off the device.
- Staff working on Aquila will ensure their account is not accessed by anyone not authorised to do so. The accounts used are password protected.
- Aquila is not used as a general communication tool between Pre-School and home. A child's learning journey is a document recording their learning and development and parents may add comments on observations or contribute photos, videos or information about activities they have been doing at home.
- Parents may contact the Pre-School through the usual channels for any other day-to-day matters, e.g. absence, lost property, etc.

Security

- Aquila on-line Learning journey system is hosted on secure dedicated servers based in the EU.
- Access to information stored on Aquila can only be gained by unique user id and password.
- Parents can only see their own child's information and are unable to login to view other children's Learning Journeys.

Safe Sleep Policy

1. Purpose & Scope

This policy outlines our commitment to providing a safe, secure, and healthy sleep environment for all children in our care, in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This policy applies to all staff, students, and volunteers.

2. Sleep Environment & Equipment

- A sleep mat situated on the book corner floor.
- No extra items like toys, pillows, or loose covers are permitted in the sleep area.
- If required a lightweight cover firmly tucked in below the shoulders to prevent head covering.
- No head covering (hats) to be worn while child is asleep..

3. Safe Sleep Practices & Positioning

- **Children Aged 2 Years and Older:** Are no longer mandated to be placed strictly on their backs. They may settle and sleep in their preferred comfortable position (back, side, or stomach). Staff do not need to reposition them if they roll over.
- **Supervision:** Staff will maintain constant visual and auditory supervision of all sleeping children. Physical checks will be conducted at a minimum of every 10 minutes.
- **Environment:** Room temperatures will be maintained between 16°C and 18°C, monitored via a room thermometer. Staff will ensure children are not overdressed or wrapped in loose blankets to prevent overheating.

Health and Safety Procedures

2.1 Threats and abuse towards 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. We believe that 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.

- Staff and volunteers have a right to expect that their workplace is a safe environment, and that prompt and appropriate action will be taken on their behalf if they are subjected to abuse, threats, violence or harassment by parents, service users and other adults as they carry out their duties.
- The most common example of unreasonable behaviour is abusive or intimidating and aggressive language. If this occurs, the ultimate sanction, where informal action is not considered to be appropriate or has proved to be ineffective, is the withdrawal of permission to be on the premises.
- Where a person recklessly or intentionally applies unlawful force on another or puts another in fear of an immediate attack, it is an offence in law which constitutes an assault. We would normally expect the police to be contacted immediately.

There are three categories of assault, based on the severity of the injury to the victim.

1. Common Assault - involving the threat of immediate violence or causing minor injury (such as a graze, reddening of the skin or minor bruise).
2. Actual Bodily Harm - causing an injury which interferes with the health or comfort of the victim (such as multiple bruising, broken tooth or temporary sensory loss).
3. Grievous Bodily Harm - causing serious injury (such as a broken bone or an injury requiring lengthy treatment).

There is also an aggravated form of assault based upon the victim's race, religion, disability or sexual

Harassment and intimidation – including sexual harassment orientation and other protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010 which carries higher maximum penalties.

It is important to note that no physical attack or injury needs to have occurred for a common assault to have taken place. It is sufficient for a person to have been threatened with immediate violence and put in fear of a physical attack for an offence to have been committed.

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.

999 should always be used when the immediate attendance of a police officer is required. The police support the use of 999 in all cases where:

- there is danger to life
- there is a likelihood of violence
- an assault is, or is believed to be, in progress
- the offender is on the premises
- the offence has just occurred, and an early arrest is likely

If it is not possible to speak when making a 999 call because it alerts an offender, cough quietly or make a noise on the line, then follow the prompts to dial 55 (mobiles only) for a silent call. Police may be able to trace the call and attend the premises.

Staff may find themselves subject to a pattern of persistent unreasonable behaviour from individual parents or service users. This behaviour may not be abusive or overtly aggressive but could be perceived as intimidating and oppressive. In these circumstances staff may face a barrage of constant demands or criticisms on an almost daily basis, in a variety of formats for instance, email or telephone. They may not be particularly taxing or serious when viewed in isolation but can have a cumulative effect over a period of time undermining their confidence, well-being, and health. In extreme cases, the behaviour of the parent/carer or other service user may constitute an offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, whereby:

A person must not pursue a course of conduct:

(a) which amounts to harassment of another, and

(b) which he knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other.

If so, the police have powers to act against the offender. Such situations are rare but, when they do arise, they can have a damaging effect on staff and be difficult to resolve. If the actions of a parent/carer are heading in this direction, staff should speak to their manager who will take appropriate action to support. This may include the manager sending a letter to the aggressor, warning them that their behaviour is unacceptable and may result in further action being taken against them. All incidents must be recorded and reported to the owners/directors/trustees.

Banning parents/carers and other visitors from the premises

- Parents/carers and some other visitors normally have implied permission to be on the premises at certain times and for certain purposes, and they will not therefore be trespassers unless the implied permission is withdrawn.
- If a parent/carer or other person continues to behave unreasonably on the premises a letter will be sent to them from the owners/directors/trustees withdrawing the implied permission for them to be there.
- Further breaches may lead to prosecution of the person concerned by the police, and they are treated as a trespasser.
- Full records are kept of each incident, in the Reportable Incident Record, including details of any person(s) who witnessed the behaviour of the trespasser(s), since evidence will need to be provided to the Court.

Dealing with an incident

- We would normally expect all cases of harassment, assault, and all but the most minor of other incidents, to be regarded as serious matters which should be reported to the setting manager and/or the police and followed up with due care and attention.
- A record of the incident must be made whether the police are involved or not.
- Whilst acknowledging that service users i.e. parents and families, may themselves be under severe stress, it is never acceptable for them to behave aggressively towards staff and volunteers. Individual circumstances along with the nature of the threat are considered before further action is taken.
- All parties involved should consider the needs, views, feelings and wishes of the victim at every stage. We will ensure sympathetic and practical help, support and counselling is available to the victim both at the time of the incident and subsequently.
- A range of support can be obtained:
  - from the setting manager, owners/directors/trustees and/or a staff colleague
  - from Victim Support on giving evidence in court
- In non-urgent cases, where the incident is not thought to be an emergency, but police involvement is required, all staff and volunteers are aware of the non-emergency police contact number for the area.
- 999 calls receive an immediate response. Unless agreed at the time, non-emergency calls are normally attended within 8 hours (24 hours at the latest).

- When they attend the setting or service, the police will take written statements from the victim (including a 'Victim Personal Statement') and obtain evidence to investigate the offence in the most appropriate and effective manner.
- The police will also consider any views expressed by the setting manager and owner/directors/trustees as to the action they would like to see taken. The manager should speak to the victim and be aware of his or her views before confirming with the police how they wish them to proceed.
- In some cases, the victim may be asked by the police if he/she wishes to make a complaint or allegation against the alleged offender. It is important to ensure that the victim can discuss the matter with their line manager, a colleague or friend before deciding on their response. It is helpful for the victim to be assured that, if there is a need subsequently to give evidence in court, support can be provided if it is not already available from Victim Support.
- The decision regarding whether an individual is prosecuted is made by the police or Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) based on the evidence and with due regard to other factors.
- After the incident has been dealt with, a risk assessment is done to identify preventative measures that can be put in place to minimise or prevent the incident occurring again.

Harassment or intimidation of staff by parents/carers/visitors

- Through open communication between staff and parents/carers a culture of respect and tolerance should always be promoted. Should this communication and relationship break down due to a parent or parents/carers behaviour towards the staff member the setting manager should contact their line manager for advice and support. Where the staff member feels threatened or intimidated the aggressive and unacceptable behaviour should be addressed.
- Where the parent/carers behaviour merits it, the setting manager, with another member of staff present, should inform the parent/carer clearly but sensitively that staff feel unduly harassed or intimidated and are considering escalating the issue and making a complaint to the police if the behaviour does not desist or improve. The parent/carer should be left in no doubt about the gravity of the situation and that this will be followed up with a letter drafted by the setting manager but sent to their line manager for approval before being issued.
- The letter to the parent/carers should outline the zero-policy approach for any form of harassment, intimidation or abuse directed at staff.

- Staff must keep a record of incidents, including dates, times, locations, and witnesses, to support future action and meet reporting procedures as outlined in policy 7 – record keeping
- If the investigation concludes that the parents/carers expectations and demands are unreasonable, and that they are having a detrimental effect on staff, the findings can strengthen the setting manager's position in further discussions with the parent/carer and subsequently, if necessary, with the police. See procedures above relating to banning parents/carers from the premises.
- If the investigation concludes that the parents/carers expectations and demands are reasonable and if the parent/carer feels unhappy with the staff member or the setting itself the setting manager and/or owners/directors/trustees might wish to consider advising the parent/carer to make a formal complaint. Information about how to complain is clearly displayed for parents/carers and service users.

Complaints relating to potential breaches of the EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare requirements will be managed according to the 10.2 Complaints procedure for parents/carers and service users.

2.2 Health and safety procedures

Manual handling

- All staff complies with risk assessment and have a personal responsibility to ensure they do not lift objects likely to cause injury. Failure to do so may invalidate an insurance claim.
- 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 a pregnant woman, or staff with an existing or previous injury or impairment that may affect their capacity to lift or move items.
- Risk assessment is carried out of the environment in which the lifting is done. Features such as uneven floor surfaces, stairs, etc. add to the general risk and need to be taken into consideration.
- The setting manager ensures that they and their staff are trained to lift and move heavy objects and unstable loads correctly. Babies and young children are also heavy and need to be lifted and carried carefully and correctly.

Guidelines:

- Do not lift heavy objects alone. Seek help from a colleague.
- Bend from the knees rather than the back.
- Do not lift very heavy objects, even with others, that are beyond your strength.
- Use trolleys for heavy items that must be carried or moved on a regular basis.
- Items should not be lifted onto, or from, storage areas above head height.
- Do not stand on objects, other than proper height steps, to reach high objects and never try to over-reach.
- Push rather than pull heavy objects.
- Do not carry heavy objects up or down stairs; or carry large objects that may block your view of the stairs.
- Do not hold babies by standing and resting them on your hips.
- Please note this is not an exhaustive list.

- Managers are responsible for carrying out risk assessment for manual handling operations, which includes lifting/carrying children and lifting/carrying furniture or equipment.

2.3 Emergency evacuation and lock-down

Most procedures for handling an emergency are focussed on an event happening in the building. However, in some situations you will be advised to stay put (lock-down) rather than evacuate. 'Lock-down' of a building/group of buildings is intended to secure and protect occupants in the proximity of an immediate threat. By controlling movement in an area, emergency services can contain and handle the situation more effectively.

- The setting manager assesses the likelihood of an incident happening based on their location.
- The setting manager will check our police website for advice and guidance.
- Local police contact numbers are clearly displayed for staff to refer to.
- Staff rehearse simple 'age appropriate' actions with the children such as staying low to the floor, keeping quiet and listening to instructions in the same way that fire procedures are practiced. Lock-down must be rehearsed and recorded termly.
- The setting manager is aware of the current terrorist alert level, as available at www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels.
- We follow any additional advice issued by the local authority.
- Emergency procedures are reviewed and added to if needed.
- Information about this procedure is shared with parents and all staff are aware of their role during 'lockdown'.
- A text/phone message is issued to parents when lockdown is confirmed.

Suggested wording for parent message
Due to an incident we have been advised by the emergency services to secure the premises and stay put until we are given the 'all clear'. Please do not attempt to collect your child until it is safe to do so. We will let you know as soon as we are able to when that is likely to be. In the meantime we need to keep our telephone lines clear and would appreciate your cooperation in not calling unless it is vital that you speak to us.

Lock-down procedures

If an incident happens the setting manager/ deputy manager acts quickly to assess the likelihood of immediate danger. In most cases the assumption will be that it is safer to stay put and place the setting into 'lockdown' until the emergency services arrive. As soon as the emergency services arrive at the scene staff comply with their instructions.

During 'lock-down'

- Staff and children stay in their designated areas if it is safe to do so.

- Doors and windows are secured until further instruction is received.
- Curtains and blinds are closed where possible.
- Staff and children stay away from windows and doors.
- Children are encouraged to stay low and keep calm.
- Staff tune into a local TV or radio station for more information.
- Staff do NOT make non-essential calls on mobile phones or landlines.
- If the fire alarm is activated, staff and children remain in their designated area and await further instructions from emergency services, unless the fire is in their area. In which case, they will move to the next room/area, following usual fire procedures.

The door will not be opened once it has been secured until the manager or deputy manager is officially advised "all clear" or is certain it is emergency services at the door.

