

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Health and safety general standards

Policy statement

We believe that the health, safety and welfare of children are of paramount importance. We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment that promotes safety, security, physical and emotional wellbeing for all children, staff, volunteers, parents, and visitors. We aim to ensure that every child thrives in clean, safe and hazard-free surroundings through effective risk assessment, safe practice, robust staff training, and a culture of shared responsibility.

Our Health and Safety Lead is: Karen Lockley - Owner

This policy has been reviewed against the EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers effective 1 September 2026, current UKHSA health-protection guidance updated 7 September 2026, HSE requirements and current London Borough of Bromley early-years arrangements.

Insurance cover

We maintain appropriate insurance cover for the setting, including public liability insurance as required by the EYFS and employers' liability insurance where legally required. Other insurance is maintained according to the setting's activities, contractual requirements and assessed risks.

Procedures

Awareness, Roles and Responsibilities

- All staff and volunteers receive comprehensive induction that includes clear explanations of all health and safety procedures, expectations, and emergency practices.
- Induction includes training on:
 - safe lifting and manual handling,
 - safe storage of hazardous substances,
 - employee well-being,
 - safeguarding responsibilities linked to health and safety.
- Staff sign induction records as confirmation of understanding.
- Health and safety is a standing agenda item in staff meetings.
- New families receive health and safety information so that they understand the measures in place to keep children safe.
- We promote children's awareness of health and safety through daily routines, modelling, and learning opportunities.

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- We observe a strict no-smoking or vaping policy in the building and grounds.
- The setting follows the strengthened September 2026 EYFS welfare requirements relevant to health and safety, including safer eating and weaning, safer sleep where applicable, appropriate screen use, electronic-device safeguards and the requirements concerning banned dog breeds.
- Where children eat, staff follow the setting's Food and Drink/Food Hygiene procedures, including appropriate preparation to reduce choking risk and ensuring children are within sight and hearing of an adult while eating.

Premises Safety

Risk assessment and daily safety

- The manager ensures suitable and sufficient risk assessments identify hazards, who may be harmed, existing controls and any further action required. Assessments are proportionate and are reviewed after significant change, an accident/near miss, new guidance or where controls may no longer be effective.
- Daily opening and ongoing checks cover indoor and outdoor areas, access/egress, security, equipment, water, temperature, ventilation and any new or temporary hazard.
- Staff carry out dynamic risk assessment throughout the day and immediately remove, isolate or control hazards. Children are supported to take developmentally appropriate risks while foreseeable serious harm is prevented.

Windows

- Blind cords and loops are fully secured and inaccessible to children to prevent strangulation risks, in line with RoSPA guidance.

Doors

- Finger-safe devices or controlled opening are used where necessary.
- Internal doors are either firmly shut or safely wedged/stayed open to avoid finger-trap hazards.

Floors and Walkways

- All floors are checked daily for damage, hazards, wet areas or obstructions.
- Walkways and stairways remain clear and clutter-free at all times.
- Spills are cleaned immediately and recorded if part of a pattern of recurring hazard.

Electrical/gas equipment

- The premises provider (e.g., church) arranges required electrical/gas safety checks; copies of certificates are kept on file.
- Our boiler, electrical switch gear and meter cupboards remain locked and inaccessible to children.
- Electrical appliances, plugs, wires and leads are maintained in a safe condition and protected from children. Inspection and testing, including portable appliance testing

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where appropriate, is carried out at intervals based on risk and competent-person advice rather than automatically every year.

- Storage heaters and radiators are checked daily to ensure they are unobstructed and safe.
- Sockets are sufficient to avoid overloading; extension leads are used only when safe to do so.
- Electrical equipment is switched off or disconnected when appropriate and safe to do so, taking account of manufacturer instructions and equipment that must remain powered.
- Hot water is thermostatically controlled to prevent scalding.
- Ventilation and lighting are checked regularly across all areas.

Storage

Shared premises, water and building hazards

· Where the pre-school uses shared or rented premises, responsibilities for building safety, maintenance, fire safety, gas/electrical systems, asbestos where relevant, water hygiene and defect reporting are agreed with the premises provider and evidence of relevant checks is retained or made available.

· Drinking water is wholesome and accessible to children. Hot-water temperatures and outlets are managed to reduce scald risk, and water systems are maintained by the responsible premises provider to control foreseeable risks such as legionella.

· Any suspected asbestos-containing material, structural defect, gas smell, electrical danger, flooding or other serious premises hazard is not disturbed or ignored; the area is made safe, the premises responsible person is informed and emergency/competent advice is obtained where required.

- Children's resources are stored safely and at accessible heights to encourage independence and reduce climbing hazards.
- Heavy or hazardous items are stored at low levels or in locked cupboards.
- Equipment is stacked securely to avoid collapse.

Outdoor area

- The outdoor area is fully fenced and secure.
- Daily safety checks are completed and recorded, monitoring for:
 - broken glass,
 - animal waste,
 - hazardous plants,
 - unfamiliar objects,
 - damaged equipment.
- Receptacles are emptied or turned upside down to prevent pooling water.
- The sandpit is covered when not in use and cleaned/checked regularly.

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- Children are supported to wear weather-appropriate clothing. In hot or sunny weather, shade, hydration and suitable sun protection are promoted in partnership with parents; individual needs, allergies, medical advice and parental permissions are respected.
- Climbing equipment and physical-play resources are supervised at all times.

Hygiene and Cleaning Standards

- Infection prevention follows current UKHSA guidance for early-years settings, including hand and respiratory hygiene, cleaning, toileting and sanitation, PPE where indicated, safe management of bodily fluids, laundry/soft furnishings and waste.
- Children and staff who are unwell are managed under the setting's sickness/infection policy and current UKHSA exclusion guidance; unusually high or increasing illness/absence patterns are escalated in line with current health-protection advice.
 - Children are supported to develop robust personal hygiene routines, including handwashing at appropriate times.
 - A daily cleaning checklist covers:
 - hall and group rooms,
 - kitchen,
 - toilets,
 - nappy-changing area,
 - high-touch points (e.g., handles, switches).
 - Toys, resources, furnishings and dressing-up clothes are cleaned on a schedule and replaced where worn.
 - Toilets are cleaned and checked throughout the day.
 - Protective equipment (gloves, aprons) is worn where appropriate.
 - Tissues are available in all areas.
 - Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.

Use of chemicals:

- We minimise chemical use to what is necessary for hygiene.
- Chemicals are stored in original