During lockdown staff do NOT:

- Travel down long corridors
- Assemble in large open areas
- Call 999 again unless there is immediate concern for their safety, the safety of others, or they feel they have critical information that must be passed on

Following lockdown:

- Staff will cooperate with emergency services to assist in an orderly evacuation.
- Staff will ensure that they have the register and children's details.
- Staff or children who have witnessed an incident will need to tell the police what they saw. The police may require other individuals to remain available for questioning.
- In the event of an incident it is inevitable that parents will want to come to the setting and collect their children immediately. They will be discouraged from doing so, until the emergency services give the 'all clear'. Staff will be always acting on the advice of the emergency services.

Recording and reporting

- A record is completed as soon as possible.

Further guidance

Members of the public should always remain alert to the danger of terrorism and report any suspicious activity to the police on 999 or the anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321.

For non-emergency, call the police on 101.

Emergency evacuation

This emergency evacuation plan should be displayed clearly on the door of each room alongside a floor plan. In shared premises, the plan must be implemented alongside any other plans in place for the rest of the building.

1. The manager will walk into the room holding up an evacuation card. The fire alarm is not to be sounded.
2. The manager will gather, or ensure that staff for each group/room have the following with them: • The visitor book. • Signing in/out sheet. • Register. • Nursery management software tablets (if applicable). • Essential medication that is required by individual children. • The setting's mobile phone (Gemma's mobile) • An emergency 'grab bag'. **NOTE** no other personal items are to be retrieved/collected. Staff do not empty their personal lockers
3. The manager identifies the safest evacuation route to be used, depending on whether there are visible signs of danger. Evacuation of the building commences
4. As the building is evacuated the manager checks each area and closes doors on the way out. If safe to do so, electrical mains and gas supplies are switched off before leaving. The locations are detailed here: Gas supplies ……UNSAFE …… Electrical mains……UNSAFE…… ……
5. Key persons are responsible for their key children during evacuation and whilst at the assembly point.
6. Once the building is evacuated the manager checks with each room/group that all children/staff or visitors are accounted for by using Aquila register
EVACUATION OF CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS
Children with additional needs must have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan. Staff must be aware of children who have plans in place and the support measures which to be followed to keep all children safe.

Children with additional needs may experience a sensory overload due to a change in routine and the noise of the fire alarm sounding. To support self-regulation and co-regulation, consider including comforting objects in your emergency bag that a child can hold whilst the evacuation is in process.

2.4 Animals in the setting

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

Procedures

Animals in the setting as pets

- We take account of the views of parents and children when selecting an animal or creature to keep as a pet in the setting, as well as any allergies or issues that individual children may have any animals or creatures.
- We carry out a risk assessment with a knowledgeable person accounting for any hygiene or safety risks posed by the animal or creature.
- We provide suitable housing for the animal or creature and ensure this is cleaned out regularly and is kept safely.
- Our staff are knowledgeable of the pet's welfare and dietary needs and ensure that the correct food is offered, at the right times.
- We make arrangements for weekend and holiday care for the animal or creature.
- We register with the local vet and take out appropriate pet care health insurance.
- We make sure all vaccinations and other regular health measures, such as de-worming, are up-to-date and recorded.
- We teach children the correct handling and care of the animal or creature and supervise them at all times.
- We ensure that children wash their hands after handling the animal or creature and do not have contact with animal soil or soiled bedding.
- We wear disposable gloves when cleaning housing or handling soiled bedding.
- If animals or creatures are brought in by visitors to show the children, they are the responsibility of their owner.
- The owner carries 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, we carry out a risk assessment - this may take account of safety factors listed in the farm's own risk assessment, which should be viewed.
- We contact the venue in advance of the visit to ensure that there has been no recent outbreak of E.coli or other infections. If there has been an outbreak, we will review the visit and may decide to postpone it.
- We follow our outings procedure.
- Children wash and dry their hands thoroughly after contact with animals.
- Outdoor footwear worn to visit farms is cleaned of mud and debris as soon as possible on departure and should not be worn indoors.
- We advise staff and volunteers who are, or may be, pregnant to avoid contact with ewes and to consult their GP before the visit.
-

2.5 Risk assessment

Risk assessment is carried out to ensure the safety of children, staff, parents, carers, and visitors. Individuals in the workplace are responsible for the health and safety of premises, equipment and working practices. We have a 'corporate responsibility' and 'duty of care' to those who work in, and receive a service from our provision. Individuals are also responsible for ensuring their own and others safety.

- 01.1a Generic risk assessment form is completed for each area of work, and the areas of the building that are identified in these procedures.
- 01.1b Access audit is completed to ensure inclusion and the health and safety of all visitors, staff, and children. The relevant procedure is modified if required to match the 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 important when balancing the need for children to take appropriate risks through physically challenging play. Children need opportunities to work out what is not safe and what to do when faced with a risk.

Daily safety sweeps and checks indoors and outdoors.

- Safety sweeps are conducted when setting up for the day or closing in the evening. Sometimes a safety sweep will identify a risk that requires a formal risk assessment on a form. For example, if a window latch is stiff and an educator must stand on a chair to reach it to ensure it has closed properly.

Health and safety risk assessments

Health and safety risk assessments inform procedures. Staff, parents, and carers should be involved in reviewing risk assessments and procedures, as they are the ones with first-hand knowledge as to whether the control measures are effective, and they can give an informed view to help update procedures accordingly.

The setting manager undertakes training and ensures staff have adequate training in health and safety matters. The setting manager ensures that checks/work to premises are carried out and records are kept.

- Gas safety by a Gas Safe registered gas/heating engineer.

- Electricity safety by a qualified electrician.
- Fire precautions to check that all fire-fighting equipment and alarms are in working order.
- Hot air heating systems/air conditioning systems cleaned and checked.
- Deep clean is carried out in kitchen.

The setting manager ensures that staff members carry out risk assessments that include relevant aspects of fire safety, food safety, in each of the following areas of the premises:

- Entrance and exits.
- Outdoor areas.
- Off-site venues used regularly.
- Passageways, stairways and connecting areas.
- Group rooms.
- Main kitchen.
- Staff/parent/carers room.
- Rooms used by others or for other purposes.

The setting manager ensures staff members carry out risk assessment for off-site activities, such as children's outings (including use of public transport), including:

Community centre, Library and local shops

- . The setting manager ensures staff members carry out risk assessment for work practice including:
- The intimate care of young children and older children.
- Arrivals and departures.
- Children with allergies and special dietary needs or preferences.
- Serving food in group rooms.
- Cooking activities with children.
- Supervising outdoor play and indoor/outdoor climbing equipment.
- Assessment, use and storage of equipment for disabled children.
- Visitors bringing equipment or animals for children's learning experiences, for example fire engines.

- Following any incidents involving threats against staff or volunteers.
- Following any accident or incident involving staff or children.

The setting manager liaises with Crime Prevention Officers as appropriate to ensure security arrangements for premises and personnel are appropriate.

Fire Safety

3.1 Fire safety policy

Alongside associated procedures in 02.01 Fire safety, this policy was adopted by Learning Tree Pre-School

Designated Fire Marshalls are: Gemma Gill and Louise Rose

Aim

Our provision is a suitable, clean, and safe place for children to be cared for, where they can grow and learn. We meet all statutory requirements about fire safety and fulfil the criteria for meeting the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements.

Objectives

- We recognise that we have a corporate responsibility and a duty of care for those who work in and receive a service from our provision, but individual employees and service users also have a responsibility to ensure their own safety as well as that of others. Risk assessment is the key means through which this is achieved.
- A fire safety risk assessment is carried out by a competent person in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- A Fire Log is completed and regularly updated.
- Necessary equipment is in place to promote fire safety.

Legal references

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005)

Electricity at Work Regulations (1989)

Further guidance

Fire Safety Record (Alliance Publication)

Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Educational Premises (Gov.uk)

3.2 Fire safety

The setting manager or named fire marshal (if applicable) has access to, or a copy of, the fire safety procedures specific to the building and ensure they align with these procedures. The setting manager/fire marshal makes reasonable adjustments as required to ensure the two documents do not contradict each other.

Fire safety risk assessment

02.01a Fire safety risk assessment form is carried out in each area of the setting by a competent person, or a named fire marshal, using the five steps to fire safety risk assessment as follows:

1. Identify fire hazards
   - Sources of ignition.
   - Sources of fuel.
   - Sources of oxygen (including oxygen tanks for disabled children).
2. Identify people at risk
   - People in and around the premises.
   - People especially at risk including very young babies, less ambulant disabled children or those using specialised equipment, such as splints, standing frames.
3. Evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from the risk
   - Evaluate the risk of the fire occurring.
   - Evaluate the risk to people from a fire starting on the premises.
   - Remove and reduce the hazards that may cause a fire.
   - Remove and reduce the risks to people from a fire.
4. Record, plan, inform, instruct, train
   - Record significant findings and action taken.
   - Prepare an emergency plan.
   - Inform and instruct relevant people; inform and co-operate with others.
   - Provide training.
5. Review
   - Keep assessment under review and revise when necessary

4 Food and Nutrition

4.1 Food safety and nutrition policy

Aim

Our setting is a suitable, clean, and safe place for children to be cared for, where they can grow and learn. We meet all statutory requirements for food safety and fulfil the criteria for meeting the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare requirements.

Objectives

- We recognise that we have a corporate responsibility and duty of care for those who work in and receive a service from our provision, but individual employees and service users also have responsibility for ensuring their own safety as well as that of others. Risk assessment is the key means through which this is achieved.
- General hygiene and safety in food preparation areas is maintained at all times
- We provide nutritionally sound snacks which promote health and reduce the risk of obesity and heart disease that may begin in childhood.
- We ensure that children are supervised at mealtimes and that children are within sight and hearing of a member of staff at all times and where possible staff are sat facing children when eating to ensure they are eating in a way that prevents choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions
- We ensure there is always a qualified Paediatric First Aider present in the room when children are eating.
- We follow the main advice on dietary guidelines and the legal requirements for identifying food allergens when planning menus based on the four food groups:
  - meat, fish, and protein alternatives
  - milk and dairy products
  - cereals and grains
  - fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Following dietary guidelines to promote health also means taking account of guidelines to reduce risk of disease caused by unhealthy eating.
- Parents/carers share information about their children's particular dietary needs with staff when they enrol their children and on an on-going basis with their key person. This information is shared with all staff who are involved in the care of the child.

- We take into account every child's individual development needs and work in partnership with parents/carers to help children to move on to the next stage with regard to weaning as per the guidance listed below.
- Foods provided by the setting for children have any allergenic ingredients identified on the menus.
- Care is taken to ensure that children with food allergies and intolerances do not have contact with food products that they are allergic to.
- We notify Ofsted or the childminder agency (CMA if registered with a CMA) of any food poisoning affecting two or more children in our care as soon as possible and at least within 14 days.
- Risk assessments are conducted for each individual child who has a food allergy or specific dietary requirement.
- If a child chokes at mealtime and intervention is given. We record details of the incident and ensure that parents/carers are informed.

Legal references

Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs.

Food Information Regulations 2014

The Childcare Act 2006

Further guidance

Safer Food Better Business for Caterers (Food Standards Agency)

Paediatric Allergy Action Plans - BSACI

Food allergy - NHS

Anaphylaxis - NHS

Weaning - Start for Life - NHS

Help for early years providers : Food safety

Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance

Allergy action plan

4.2 Food safety and nutrition procedures

Food preparation, storage and purchase

General

- All staff have up to date training on food safety.
- Staff refer to DFE food safety information which contains guidance on menu planning, food safety, managing food allergies and reading food labels.
- The setting manager is responsible for ensuring that the requirements in Safer Food Better Business are implemented.
- All staff responsible for preparing food have undertaken the Food Allergy Online Training CPD module available at http://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/.
- The setting manager is responsible for overseeing the work of the cook and all food handlers to ensure hygiene and allergy procedures are complied with.
- The staff and setting manager maintain a Food Allergy and Dietary Needs folder with:
  - a list of all children with known food allergies, intolerances or dietary needs updated at least once a term (the personal/medical details about the allergy or dietary needs remain in the child's file along with a copy of the risk assessment). This is displayed for all staff and the risk assessment shared.
  - a record of food menus along with any allergens
  - a copy of the FSA booklet 'Allergen information for pre-packed and loose foods' available at https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/allergen-information-for-pre-packed-and-loose-foods
  - a copy of the Food Allergy Online Training CPD certificate for the cook and each member of staff that has undertaken the training
- The setting manager is responsible for informing the directors who then reports to Ofsted or the childminding agency of any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises. Notification must be made as soon as possible and within 14 days of the incident.

Purchasing and storing food

- Food is purchased from reputable suppliers.
- Pre-packed food (any food or ingredient that is made by one business and sold by another such as a retailer or caterer) is checked for allergen ingredients and this

information is communicated to parents alongside menu information. For example, a meat pie bought at a supermarket or a tin of baked beans or the ingredients for a recipe prepared on site.

- If food that is not pre-packed (described as ‘loose food’), such as sandwiches bought from a bakery is served, then allergen information will have been provided by the retailer, this information must then be shared in the same way with parents.
- Parents/carers are requested not to bring food that contains (or may contain) nuts. Staff check packets to make sure they do not contain nuts or nut products.
- Bulk buy is avoided where food may go out of date before use.
- All opened dried food stuffs are stored in airtight containers.
- Dried packaged food is not decanted from packaging into large bins or containers as this prevents monitoring of sell by/use by dates and allergen information.
- Food is regularly checked for sell by/use by dates and any expired items are discarded.
- Bottles and jars are cleaned before returning to the cupboards.
- ‘Squeezy’ plastic bottles are not used for sauces.
- Items are not stored on the floor; floors are kept clear so they can be easily swept.
- Perishable foods such as dairy produce, meat and fish are to be used the next/same day. Soft fruit and easily perishable vegetables are kept in the fridge at 1- 5 Celsius.
- Packaged frozen food should be used by use by dates.
- Food left over should not be frozen unless it has been prepared for freezing, such as home-made bread or stews. Hot food should be left to cool for up to 1.5 hours and then quickly frozen.
- Freezer containers should be labelled, dated and used within 1-3 months.
- Fridge and freezer thermometers should be in place. Recommended temperatures for fridge 37 degrees Fahrenheit (3 degrees Celsius), and freezers 0 degrees Fahrenheit (-18 degrees Celsius). Temperatures must be recorded daily to ensure correct temperatures are being maintained.
- Freezers are defrosted every 3 months or according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Fruit and vegetables stored in the fridge are washed thoroughly before refrigeration to reduce risk of pests and E. coli contamination.

- Staff's own food or drink should be kept in separate designated area of the fridge; where possible, a fridge should be kept in the staff room to avoid mix ups.
- Items in fridges must be regularly checked to ensure they are not past use by dates.

Preparation of food

- Food handlers must check the content of food/packets to ensure they do not contain allergens.
- Food allergens must be identified on the menus and displayed for parents.
- Food handlers wash hands and cover any cuts or abrasions before handling food.
- Separate boards and knives are used for chopping food, usually colour coded.
- Raw and cooked foods are prepared separately.
- Meat and fish should be washed and patted dry with paper towels. This does not include chicken which must not be washed because of the risk of campylobacter.
- All vegetables and fruit are washed before preparing.
- Food left out is covered, for example when cooling down.
- Frozen meat, fish and prepared foods are thawed properly before cooking.
- Meat and fish are cooked thoroughly; a food probe is to be used to check temperature of roasted meat or baked meat products.
- Where a microwave is used, food is cooked according to manufacturer's instructions. It is not used to reheat children's food and never used to heat babies' bottles.
- Microwaved food is left to stand for a few minutes before serving.
- A food probe is used to check temperature of food, including where heated in a microwave; it is checked in several places to avoid hot spots.
- Food is cooked in time for serving and is not prepared in advance of serving times.
- Hot cupboards or ovens are not used to keep food warm.
- Potatoes and vegetables are peeled when needed, not in advance and left in water.
- Food prepared and cooked for different religious dietary needs and preferences, such as Halal or Kosher meat is cooked in separate pans and served separately.
- Food cooked for vegetarians does not come into contact with meat or fish or products.
- Food cooked and prepared for children with specific dietary needs is cooked in separate pans and served separately.

- A separate toaster is kept and used for children with a wheat or gluten allergy.
- Food prepared for children with dietary needs and preferences is clearly labelled and every effort is made to prevent cross-contamination.
- Raw eggs are not to be given in any form, such as mousse or mayonnaise.
- When given to children, eggs are fully cooked.

Serving Food

- There is a named person who is responsible for ensuring that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child.
- Staff risk assess the likelihood of children with dietary restrictions accessing the food of other children and must take appropriate action to prevent this from happening, for example:
  - check the list of children's dietary requirements displayed in the food preparation area
  - coloured plates
  - place mats
  - other methods as agreed by the setting manager
- Children with allergies/food preferences are not made to feel 'singled out' by the methods used to manage their allergy/food preference.
- Food served to children with identified allergies is checked by the key person to ensure that the meal (and its ingredients) does not contain any of the allergens for that child.
- The child's key person remains present throughout the child's mealtime.
- Food is taken from the kitchen to the rooms on a trolley, not carried across rooms.
- Tables are cleaned before and after, with soapy water or a suitable non-bleach product.
- Members of staff serving food wash their hands and cover any cuts with a blue plaster.

E.coli prevention

Staff who are preparing and handling food, especially food that is not pre-prepared for consumption e.g. fruit and vegetables grown on the premises, must be aware of the potential spread of E.coli and must clean and store food in accordance with the E.coli 0157 guidance, available at:

www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/guidancenotes/hygguid/ecoliguide#.U7FCVGlOWdI

Further guidance

Safer Food Better Business www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-sfbb

Campylobacter (Food Standards Agency) www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/campaigns/campylobacter/fsw-2014

Food allergy/anaphylaxis guidance

https://www.bsaci.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/BSACIAllergyActionPlan2018NoAAI2981-2.pdf

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/food-allergy/

Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance

Common_allergens.pdf

Allergen checklist for food businesses | Food Standards Agency

Health

5.1 Administering medicines

Policy statement

While it is not our policy to care for sick children, who should be at home until they are well enough to return to the setting, we will agree to administer medication as part of maintaining their health and well-being or when they are recovering from an illness.

In many cases, it is possible for children's GPs to prescribe medicine that can be taken at home in the morning and evening. As far as possible, administering medicines will only be done where it would be detrimental to the child's health if not given in the setting. If a child has not had a medication before, especially a baby/child under two, it is advised that the parent keeps the child at home for the first 48 hours to ensure there are no adverse effects, as well as to give time for the medication to take effect.

These procedures are written in line with guidance in *Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years Settings;* the manager is responsible for ensuring all staff understand and follow these procedures.

The key person is responsible for the correct administration of medication to children for whom they are the key person. This includes ensuring that parent consent forms have been completed, that medicines are stored correctly and that records are kept according to procedures. In the absence of the key person, the manager is responsible for the overseeing of administering medication.

Procedures

Children taking prescribed medication must be well enough to attend the setting. Only medication prescribed by a doctor (or other medically qualified person) is administered. It must be in-date and prescribed for the current condition (medicines containing aspirin will only be given if prescribed by a doctor). NB Children's paracetamol (un-prescribed) is administered only for children under the age of one year with the verbal consent of the parents in the case of a high temperature. This is to prevent febrile convulsion and where a parent or named person is on their way to collect the child.
Children's prescribed medicines are stored in their original containers, are clearly labelled and are inaccessible to the children.
Parents give prior written permission for the administration of medication. The staff receiving the medication must ask the parent to sign a consent form stating the following information. No medication may be given without these details being provided:
- the full name of child and date of birth;
- the name of medication and strength;
who prescribed it;
- the dosage to be given in the setting;
- how the medication should be stored and its expiry date;

- any possible side effects that may be expected; and
- the signature of the parent, their printed name and the date.

The manager or deputy will receive the medication and asks the parent to complete a consent form. Details will be conveyed to members of staff

The administration of medicine is recorded accurately in our medication record book each time it is given and is signed by the key person/manager. Parents are shown the record at the end of the day and asked to sign the record book to acknowledge the administration of the medicine. The medication record book records the:
name of the child;
name and strength of the medication;
date and time of the dose;
dose given and method;
signature of the key person/manager; and
parents signature.
We use the Pre-school Learning Alliance's Medication Record book for recording the administration of medicine and comply with the detailed procedures set out in that publication.

Storage of medicines
All medication is stored safely in a locked cupboard or refrigerated as required. Where the cupboard or refrigerator is not used solely for storing medicines, they are kept in a marked plastic box.
The child's key person is responsible for ensuring medicine is handed back at the end of the day to the parent.
For some conditions, medication may be kept in the setting to be administered on a regular or as-and-when- required basis. Key persons check that any medication held in the setting, is in date and return any out-of-date medication back to the parent.
Medicine will be locked in the cabinet stored in the staff room/office

If the administration of prescribed medication requires medical knowledge, individual training is provided for the relevant member of staff by a health professional.
If rectal diazepam is given, another member of staff must be present and co-signs the record book.
No child may self-administer. Where children are capable of understanding when they need medication, for example with asthma, they should be encouraged to tell their key person what they need. However, this does not replace staff vigilance in knowing and responding when a child requires medication.

Children who have long term medical conditions and who may require ongoing medication
A risk assessment is carried out for each child with long term medical conditions that require ongoing medication. This is the responsibility of the manager alongside the key person. Other medical or social care personnel may need to be involved in the risk assessment.

Parents will also contribute to a risk assessment. They should be shown around the setting, understand the routines and activities and point out anything which they think may be a risk factor for their child.
For some medical conditions, key staff will need to have training in a basic understanding of the condition, as well as how the medication is to be administered correctly. The training needs for staff form part of the risk assessment.
The risk assessment includes vigorous activities and any other activity that may give cause for concern regarding an individual child's health needs.
The risk assessment includes arrangements for taking medicines on outings and advice is sought from the child's GP if necessary where there are concerns.
A health care plan for the child is drawn up with the parent; outlining the key person's role and what information must be shared with other staff who care for the child.
The health care plan should include the measures to be taken in an emergency.
The health care plan is reviewed every six months, or more frequently if necessary. This includes reviewing the medication, e.g. changes to the medication or the dosage, any side effects noted etc.
Parents receive a copy of the health care plan and each contributor, including the parent, signs it.

Managing medicines on trips and outings
If children are going on outings, staff accompanying the children must include the key person for the child with a risk assessment, or another member of staff who is fully informed about the child's needs and/or medication.
Medication for a child is taken in a sealed plastic box clearly labelled with the child's name and the name of the medication. Inside the box is a copy of the consent form and a card to record when it has been given, including all the details that need to be recorded in the medication record as stated above.
On returning to the setting the card is stapled to the medicine record book and the parent signs it.
If a child on medication has to be taken to hospital, the child's medication is taken in a sealed plastic box clearly labelled with the child's name and the name of the medication. Inside the box is a copy of the consent form signed by the parent.
As a precaution, children should not eat when travelling in vehicles.
This procedure is read alongside the outings procedure.

5.2 Poorly children

- If a child appears unwell during the day, for example has a raised temperature, sickness, diarrhoea* and/or pains, particularly in the head or stomach then the setting manager calls the parents/carers and asks them to collect the child or send a known carer to collect on their behalf.
- If a child has a raised temperature, top clothing may be removed to make them more comfortable, but children are not undressed or sponged down to cool their temperature. A high temperature should never be ignored, but it is a natural response to infection.
- A child's temperature is taken and checked regularly, using Fever Scans or other means i.e. ear thermometer.
- In an emergency an ambulance is called, and the parents/carers are informed.
- Parents/carers are advised to seek medical advice before returning them to the setting; the setting can refuse admittance to children who have a raised temperature, sickness and diarrhoea or a contagious infection or disease.
- Where children have been prescribed antibiotics for an infectious illness or complaint, parents/carers are asked to keep them at home for 48 hours.
- After diarrhoea or vomiting, parents/carers are asked to keep children home for 48 hours following the last episode.
- Some activities such as sand and water play, and self-serve snack will be suspended for the duration of any outbreak.
- The setting has information about excludable diseases and exclusion times.
- The setting manager notifies the directors if there is an outbreak of an infection (affects more than 3-4 children) and keeps a record of the numbers and duration of each event.

Notifiable diseases and infection control

If educators suspect a child who falls ill whilst in their care is suffering from a serious disease that may have been contracted in the United Kingdom or abroad, immediate medical assessment is required. The service manager or deputy will call 111 and inform parents / carers.

Preventative measures are taken to reduce the risk of an outbreak returning. When an individual shows signs of an infectious illness, they are advised not to attend the service. If a child is already at the setting, they will be made comfortable in a space away from the other children to rest until they are able to be collected. The importance of thorough handwashing will be reiterated, and the educators will promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach with children and young people.

In the case of an outbreak of a notifiable disease which has been confirmed by a medical professional, the setting manager will seek further advice from the UKHSA, if not already contacted by them.

The setting manager has a list of notifiable diseases and contacts the UK Health Security Agency(UKHSA), Ofsted, or the childminder agency in the event of an outbreak.

Unwell children upon arrival

- On arrival, it is vital that parents/carers inform a member of staff if they notice their child may be showing signs of being unwell. It is the responsibility of the parents / carers to ensure their child does not attend the service if they are not fit to; this is a precautionary measure to prevent other children or staff from becoming ill. If a child is brought into the service with a non-prescription medication to treat a temporary illness or appears to show signs of being unwell, the setting manager will use their discretion to decide whether a child is fit to remain in the service.

Infection control for bodily fluids – transmissible viruses

- Viruses such as Hepatitis, (A, B and C), are spread through body fluids. Hygiene precautions for dealing with body fluids are the same for all children and adults. Transmittable viruses are spread through bodily fluids. Hygiene measures are put in

place to protect all staff and children/young people. These include single use vinyl gloves and aprons are worn when changing children's nappies, pants and clothing that are soiled with blood, urine, faeces or vomit.

- Protective rubber gloves are used for cleaning/sluicing clothing after changing.
- Soiled clothing is rinsed and bagged for parents/carers to collect.
- Spills of blood, urine, faeces or vomit are cleared using mild disinfectant solution and designated area mops; cloths used are disposed of with clinical waste.
- Tables, other furniture or toys/resources affected by blood, urine, faeces or vomit are removed where possible and cleaned using disinfectant. For larger items such as furniture, these must be cleaned immediately with disinfectant.
- Baby mouthing toys must be cleaned prior to another baby using them. All toys/resources are cleaned regularly. As a minimum, this should be carried out weekly, using sterilising solution for plastic toys/resources.

Handwashing

Handwashing is a crucial infection control measure which reduces the spread of illness. Adults, children and young people should regularly wash their hands, and increase this where there is an infection outbreak.

This should be carried out by all:

- After outside breaks
- Before meals and snack times
- Before preparation of snack and meals
- After using the toilet
- After nappy or clothing changes
- After the removal of personal protective equipment (PPE), including gloves.
- After blowing noses
- Before and after administering medication

Public Health England advises that children and staff should be encouraged to catch sneezes with a tissue, bin the tissue and wash their hands.

Nits and head lice

- Nits and head lice are not an excludable condition; although in exceptional cases parents may be asked to keep the child away from the setting until the infestation has cleared.

- On identifying cases of head lice, all parents are informed and asked to treat their child and all the family, using current recommended treatments methods if they are found.

**Diarrhoea is defined as 3 or more liquid or semi-liquid stools in a 24-hour period. (www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/chapter-9-managing-specific-infectious-diseases#diarrhoea-and-vomiting-gastroenteritis)*

*****Paracetamol based medicines (e.g. Calpol)***

Such medicine should never be used to reduce temperature so that a child can stay in the care of the setting for a normal day. The use of emergency medicine does not apply to children over 2 years old. A child over two who is not well, and has a temperature, must be kept cool and the parents asked to collect straight away.

Whilst the brand name Calpol is referenced, there are other products which are paracetamol or Ibuprofen based pain and fever relief such as Nurofen for children over 3 months.

Further guidance

Medication Administration Record (Alliance Publication)

Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings (Public Health Agency) https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in%20schools_poster.pdf

High temperature (fever) in children - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

5.3 Accidents and emergency treatment

Person responsible for checking and stocking first aid box: *Gemma Gill*

The setting provides care for children and promotes health by ensuring emergency and first aid treatment is given as required. There are also procedures for managing food allergies in section 03 Food safety and nutrition and 04 Health.

- Parents/carers' consent to emergency medical treatment consent on registration.
- At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate **must** always be on the premises and available when children are on the premises and must accompany children on outings, [or all staff are paediatric first aiders], who regularly update their training. We consider the number of children, staff, staff breaks and the layout of our setting to ensure that a paediatric first aider is always available and can respond to emergencies. We ensure that the training provider who delivers PFA training to our staff are competent.
- Students and trainees have PFA training may be included in ratios at the level below their level of study if we are satisfied that they are competent and responsible.
- First Aid certificates are renewed at least every three years. In line with the EYFS, all staff who obtained a level 2 and/or level 3 qualification since 30 June 2016 must obtain a PFA qualification within three months of starting work to be counted in ratios.
- All members of staff know the location of First Aid boxes, the contents of which are in line with St John's Ambulance recommendations as follows:
  - 20 individually wrapped sterile plasters (assorted sizes)
  - 2 sterile eye pads
  - 4 individually wrapped triangular bandages (preferably sterile)
  - 6 safety pins
  - 2 large, individually wrapped, sterile, un-medicated wound dressings
  - 6 medium, individually wrapped, sterile, un-medicated wound dressings
  - a pair of disposable gloves

- adhesive tape
- a plastic face shield (optional)

- No other item is stored in a First Aid box.
- Vinyl single use gloves are also kept near to (not in) the box, as well as a thermometer.
- There is a named person in the setting who is responsible for checking and replenishing the First Aid Box contents.
- A supply of ice is kept in the milk kitchen and main kitchen fridges.
- 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 or digital recording system. Parents/carers may have a photocopy of the accident form on request.
- In the event of minor injuries or accidents, 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. In which case they will contact the parent for clarification of what they would like to do, i.e. collect the child or take them home and seek further advice from NHS 111.

Serious accidents or injuries

- An ambulance is called for children requiring emergency treatment.
- First aid is given until the ambulance arrives on scene. If at any point it is suspected that the child has died, 06.07 Death of a child on site procedure is implemented and the police are called immediately.
- The registration form is taken to the hospital with the child.
- Parents/carers are contacted and informed of what has happened and where their child is being taken to.
- If the parents/carers do not arrive at the setting before the ambulance sets off for the hospital, a member of staff accompanies the child and remains with them until the parent/carer arrives.
- The setting manager arranges for a taxi to take the child and carer to hospital for further checks for minor injuries, if deemed to be necessary.

Recording and reporting

- In the event of a serious accident, injury, or serious illness, the setting manager notifies the owner/trustees/committee using 6.1c Confidential Safeguarding Incident report form, or other agreed reporting format, as soon as possible.
- If required, a RIDDOR form is completed; one copy is sent to the parent/carer, one for the child's file and one for the local authority Health and Safety Officer.
- The owners//trustees/committee are notified by the setting manager of any serious accident or injury to, or serious illness of, or the death of, any child whilst in their care to be able to notify Ofsted or the childminder agency (CMA if registered with a CMA) and any advice given will be acted upon. Notification to Ofsted is made as soon as is reasonably practicable and always within 14 days of the incident occurring. The designated person will, after consultation with the owners/directors/trustees, inform local child protection agencies of these events

5.4 Allergies and food intolerance

When a child starts at the setting, parents/carers are asked if their child has any known allergies or food intolerance. This information is recorded on the registration form.

- If a child has an allergy or food intolerance, 01.01a Generic risk assessment form is completed with the following information:
  - the risk identified – the allergen (i.e. the substance, material or living creature the child is allergic to such as nuts, eggs, bee stings, cats etc.)
  - the level of risk, taking into consideration the likelihood of the child coming into contact with the allergen
  - control measures, such as prevention from contact with the allergen
  - review measures
- 04.02a Health care plan form must be completed with:
  - the nature of the reaction e.g. anaphylactic shock reaction, including rash, reddening of skin, swelling, breathing problems etc.
  - managing allergic reactions, medication used and method (e.g. Epipen)
- The child's name is added to the Dietary Requirements list**.**
- A copy of the risk assessment and health care plan is kept in the child's personal file and is shared with all staff and is also kept in the cook's Food Allergy and Dietary Needs file.
- Parents/carers show staff how to administer medication in the event of an allergic reaction.
- Generally, no nuts or nut products are used within the setting.
- Parents/carers are made aware, so that no nut or nut products are accidentally brought in.

Oral Medication

- Oral medication must be prescribed or have manufacturer's instructions written on them.
- Staff must be provided with clear written instructions for administering such medication.
- All risk assessment procedures are adhered to for the correct storage and administration of the medication.
- The setting must have the parents/carers' prior written consent. Consent is kept on file.

5.5 Oral health

The setting provides care for children and promotes health through promoting oral health and hygiene, encouraging healthy eating, healthy snacks and tooth brushing.

- Fresh drinking water is always available and easily accessible.
- Sugary drinks are not served.
- In partnership with parents/carers, babies are introduced to an open free-flowing cup at 6 months and from 12 months are discouraged from using a bottle.
- Only water and milk are served with morning and afternoon snacks.
- Children are offered healthy nutritious snacks with no added sugar.
- Parents/carers are discouraged from sending in confectionary as a snack or treat.
- Staff follow the Infant & Toddler Forum's Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers.

Pacifiers/dummies

- Parents/carers are *advised* to stop using dummies/pacifiers once their child is 12 months old.
- Dummies that are damaged are disposed of and parents/carers are told that this has happened

Further guidance

Infant & Toddler Forum: Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers
www.infantandtoddlerforum.org/toddlers-to-preschool/healthy-eating/ten-steps-for-healthy-toddlers/

6 Promoting inclusion and Equality

6.1 Policy statement

We at Learning Tree Pre-school will ensure that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children. We recognise that children and their families come from diverse backgrounds. All families have needs and values that arise from their social and economic, ethnic and cultural or religious backgrounds. Children grow up in diverse family structures that include two parent and one parent families; some children have two parents of the same sex. Some children have close links with extended families of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins; while others may be more removed from close kin, or may live with other relatives or foster carers.

Some children have needs that arise from disability or impairment, or may have parents that are affected by disability or impairment. Some children come from families who experience social exclusion or severe hardship; some have to face discrimination and prejudice because of their ethnicity, the languages they speak, their religious or belief background, their gender or their impairment.

We understand that these factors affect the well-being of children and can impact on their learning and attainment. Our setting is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families. We aim to:
provide a secure and accessible environment in which all of our children can flourish and in which all contributions are considered and valued;
include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse family structures, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people;
improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity;
challenge and eliminate discriminatory actions;
make inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities of the setting; and
foster good relations between all communities.

Procedures

Admissions
Our setting is open to all members of the community.

We advertise our service widely.
We reflect the diversity of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
We provide information in as many languages as possible.
We base our Admissions Policy on a fair system.
We ensure that all parents are made aware of our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality Policy.

We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of a protected characteristic as defined by the Equalities Act (2010). These are:
disability;
race;
gender reassignment;
religion or belief;
sex;
sexual orientation;
age;
pregnancy and maternity; and
marriage and civil partnership.
We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our setting for reasons relating to disability.
We ensure, wherever possible, that we have a balanced intake of boys and girls in the setting.
We develop an action plan to ensure that people with impairments can participate successfully in the services offered by the setting and in the curriculum offered.
We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents whether by:
direct discrimination – someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic e.g. preventing families of some racial groups from using the service;
indirect discrimination - someone is affected unfavourably by a general policy e.g. children must only speak English in the setting;
association – discriminating against someone who is associated with a person with a protected characteristic e.g. behaving unfavourably to someone who is married to a person from a different cultural background; or
perception – discrimination on the basis that it is thought someone has a protected characteristic e.g. making assumptions about someone's sexual orientation because of their mannerisms or how they speak.
Displaying of openly discriminatory and possibly offensive materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on, or around, the premises and will be dealt with immediately and discreetly by asking the adult to stop using the unacceptable behaviour and inviting them to read and to act in accordance with the relevant policy statement and procedure. Failure to comply may lead to the adult being excluded from the premises.

Employment
Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria. Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all.
We may use the exemption clauses in relevant legislation to enable the service to best meet the needs of the community.
The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the DBS. This ensures fairness in the selection process.
All job descriptions include a commitment to promoting equality and recognising and respecting diversity as part of their specifications.
We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.

Training
We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which enable all children to flourish.

We ensure that staff are confident and fully trained in administering relevant medicines and performing invasive care procedures when these are required.
We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality.

Curriculum
The curriculum offered in the setting encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

Our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. If access to the settings is found to treat disabled children or adults less favourably, then we make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled children and adults. We do this by:
making children feel valued and good about themselves and others;
ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
undertaking an access audit to establish if the setting is accessible to all children;
making adjustments to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairments;
making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities, e.g. recognising the different learning styles of girls and boys;
positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources;
avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of books or other visual materials;
celebrating a wide range of festivals, particularly those celebrated by the children in the setting;
creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
differentiating the curriculum to meet children's special educational needs;
helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable;
ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities;
ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning; and
ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages.

Valuing diversity in families
We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families.
We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life to the setting.
We encourage mothers, fathers and other carers to take part in the life of the setting and to contribute fully.
For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion.
We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means and offer information regarding sources of financial support.

We take positive action to encourage disadvantaged and under-represented groups to use the setting.

Food
We work in partnership with parents to ensure that dietary requirements of children that arise from their medical, religious or cultural needs are met.
We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them.

Meetings
Meetings are arranged to ensure that all families who wish to may be involved in the running of the setting.
We positively encourage fathers to be involved in the setting, especially those fathers who do not live with the child.
Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways - written, verbal and in translation if necessary – to ensure that all mothers and fathers have information about, and access to, the meetings.

Monitoring and reviewing
So that our policies and procedures remain effective, we monitor and review them annually to ensure our strategies meets the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and to value diversity.
We provide a complaints procedure and a complaints summary record for parents to see.

Learning Tree Pre-school recognises that qualifications and training make an important contribution to the quality of the care and education provided by early years settings. As part of our commitment to quality, we offer placements to students undertaking early years qualifications and training. We also offer placements for school pupils on work experience.

We aim to provide for students on placement with us, experiences that contribute to the successful completion of their studies and that provide examples of quality practice in early years care and education.

Procedures

We require students on qualification courses to meet the 'suitable people' requirements of Ofsted and have DBS checks carried out.
We require students in our setting to have a sufficient understanding and use of English to contribute to the well-being of children in our care.
We require schools placing students under the age of 17 years with the setting to vouch for their good character.
We supervise students at all times and do not allow them to have unsupervised access to children.
Students undertaking qualification courses who are placed in our setting on a short term basis are not counted in our staffing ratios.
Trainee staff employed by the setting and students over the age of 17 may be included in the ratios if they are deemed competent and responsible.
We take out employers' liability insurance and public liability insurance, which covers both trainees and voluntary helpers.
We require students to keep to our Confidentiality Policy.
We co-operate with students' tutors in order to help students to fulfil the requirements of their course of study.
We provide students, at the first session of their placement, with a short induction on how our setting is managed, how our sessions are organised and our policies and procedures.
We communicate a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
We make the needs of the children paramount by not admitting students in numbers that hinder the essential work of the setting.
We ensure that trainees and students placed with us are engaged in bona fide early years training, which provides the necessary background understanding of children's development and activities.

7. Record Keeping

7.1 Children's records

Policy statement

We have record keeping systems in place that meet legal requirements; the means We use to store and share that information takes place within the framework of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018) and the Human Rights Act (1998).

This policy and procedure should be read alongside my Privacy Notice, Confidentiality and Client Access to Records Policy and our Information Sharing Policy.

Procedures

If a child attends another setting, we establish a regular two-way flow of appropriate information with parents and other providers. Where appropriate, We will incorporate comments from other providers, as well as parents and/or carers into the child's records.

We keep two kinds of records on children attending our setting:

Developmental records
These include observations of children in the setting, photographs, video clips and samples of their work and summary developmental reports.
These are usually kept in [state location] and can be accessed, and contributed to, by [our staff/me], the child and the child's parents.

Personal records
These may include the following (as applicable):
Personal details – including the child's registration form and any consent forms.
Contractual matters – including a copy of the signed parent contract, the child's days and times of attendance, a record of the child's fees, any fee reminders or records of disputes about fees.
Child's development, health and well-being – including a summary only of the child's EYFS profile report, a record of discussions about every day matters about the child's development health and well-bring with the parent.
Early Support – including any additional focussed intervention provided by our setting (e.g. support for behaviour, language or development that needs an SEN action plan) and records of any meetings held.
Welfare and child protection concerns – including records of all welfare and protection concerns, and our resulting action, meetings and telephone conversations about the child, an Education, Health and Care Plan and any information regarding a Looked After Child.
Correspondence and Reports – including a copy of the child's 2 Year Old Progress Check (as applicable), all letters and emails to and from other agencies and any confidential reports from other agencies.

These confidential records are stored in a lockable file or cabinet, which is always locked when not in use and which [our manager keeps/I keep] secure in an office or other suitably safe place.
We read any correspondence in relation to a child, note any actions and file it immediately
We ensure that access to children's files is restricted to those authorised to see them and make entries in them, this being [our manager, deputy or designated person for child protection, the child's key person, or other staff as authorised by our manager/myself and other staff as authorised by me].
We may be required to hand children's personal files to Ofsted as part of an inspection or investigation process; or to local authority staff conducting a S11 audit, as long as authorisation is seen. We ensure that children's personal files are not handed over to anyone else to look at.
Parents have access, in accordance with our Privacy Notice, Confidentiality and Client Access to Records Policy, to the files and records of their own children, but do not have access to information about any other child.
Our staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs. our staff induction programme includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality in the role of the key person.
We retain children's records for three years after they have left the setting; except records that relate to an accident or child protection matter, which are kept until a child reaches the age of 21 years or 24 years respectively. These are kept in a secure place.

Archiving children's files
When a child leaves our setting, We remove all paper documents from the child's personal file and place them in a robust envelope, with the child's name and date of birth on the front and the date they left. We seal this and place it in an archive box, stored in a safe place (i.e. a locked cabinet) for three years. After three years it is destroyed.
If data is kept electronically it is encrypted and stored as above.
Where there were s.47 child protection investigations, We mark the envelope with a star and archive it for 25 years.
We store financial information according to our finance procedures.

Other records
We keep a daily record of the names of the children we are caring for, their hours of attendance and the names of their key person.
Students on Pre-school Learning Alliance or other recognised qualifications and training, when they are observing in the setting, are advised of our Confidentiality and Client Access to Records Policy and are required to respect it.

7.2 **Providers records**

Policy statement

We keep records and documentation for the purpose of maintaining my business. These include:
Records pertaining to my registration.
Lease documents and other contractual documentation pertaining to amenities, services and goods.
Financial records pertaining to income and expenditure.
Risk assessments.
Employment records of my staff including their name, home address and telephone number.
Names, addresses and telephone numbers of anyone else who is regularly in unsupervised contact with the children.

I consider my records as confidential based on the sensitivity of information, such as with employment records. These confidential records are maintained with regard to the framework of the General Data Protection Regulations (2018), further details are given in our Privacy Notice and the Human Rights Act (1998).

This policy and procedure should be read alongside my Privacy Notice, Confidentiality and Client Access to Records Policy and Information Sharing Policy.

Procedures

All records are my responsibility and I ensure they are kept securely.
All my records are kept in an orderly way in files and filing is kept up-to-date.
My financial records are kept up-to-date for audit purposes.
I maintain health and safety records; these include risk assessments, details of checks or inspections and guidance etc.
My Ofsted registration certificate is displayed.
My Public Liability insurance certificate is displayed.
All my employment and staff records are kept securely and confidentially.

I notify Ofsted of any:
change in the address of my premises;
change to my premises which may affect the space available to me or the quality of childcare I provide;
change to [the name and address of our registered provider, or the provider's contact information/my name, address or contact information];
change to the person managing my provision];
significant event which is likely to affect my suitability to look after children; or
other event as detailed in the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* (DfE 2017).

7.3 Transfer of children's records to school

Policy statement

We recognise that children sometimes move to another early years setting before they go on to school, although many will leave my setting to enter a nursery or reception class.

We prepare children for these transitions and involve parents and the receiving setting or school in this process. We prepare records about a child's development and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage in my setting; in order to enable smooth transitions, we share appropriate information with the receiving setting or school at transfer.

Confidential records are shared where there have been child protection concerns according to the process required by our Local Safeguarding Children Board.

The procedure guides this process and determines what information we can and cannot share with a receiving school or setting. Prior to transferring information, we will establish the lawful basis for doing so (see our Privacy Notice).

Procedures

Transfer of development records for a child moving to another early years setting or school
Using the *Early Years Outcomes* (DfE 2013) guidance and our assessment of children's development and learning, [the key person] will prepare a summary of achievements in the seven areas of learning and development.
The record refers to:
any additional language spoken by the child and his or her progress in both languages;
any additional needs that have been identified or addressed by my setting;
any special needs or disability, whether a CAF was raised in respect of special needs or disability, whether there is an Education, Health and Care Plan, and the name of the lead professional.
The record contains a summary by the key person and a summary of the parent's view of the child.
The document may be accompanied by other evidence, such as photos or drawings that the child has made.
When a child transfers to a school, most local authorities provide an assessment summary format or a transition record, which we will follow as applicable.
If there have been any welfare or protection concerns, we place a star on the front of the assessment record.

Transfer of confidential information
The receiving school or setting will need to have a record of any safeguarding or child protection concerns that were raised in my setting and what was done about them.
I will make a summary of the concerns to send to the receiving setting or school, along with the date of the last professional meeting or case conference. Some Local

Safeguarding Children Boards will stipulate the forms to be used and provide these for us to use.
Where a CAF has been raised in respect of any welfare concerns, we will pass the name and contact details of the lead professional on to the receiving setting or school.
Where there has been an s47 investigation regarding a child protection concern, we will pass the name and contact details of the child's social worker on to the receiving setting or school – regardless of the outcome of the investigation.
We post or take the information to the school or setting, ensuring it is addressed to the setting or school's designated person for child protection and marked as 'confidential'.
We do not pass any other documentation from the child's personal file to the receiving setting or school.

Legal framework

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018)
Freedom of Information Act (2000)
Human Rights Act (1998)
Children Act (1989)

Further guidance

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners (HM Government 2015)
Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HM Government 2015)

7.4 Information sharing

'Sharing information is an intrinsic part of any frontline practitioners' job when working with children and young people. The decisions about how much information to share, with whom and when, can have a profound impact on individuals' lives. It could ensure that an individual receives the right services at the right time and prevent a need from becoming more acute and difficult to meet. At the other end of the spectrum it could be the difference between life and death.'

Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HM Government 2015)

Policy statement

We recognise that parents have a right to know that the information they share with us will be regarded as confidential, as well as to be informed about the circumstances when, and the reasons why, we are obliged to share information.

We record and share information about children and their families (data subjects) in line with the six principles of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018) which are further explained in our Privacy Notice that is given to parents at the point of registration The six principles state that personal data must be:
Processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject.
Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed for other purposes incompatible with those purposes.
Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which data is processed.
Accurate and where necessary, kept up to date.
Kept in a form that permits identification of data subjects fo no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is processed.
Processed in a way that ensures appropriate security of the persona data including protection against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures

We are obliged to share confidential information without authorisation from the person who provided it, or to whom it relates, if it is in the public interest. That is when:
it is to prevent a crime from being committed or to intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult; or
not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

The responsibility for decision-making should not rely solely on an individual, but should have the back-up of the management team. The management team provide clear guidance, policy and procedures to ensure all staff and volunteers understand their information sharing responsibilities and are able to respond in a timely, appropriate way to any safeguarding concerns.

The three critical criteria are:

Where there is evidence that the child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm.
Where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child may be suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm.
To prevent significant harm arising to children and young people or adults, including the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime.

Procedures

Our procedure is based on the GDPR principles as listed above and the seven golden rules for sharing information in the Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers. We also follow the guidance on information sharing from the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Remember that the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing as per the Children Act 1989, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.

Our policy and procedures on Information Sharing provide guidance to appropriate sharing of information [both within the setting, as well as] with external agencies.

Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their consent, unless it is unsafe or if I have a legal obligation to do so. A Privacy Notice is given to parents at the point of registration to explain this further.

In our setting we ensure parents:
Receive a copy of our Privacy Notice and information about our Information Sharing Policy when starting their child in the setting and that they sign our Registration Form to say that they understand the circumstances in which information may be shared without their consent. This will only be when it is a matter of safeguarding a child or vulnerable adult;
have information about our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy; and have information about the other circumstances when information will be shared with external agencies, for example, with regard to any special needs the child may have or transition to school.

Seek advice from other practitioners if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.

Our staff discuss concerns about a child routinely in supervision and any actions are recorded in the child's file.
Our manager routinely seeks advice and support from their line manager about significant harm.

Our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy sets out the duty of all members of our staff to refer concerns to our manager or deputy, as designated

person, who will contact children's social care for advice where they have doubts or are unsure.

Our manager seeks advice if they need to share information without consent to disclose.

Share with informed consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be certain of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.

We base decisions to share information without consent on judgements about the facts of the case and whether there is a legal obligation.
Our guidelines for consent are part of this procedure.
Our manager is conversant with this and she is able to advise staff accordingly.

Consider safety and well-being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.

In our setting we :
record concerns and discuss these with our designated person and/or designated officer from the management team for child protection matters;
record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared and to whom; and
follow the procedures for reporting concerns and record keeping as set out in our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.

Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.

Our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and Children's Records Policy set out how and where information should be recorded and what information should be shared with another agency when making a referral.

Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Where information is shared, we record the reasons for doing so in the child's file; where it is decided that information is not to be shared that is recorded too.

Consent
When parents choose our setting for their child, they will share information about themselves and their families. This information is regarded as confidential. Parents

have a right to be informed that we will seek their consent to share information in most cases, as well as the kinds of circumstances when we may not seek their consent, or may override their refusal to give consent. We inform them as follows:

Our policies and procedures set out our responsibility regarding gaining consent to share information and when it may not be sought or overridden.
We may cover this verbally when the child starts or include this in our prospectus.
Parents sign our Registration Form at registration to confirm that they understand this.
We ask parents to give written consent to share information about any additional needs their child may have, or to pass on child development summaries to the next provider/school.

We consider the following questions when we assess the need to share:
Is there a legitimate purpose to us sharing the information?
Does the information enable the person to be identified?
Is the information confidential?
If the information is confidential, do we have consent to share?
Is there a statutory duty or court order requiring us to share the information?
If consent is refused, or there are good reasons for us not to seek consent, is there sufficient public interest for us to share information?
If the decision is to share, are we sharing the right information in the right way?
Have we properly recorded our decision?
Consent must be freely given and *informed* - that is the person giving consent needs to understand why information will be shared, what will be shared, who will see information, the purpose of sharing it and the implications for them of sharing that information as detailed in the Privacy Notice.
Consent may be *explicit*, verbally but preferably in writing, or *implicit*, implied if the context is such that sharing information is an intrinsic part of our service or it has been explained and agreed at the outset.
Consent can be withdrawn at any time.
We explain our Information Sharing Policy to parents.

Separated parents
Consent to share need only be sought from one parent. Where parents are separated, this would normally be the parent with whom the child resides. Where there is a dispute, we will consider this carefully.
Where the child is looked after, we may also need to consult the Local Authority, as ‘corporate parent’ before information is shared.

All the undertakings above are subject to our paramount commitment, which is to the safety and well-being of the child. Please also see our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.

Legal framework

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018)
Human Rights Act (1998)

Further guidance

8. Staff and Volunteers

08 Staff, assistants, volunteers and students' policy

Alongside associated procedures in 08.1-08.4 Staff, volunteers and students, this policy was adopted by Learning Tree Pre-School (Swindon) Limited

Aim

Ensuring that the requirements of the EYFS are met staff at Learning Tree Pre-School (Swindon) Limited is effectively deployed to meet the care and learning needs of all children and ensure their safety and well-being. Staff are also deployed to ensure the safety of staff and other people on site. There are effective systems in place including safer recruitment procedures, induction support and ongoing professional development opportunities to ensure that every person looking after children are suitable to do so.

Objectives

- Recruitment checks meet the requirements of the EYFS
- In accordance with the EYFS statutory requirements all staff, students and volunteers aged 16 or over who work directly with the children more than occasionally (as defined in the EYFS) have enhanced criminal records checks and barred list checks. If any caution or convictions appear or are disclosed, then the DfE statutory guidance is followed.
- All staff and volunteers who work on the premises on which the childcare is provided (unless they do not work on the part of the premises where the childcare takes place, or do not work there at times when children are present) have enhanced criminal records checks and barred list checks. If any caution or convictions appear or are disclosed, then the DfE statutory guidance is followed.
- No individuals will be allowed to begin working or volunteering at the setting until the enhanced criminal records check and barred list check has been received.
- All staff and prospective staff, students and volunteers are expected to disclose any information that may affect their suitability to work with children including, but not limited to, arrests, charges, convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings (whether received before or during their employment/placement at the setting)
- All staff and volunteers working with children have appropriate training, skills, and knowledge.
- Appropriate steps will be taken to verify qualifications
- All staff, students and volunteers are deployed in accordance with EYFS statutory requirements and the procedures.

- There is a complaints procedure and staff, students and volunteers know how to complain and who they complain to.
- There is a whistleblowing procedure for all staff, students and volunteers to raise any concerns about poor or unsafe practice they may have.
- Ofsted are notified of any significant events .
- Parents/carers are involved with their children's learning and their views are considered.

Legal references

DfE Statutory guidance – Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006

Protection of Children Act 1999

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Childcare Act 2006

Further guidance

Recruiting Early Years Staff (Alliance Publication)

People Management in the Early Years (Alliance Publication)

08 Staff, volunteers, assistants and students' policy

8. 1 Recruitment Checks

Obtaining references

As part of our commitment to safer recruitment and in line with the EYFS statutory requirements Learning Tree Pre-School (Swindon)Limited will always obtain references from applicants including staff, students and volunteers for roles in our setting. Robust recruitment checks are essential to ensuring that unsuitable persons cannot have contact with children through employment with us.

Obtaining references is an essential element of our recruitment process. We will always obtain at least one written reference before an individual is recruited in line with the requirements of the EYFS as follows:

- Our application process requires candidates, to supply us with the contact details of a suitable referee from:
  - Their current employer, training provider or early years education and care setting
  - A senior person within the organisation who is authorised to provide a reference.
- If the applicant is not currently employed, or is not currently working with children we will:
  - Obtain verification of the applicants most recent relevant employment if they are not currently employed
  - Obtain a reference from the applicants most recent relevant employer from the last time they worked with children
- If the applicant has never worked with children we will obtain a reference from their current employer, training provider or education setting.
- We do not rely on applicants to obtain their own references
- We do not accept references from the following
  - Family members
  - A generic reference i.e. 'to whom it may concern'.

Once a reference is received

- A reference received electronically will be checked to ensure that it originates from a legitimate source.
- We will compare the information on the original application form against relevant information given in the reference, for example, checking that dates align, and roles and responsibilities listed are consistent. Where this is not the case, we will take up any discrepancies with the applicant.

- If information is incomplete or we feel it is insufficient for us to make an informed decision about the applicant's suitability, we will contact the referee for clarification.
- Before an offer of employment is made, we will ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily.
- In line with best practice, we will seek to gain explanations for any gaps in employment.

Further information and guidance

A120 New Employee Handbook (Alliance Publication)
A128 Recruiting Early Years Staff (Alliance Publication)
A129 People Management in the Early Years (Alliance Publication)

8.2 **Staff deployment**

Members of staff, including assistants, bank staff and students (where eligible to be counted in ratios) are deployed to meet the care and learning needs of children and to always ensure their safety and well-being.

- Two members of staff are on the premises before children are admitted in the morning and the end of the day; one of which should be the manager or deputy.
- Only those staff aged 17 or over are included in ratios. Staff working as apprentices (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios if the setting manager is satisfied that they are competent and responsible. Except in the cases of apprentices, only those aged 17 and over may be included in the ratios and only if the setting manager is satisfied, they are suitable, (staff under 17 should be supervised at all times).
- At least one Paediatric First Aider must always be on site when children are present, and at least one Paediatric First Aider must be present at children's mealtimes.
- The setting manager deploys staff to give adequate supervision of indoor and outdoor areas, ensuring that children are always within sight or hearing of staff. Whilst eating, children must be within sight and hearing of a member of staff.
- All staff are deployed according to the needs of the setting and the children attending.
- In open plan provision, staff are positioned in areas of the room and outdoors to supervise children and to support their learning.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring that equipment in their area is used appropriately and that the area is tidy at the end of the session.
- Staff plan their focus on activities.
- Staff inform colleagues if they must leave the room for any reason.
- There are two members of staff outside in the garden when it is being used, one of whom supervises climbing equipment that has been put out.
- The setting manager may direct other members of staff to join those outside, if the numbers of children warrant additional staff.
- Staff always focus their attention on the children whilst having a wider awareness of what is happening around them.
- Staff do not spend working time in social conversation with colleagues.

- Staff allow time for colleagues to engage in ‘sustained shared interaction’ with children and do not interrupt activities led by colleagues.
- Sufficient staff are available at story times to engage children.

not for focussed activities but for promoting shared times and friendship.

Staff children

- Where members of staff have their own children with them at the setting, the age of the child must fall within the stipulated ages of the setting’s Ofsted registration.
- Where members of staff are likely to be working directly with their own children, this is subject to discussion before commencement with the setting manager.
- Where it is agreed that a member of staff’s child attends the setting, it is subject to the following:
  - the child is treated by the parent and all staff as any other child would be
  - the child will not be in the parent/carers key group of children
  - the key person and parent will work towards helping the child to make a comfortable separation from the parent to allow the parent to fully undertake their role as a staff member of the setting
  - the key person will take responsibility for the child’s needs throughout the day, unless the child is sick or severely distressed
  - time and space are made for the parent to breastfeed during the day, if that is their chosen method of feeding
  - the situation is reviewed as required, to ensure that the needs of the child are being met, and that the parent/carer can fulfil their role as a member of staff

    If it is the setting manager’s child, then their line manager ensures the criteria above is met

8.3 Deployment of volunteers and parent/carer helpers

Volunteers and parent/carer helpers are always under the supervision of a permanent member of staff. They are not included in staff ratios, or as the two members of staff needed on the premises before children are admitted in the morning or at the end of the day. (*This can be removed for sessional settings, who operate with 2 or 3 members of staff where the volunteer helper enables the session to run, while the play leader in charge finds cover staff*.)

- The setting manager ensures that volunteers and parent/carer helpers are deployed to assist permanent staff.
- Volunteers and parent helpers assist staff in ensuring that the equipment in their designated area is used appropriately and that it is left tidy at the end of the session.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers give additional support for busy areas or to track or observe children.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers inform colleagues where they are going if they leave the room at any time.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers do not have unsupervised access to children; they do not take them into a separate room for an activity or toileting and do not take them off premises.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers are deployed in addition to two members of staff in the garden/outdoor area when in use.
- The setting manager can direct volunteers and parent/carer helpers to join those outside if the numbers of children warrant additional numbers of staff available.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers always focus their attention to children.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers do not spend time in social conversation with colleagues while they are with children.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers allow time for colleagues to engage in ‘sustained shared interaction’ with children and do not interrupt activities led by colleagues.
- Sufficient volunteers and parent/carer helpers are available to support staff at story and other circle times.

8.4 Student placement

Qualifications and training make an important contribution to the quality of care and education. As part of our commitment, we may offer placements to students undertaking relevant qualifications/training. We aim to provide students experiences that will contribute to the successful completion of their studies and provide examples of quality practice in early years care and education.

- The setting manager ensures that students meet the 'suitable person' requirements.
- The setting manager discusses the aim of the placement with the student's tutor prior to the placement commencing. The expectations of both parties are agreed at this point.
- The good character of students under 17 years old is vouched for by the establishment that places them, the setting manager must be satisfied that all relevant checks have been made.
- Students do not have unsupervised access to children.
- Suitable students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios at the level below their level of study, if the provider is satisfied that they are competent and responsible and if they hold a valid and current PFA qualification.
- Public liability and employer's liability insurance is in place that covers students and voluntary helpers.
- Students are aware of confidentiality.
- Student induction includes how the setting and sessions are managed, and policies and procedures, in particular safeguarding, confidentiality and health and safety.
- Appropriate members of staff co-operate with students' tutors to assist them in fulfilling the requirements of their course of study.
- The setting communicates a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
- The needs of the children and their families remain paramount at all times and students are only admitted in numbers that do not hinder the work of the setting.

- The setting manager ensures that students and trainees on placement are engaged in bona fide early years training, which provides the necessary background understanding of children's development and activities.

9. Early years practice

9.1 Early years practice policy

Aim

Children are safe, happy, and eager to participate and to learn.

Objectives

- Babies and young children need to form a secure attachment to their key person when they join the setting to feel safe, happy and eager to participate and learn. It is their *entitlement* to be settled comfortably into a new environment.
- The needs of part-time children are considered.
- There is a procedure for when children do not settle and for prolonged absences.
- Introductions and induction of the parent/carer is carried out before children start.
- *Prime times* of the day make the very best of routine opportunities to promote 'tuning-in' to the child emotionally and create opportunities for learning. We actively promote British values, inclusion, equality of opportunity and the valuing of diversity.
- We operate a positive behaviour management approach. Behaviour management procedures cover how staff should respond to all aspects of behaviour, including children who exhibit challenging behaviour towards other children. These procedures build on the Early Years Alliance's approach to learning based on three key statements.
  1. Learning is a lifelong process, which enables children and adults to contribute to and shape their world.
  2. We want the curriculum we provide to help children to learn to:
     - be confident and independent
     - be aware of and responsive to their feelings
     - make caring and thoughtful relationships with other people
     - become increasingly excited by, interested in, and knowledgeable and questioning about the world around them.
  3. We provide a wide range of interesting child-chosen and adult-initiated activities which:
     - give children opportunities to use all their senses
     - help children of different ages and stages to play together

- help children be the directors of their own learning
- help children develop an inquiring and questioning attitude to the world around them

The *EYFS* is used as a framework to provide care and learning for babies and children under two years.

Older Children (2-5 years)

- To feel securely settled and ready to learn, children from two to five years need to form attachments with adults who care for them, primarily to a key person, but with other adults and children too. In this way children feel part of a community of learners; they can contribute to that community and receive from it. The three-stage model referred to in procedure 9.4 is applicable, but with some differences in the procedures for children moving up into the next group and for older children.

Waiting list and admissions

Our provision is accessible to children and families from all sections of the local and wider community. We aim to ensure that all sections of the community receive accessible information and that our admissions procedures are fair, clear, and open to all parents who apply for places. The availability of a place at the setting considers staff/child ratios, the age of the child and registration requirements.

- We operate in an inclusive manner which enables all children and families to access our services.
- We also have regard for the needs of parents/carers who are:
  - looking to take up work, remain in work or extend their hours of work
  - looking to commence training or education
- We work in partnership with the local authority and other agencies to ensure that our provision is accessible to all sections of the community.
- Services are widely advertised, and information is accessible to all sections of the community.
- Where the number of children wanting places exceeds the number of places available a waiting list is operated using clear criteria for allocation of places as detailed in section 09.1 Waiting list and admissions procedure.

Funded places – free entitlement

All 3- and 4-year-olds in England are entitled to 15 hours free childcare and early education each week for 38 weeks of the year. Some eligible two-year-olds are also entitled. Funded places are offered in accordance with national and local codes of practice and adherence to the relevant Provider Agreement/Contract with the local authority.

Legal References

Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DfE 2014)

Equality Act 2010

Childcare Act 2006

9.2 Attendance and absence

We take steps to ensure that children are kept safe, that their wellbeing is promoted, and they do not miss their entitlements and opportunities. At the very least, good attendance promotes good outcomes for children. In a small minority of cases, good attendance may also lead to early identification of more serious concerns for a child or family.

There are several reasons why a child may be absent from a setting. In most cases it is reasonable to expect that parents/carers alert the setting as soon as possible, or in the case of appointments and holidays give adequate notice. The attendance and absence policy are shared with parents and carers, and they are advised that they should contact the setting within one hour of the time the child would have been expected to advise of their absence. Designated safeguarding leads must also adhere to Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) requirements, procedures and contact protocols for children who are absent or missing from the provision

- If a child who normally attends fails to arrive and no contact has been received from their parents/carers, or if the child is absent for a prolonged period of time the designated safeguarding lead, takes immediate action to contact them to seek an explanation for the absence and be assured that the child is safe and well.
- Attempts to contact the child's parents/carers or other named carers continue throughout the day on the first day of absence.
- If no contact is made with the parents/carers and there is no means to verify the reason for the child's absence i.e. through a named contact on the child's registration form, this is recorded as an unexplained absence on the child's personal file and is followed up by the manager each day until contact is made.
- If contact has not been made, and we have any reason for concern about a child's wellbeing and welfare, children's services will be contacted for advice about making a referral. Other relevant services may be contacted as per LSP procedures.
- All absences are recorded on the child's personal file with the reason given for the absence, the expected duration and any follow up action taken or required with timescales.
- Absence records will be monitored to identify patterns and trends in children's attendance. An understanding of the child's and family's individual circumstances will inform the setting's judgement in determining what constitutes a 'prolonged period of absence'.
- Absence records are retained for at least three years, or until the next Ofsted inspection following a cohort of children moving on to school.

If at any time further information becomes known that gives cause for concern, procedure 06.1 Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns is immediately followed.

Safeguarding vulnerable children

- The designated safeguarding lead or key person attempts to contact the parents/carers to establish why the child is absent. If contact is made and a valid reason given, the information is recorded in the child's file.
- Any relevant professionals involved with the child are informed, e.g. social worker/family support worker.
- If contact is made and the designated safeguarding lead is concerned that the child is at risk, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately. The events, conversation and follow-up actions are recorded. If contact cannot be made, the designated person contacts the relevant professionals and informs them of the situation.
- If the child has current involvement with social care, the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
- If at any time information becomes known that gives cause for concern, 06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures are followed immediately.

Safeguarding

- If a child misses three consecutive sessions and it has not been possible to make contact, the designated person calls Social Care and makes a referral if advised. Contact with Social Care may be made sooner if there are concerns for a child's wellbeing or welfare
- If there is any cause for concern i.e. the child has a child protection plan in place or there have been previous safeguarding and welfare concerns, the designated person attempts to contact the child's parent/carer immediately. If no contact is made, the child's absence is logged on 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form, and Social Care are contacted immediately, and safeguarding procedures are followed.

Poor/irregular attendance

Whilst attendance at an early years setting is not mandatory, regular poor attendance may be indicative of safeguarding and welfare concerns that should be followed up.

- In the first instance the setting manager should discuss a child's attendance with their parents/carers to ascertain any potential barriers i.e. transport, working patterns etc and should work with the parents/carers to offer support where possible.
- If poor attendance continues and strategies to support are not having an impact, the setting manager must review the situation and decide if a referral to a multi-agency team is appropriate.
- Where there are already safeguarding and welfare concerns about a child or a child protection plan is in place, poor/irregular attendance at the setting is reported to the Social Care worker without delay.

In the case of funded children, the local authority may use their discretion, where absence is recurring or for extended periods, considering the reason for the absence and impact on the setting. The setting manager is aware of the local authority policy on reclaiming refunds when a child is absent from a setting.

9.3 Prime times – Settling in and transitions

To feel securely settled and ready to learn, children need to form attachments with the adults who care for them, primarily a key person, but others too. In this way they feel part of a community; they can contribute to that community and receive from it. Very young children, especially two- to three-year-olds, approach separation from their parent with anxieties, older children have a more secure understanding of 'people permanence' and can approach new experiences with confidence; but also need time to adjust and feel secure. It is the entitlement of all children to be settled comfortably into a new environment.

Two-year-olds starting a setting for the first time

- A two-year-old may have little or no experience of group care. As part of gathering information from parents, it is important to find out about the child's experience of non-parental care, for example grandparents, or childminder; this informs staff as to how a child may respond to a new situation.
- The three-stage approach involving *Proximity, Secure Base* and *Dependency/Independence* is applied to two-year-olds as to younger children.
- After the induction meeting with the setting manager or deputy and key person, a settling-in plan is drawn up
- Separation causes anxiety in two-year-olds, as they have no concept of where their parents/carers have gone. Parents/carers should always say goodbye and tell them when they will return. Patience with the process will ensure children are happy and eager to come to play and be cared for in the setting.

Three- and four-year-olds

- Most children of this age can move through the stages more quickly and confidently.
- Some children take longer, and their needs for proximity and secure base stages should be accommodated as much as possible.
- Some children appear to leap to dependency/independence within a couple of days. In most cases, they will revert to the need for proximity and secure base. It can be difficult to progress to true dependency/independence and this can be frustrating.
- After the parent/carer attends for an induction meeting with the setting manager or deputy and key person a settling in plan is put in place

- Parents/carers are encouraged to explain to their child where they are going, and that they will return.

For children whose first language is not English

- For many children learning English as an additional language, the stage of proximity takes longer as the child is dependent upon the parent/carers' input to make sense of what is going on.
- If the parent/carer does not speak English, efforts can be made to source an interpreter for induction; it will be helpful for them to see around the setting and be clear about their role in interpreting in the play area.
- The settling-in programme is explained to the parent/carer, and it is emphasised how important it is that they stay with the child and talk to him/her in the home language to be able to explain things.
- The key person will try to gauge the child's level of skills in their home language; this will give the key person an idea of the child's interests and levels of understanding.
- The need for the parent/carer to converse in the child's home language is important.
- The key person makes the parent/carer feel welcome using smiles and gestures.
- With the parent/carer, make a list of key words in the child's home language; sometimes it is useful to write the word as you would pronounce it. These words will be used with the child and parents/carers will be addressed with 'hello' and 'goodbye' in their language.
- The key person prepares for the child's visits by having a favourite toy or activity ready for the child to provide a means to interact with the child.
- Children will be spoken to as per any other child, using gestures and facial expressions to help.
- When the child feels happy to spend time with the key person (secure base), the parent/carer should spend time outside of the room.
- Progress with settling in will be done as with any other child; it just takes a little longer to reach dependency/independence.

9.4 Early years practice procedures

Prime times – Intimate care and nappy changing

Prime times of the day make the best of routine opportunities to promote 'tuning-in' to the child emotionally and to create opportunities for learning. Children's privacy is maintained during nappy changing and toileting, whilst balanced with safeguarding considerations. Nappy changing times are key times in the day for being close and promoting security as well as for communication, exploration, and learning.

- Changing areas are warm, appropriately sited and there are safe areas to lay young children if they need to have their bottoms cleaned.
- If children refuse to lie down for nappy change, they can be changed whilst standing up, providing it is still possible to clean them effectively.
- Each young child has his/her own bags to hand with their nappies/pull ups and changing wipes.
- Staff ensure that nappy changing is relaxed and a time to promote independence in young children.
- Young children are encouraged to take an interest in using the toilet; they may just want to sit on it and talk to a friend who is also using the toilet.
- They are encouraged to wash their hands and have soap and hand dryer or paper towels to hand. They should be allowed time for some play as they explore the water and the soap.
- Anti-bacterial hand wash liquid or soap should not be used by young children, as they are no more effective than ordinary soap and water.
- Staff are gentle when changing and avoid pulling faces and making negative comment about the nappy contents.
- Wipes or cotton wool and water are used to clean the child. Where cultural practices involve children being washed and dried with towels, staff aim to make reasonable adjustments to achieve the desired results in consultation with the child's parents/carers. Where this is not possible it is explained to parents/carers the reasons why. The use of wipes or cotton wool and water achieves the same outcome whilst reducing the risk of cross infection from items such as towels that are not 'single use' or disposable.
- Key persons do not make inappropriate comments about young children's genitals when changing their nappies.

- The procedure for dealing with sore bottoms is the same as that for babies.
- Older children use the toilet when needed and are encouraged to be independent.
- Members of staffs do not wipe older children's bottoms unless there is a need, or unless the child has asked.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to provide enough changes of clothes for 'accidents when children are potty training.
- If spare clothes are kept by the setting, they are 'gender neutral' i.e. neutral colours, and are clean, in good condition and are in a range of appropriate sizes.
- If young children are left in wet or soiled nappies/pull-ups in the setting, this may constitute neglect and will be a disciplinary matter.

Nappy changing is always done in an appropriate/designated area. Children are not changed in play areas or next to snack tables. If there are limitations for nappy change areas due to the lay-out of the room or space available this is discussed with the setting manager's line manager so that an appropriate site can be agreed that maintains the dignity of the child and good hygiene practice.

9.5 Early years practice procedures

Prime times – Snack-times and mealtimes

Children are supervised during mealtimes and always remain within sight and hearing of staff. A member of staff with a valid first aid certificate is always present at mealtimes and there is a named person responsible for ensuring that the food provided meets each child's needs.

Snack times

- A 'snack' is prepared mid-morning and mid-afternoon and can be organised according to the discretion of the setting manager e.g. picnic on a blanket.
- Children may also take turns to help set the table. Small, lidded plastic jugs are provided with choice of milk or water.
- Children wash their hands before and after snack-time.
- At the age of two, children can move to semi-skimmed milk as a main drink, if they are eating a varied and balanced diet.
- Fruit or raw vegetables, such as carrot or tomato, are offered in batons, which children should be encouraged to help in preparing. Bananas and other foods are not cut as rounds but are sliced to minimise a choking hazard.
- Portion sizes are gauged as appropriate to the age of the child.
- Biscuits should not be offered, but toast, rice cakes or oatcakes are good alternatives.
- Children arrive as they want refreshment and leave when they have had enough. Children are not made to leave their play if they do not want to have a snack.
- Staff join in conversation and encourage children's independence by allowing them to pour drinks, butter toast, cut fruit etc.

Mealtimes

- Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes.
- Children are always within sight and hearing of staff at mealtimes
- There is a Paediatric First Aider present at children's meal and snack times.
- Children wash their hands and sit down as food is ready to be served.
- Children are encouraged to choose what they want and to take their own helpings.

- Staff who are always eating with the children role-model healthy eating and best practice, for example not drinking cans of fizzy drinks in front of the children.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried to fit in with adults' tasks and breaks. They are not made to eat what they do not like and are encouraged to try new foods slowly.
- To protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swopping their food with one another.
- If children do not eat their main course, they are not denied pudding. Food is not used as a reward or punishment.
- Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction between children and adults.
- After eating children are encouraged to scrape their plates and help wipe the table and sweep the floor.
  - Daily menus including identification of any foods containing allergens

9.6 Promoting positive behaviour

Policy statement

We believe that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are understood, supported and met and where there are clear, fair and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

As children develop, they learn about boundaries, the difference between right and wrong, and to consider the views and feelings, and needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. The development of these skills requires adult guidance to help encourage and model appropriate behaviours and to offer intervention and support when children struggle with conflict and emotional situations. In these types of situations key staff can help identify and address triggers for the behaviour and help children reflect, regulate and manage their actions.

Procedures

In order to manage children's behaviour in an appropriate way we will:

Attend relevant training to help understand and guide appropriate models of behaviour;
Implement the setting's behaviour procedures including the stepped approach;
Have the necessary skills to support other staff with behaviour issues and to access expert advice, if necessary;
Ensure all staff promotes positive behaviour.

Stepped approach
Step 1
We will ensure that EYFS guidance relating to 'behaviour management' is incorporated into relevant policy and procedures;
We will be knowledgeable with, and apply the setting's procedures on Promoting Positive Behaviour;
We will undertake an annual audit of the provision to ensure the environment and practices supports healthy social and emotional development. Findings from the audit are considered by management and relevant adjustments applied.
Ensure that all staff are supported to address issues relating to behaviour including applying initial and focused intervention approaches (see below).

Step 2
We address unwanted behaviours using the agreed and consistently applied initial intervention approach. If the unwanted behaviour does not reoccur or cause concern then normal monitoring will resume.
Behaviours that result in concern for the child and/or others will be discussed between the key person, the behaviour coordinator and Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or/and manager. During the meeting, the key person will use their knowledge and assessments of the child to share any known influencing factors (new baby, additional needs, illness etc.) in order to place the behaviour into context.

Appropriate adjustments to practice will be agreed and if successful normal monitoring resumed.
If the behaviour continues to reoccur and remain a concern then the key person should liaise with parents to discuss possible reasons for the behaviour and to agree next steps. If a cause for the behaviour is not known or only occurs whilst in the setting then the SENCO will suggest using a focused intervention approach to identify a trigger for the behaviour.
If a trigger is identified then the SENCO and key person will meet with the parents to plan support for the child through developing an action plan. If relevant, recommended actions for dealing with the behaviour at home should be agreed with the parent/s and incorporated into the plan. Other members of the staff team should be informed of the agreed actions in the action plan and help implement the actions. The plan should be monitored and reviewed regularly by the key person and SENCO until improvement is noticed.

Step 3
If, despite applying the initial intervention and focused intervention approaches, the behaviour continues to give occur and/or is of significant concern, then the behaviour coordinator and SENCO will invite the parents to a meeting to discuss external referral and next steps for supporting the child in the setting.
It may also be agreed that the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) or Early Help process should begin and that specialist help be sought for the child if deemed necessary – this support may address either developmental or welfare needs. (See Supporting Children with SEN policy 9.2) If the child's behaviour is part of a range of welfare concerns that also include a concern that the child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, follow the Safeguarding and Children and Child Protection Policy (1.2).
Advice provided by external agencies should be incorporated into the child's action plan and regular multi-disciplinary meetings held to review the child's progress.

Initial intervention approach
We use an initial problem solving intervention for all situations in which a child or children are distressed on in conflict. All staff use this intervention consistently.
This type of approach involves an adult approaching the situation calmly, stopping any hurtful actions, acknowledging the feelings of those involved, gathering information, restating the issue to help children reflect, regain control of the situation and resolve the situation themselves.
High Scope's Conflict Resolution process provides this type of approach but equally any other similar method would be suitable. Periodically the effectiveness of the approach will be checked.

Focused intervention approach
The reasons for some types of behaviour are not always apparent, despite the knowledge and input from key staff and parents.
Where we have considered all possible reasons, then a focused intervention approach should then be applied.
This approach allows the key person and behaviour coordinator to observe, reflect, and identify causes and functions of unwanted behaviour in the wider context of other known influences on the child.

We follow the ABC method which uses key observations to identify a) an event or activity (antecedent) that occurred immediately before a particular behaviour, b) what behaviour was observed and recorded at the time of the incident, and c) what the consequences were following the behaviour. Once analysed, the focused intervention should help determine the cause (e.g. ownership of a toy or fear of a situation) and function of the behaviour (to obtain the toy or avoid a situation) and suitable support will be applied.

Use of rewards and sanctions

All children need consistent messages, clear boundaries and guidance to intrinsically manage their behaviour through self-reflection and control.

Rewards such as excessive praise and stickers may provide an immediate change in the behaviour but will not teach children how to act when a 'prize' is not being given or provide the child with the skills to manage situations and their emotions. Instead, a child is taught how to be 'compliant' and respond to meet adult's own expectations in order to obtain a reward (or for fear of a sanction). If used then the type of rewards and their functions must be carefully considered before applying.

Children should never be labelled, criticised, humiliated, punished, shouted at or isolated by removing them from the group and left alone in 'time out' or on a 'naughty chair'. However, if necessary children can be accompanied and removed from the group in order to calm down and if appropriate helped to reflect on what has happened.

Use of physical intervention

The term physical intervention is used to describe any forceful physical contact by an adult to a child such as grabbing, pulling, dragging, or any form of restraint of a child such as holding down. Where a child is upset or angry, staff will speak to them calmly, encouraging them to vent their frustration in other ways by diverting the child's attention.

Staff should not use physical intervention – or the threat of physical intervention, to manage a child's behaviour unless it is necessary to use "reasonable force in order to prevent children from injuring themselves or others or damage property" (EYFS).

If "reasonable force" has been used for any of the reasons shown above, parents are to be informed on the same day that it occurs. The intervention will be recorded as soon as possible within the child's file, which states clearly when and how parents were informed.

Corporal (physical) punishment of any kind should never be used or threatened which could adversely affect a child's well-being.

10. Working in Partnership with Parents/ Carers and other agencies

10 Working in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies policy

Alongside associated procedures in 10.1-10.2 Working in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies, this policy was adopted by Learning Tree Pre-School (Swindon) Limited

Aim

Learning Tree Pre-School (Swindon) Limited actively promotes partnership with parents/carers and recognises the importance of working in partnership with other agencies to promote the well-being of children and their families. This includes signposting parents/carers to support as appropriate.

Objectives

- We believe that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and our practice aims to involve and consult parents/carers on all aspects of their child's well-being and education.
- We also recognise the key role parents/carers must play in the day-to-day organisation of the provision.
- We consider parents/carers views and expectations and will give the opportunity to be involved in the following ways:
  - sharing information about their child's needs, likes, achievements and interests
  - settling in their child to the agreed plan according to our settling in procedures
  - taking part in children's activities and outings
  - contributing with ideas or resources as appropriate to enhance the curriculum of the setting
  - taking part in early learning projects, sharing with educators' knowledge and insights about their child's learning
  - contributing to assessment with information, photos and stories that illustrate how their child is learning within the home environment, taking part in day-to-day family activities
  - taking part in discussion groups

- taking part in planning, preparing, or simply participating in social activities organised within the setting
- taking part in a parent forum to encourage the democratic participation of parents in discussions about the day-to-day organisation of the setting, consulting about new developments and other matters as they arise
- involvement in the review of policies and procedures
- Ofsted, the childminder agency and setting contact details are displayed on the parent/carer notice board for parents/carers who have a complaint that cannot be resolved with the setting manager in the first instance, or where a parent/carer is concerned that the EYFS standards are not being maintained

Partnership and signposting to other agencies

- We are committed to ensuring effective partnership with other agencies including:
  - local authority early years services about the EYFS, training and staff development
  - local programmes delivered by Family Hubs or the childcare and early education element of Family Hubs
  - social welfare departments regarding children in need and children who need safeguarding or for whom a child protection plan is in place
  - child development networks and health professionals to support children with disabilities and special needs
  - local community organisations and other childcare and early education providers
  - Ofsted and setting contact details are made available to other agencies who have a complaint that cannot be resolved with the setting manager in the first instance, or where a parent/carer is concerned that the EYFS safeguarding and welfare standards are not being maintained.

Childcare Act 2006

Education Act 2011

10.1 Parental Involvement

Policy statement

At Learning Tree Pre-school we believe that children benefit most from early years education and care when parents and settings work together in partnership.

Our aim is to support parents as their children's first and most important educators by involving them in their children's education and in the full life of the setting. We also aim to support parents in their own continuing education and personal development.

Some parents are less well represented in early years settings; these include fathers, parents who live apart from their children, but who still play a part in their lives, as well as working parents. In carrying out the following procedures, we will ensure that all parents are included.

When we refer to 'parents' we mean both mothers and fathers; these include both natural or birth parents, as well as step-parents and parents who do not live with their children, but have contact with them and play a part in their lives. 'Parents' also includes same sex parents, as well as foster parents.

The Children Act (1989) defines parental responsibility *as* 'all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property'*. (For a full explanation of who has parental responsibility, refer to the Pre-school Learning Alliance publication* Safeguarding Children*.)*

Procedures

We have a means to ensure all parents are included - that may mean we have different strategies for involving fathers, or parents who work or live apart from their children.
We consult with all parents to find out what works best for them.
We ensure ongoing dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families.
We inform all parents about how the setting is run and its policies, through access to written information and through regular informal communication. We check to ensure parents understand the information that is given to them.
We encourage and support parents to play an active part in the setting.
We inform all parents on a regular basis about their children's progress.
We involve parents in the shared record keeping about their children - both formally or informally – and ensure parents have access to their children's written developmental records.
We provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting.
We inform parents about relevant events and meetings.
We consult with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone.

We provide information about opportunities to be involved in the setting in ways that are accessible to parents with basic skills needs, or those for whom English is an additional language.
We hold meetings in venues that are accessible and appropriate for all.
We welcome the contributions of parents, in whatever form these may take.
We inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions and we check to ensure these are understood. All parents have access to our written complaints procedure.
We provide opportunities for parents to learn about the curriculum offered in the setting and about young children's learning, in the setting and at home.

In compliance with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements, the following documentation is in place:
Admissions Policy.
Complaints procedure.
Record of complaints.
Developmental records of children.

10.2. Making a complaint

Policy statement

We believe that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our setting and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the setting. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly, by an informal approach [with the appropriate member of staff]. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of my setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

Procedures

All settings are required to keep a written record of any complaints that reach stage two and above, and their outcome. This is to be made available to parents, as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request. A full procedure is set out in the Pre-school Learning Alliance publication Complaint Investigation Record (2012) which acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose.

Making a complaint
Stage 1
Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of my setting's provision talks over his/her concerns me first of all.
Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
We record the issue, and how it was resolved, in the child’s file.
Stage 2
If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing.
For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in the Complaint Investigation Record; the form may be completed me and signed by the parent.
My setting stores all information relating to written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, I may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
When the investigation into the complaint is completed, I meet with the parent to discuss the outcome.
I inform parents of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of him/her making the complaint.
When the complaint is resolved at this stage, I log the summative points in my Complaint Investigation Record, which is made available to Ofsted on request.
Stage 3
If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with me. The parent may have a friend or partner present if they prefer and I should have the support of my deputy manager.

An agreed written record of the discussion is made, as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it.
This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, I log the summative points in my Complaint Investigation Record.
Stage 4
If at the stage three meeting the parent cannot reach agreement with me, I invite an external mediator to help to settle the complaint. This person should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers, but can help us to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
Staff or volunteers within the Pre-school Learning Alliance or SBC are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with me and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice s/he gives.
Stage 5
When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent and myself is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.
A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), the Local
Safeguarding Children Board and the Information Commissioner's Office
Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the setting's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
Parents can complain to Ofsted by telephone on in writing at:
Ofsted National Business Unit, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD
Tel: 0300 123 1231
These details are displayed on [our setting's/my] notice board.
If a child appears to be at risk, we follow the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
In these cases, both the parent and I]work with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.
The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) can be contacted if you have made a complaint about the way your data is being handled and remain dissatisfied after raising your concern with us. For further information about how we handle your data, please refer to the Privacy Notice given to you when you registered your child at our setting. The ICO can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or ico.org.uk

Records

A record of complaints in relation to my setting, or the children or the adults working in my setting, is kept for at least three years; including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.

The outcome of all complaints is recorded in my Complaint Investigation Record, which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors to view on request.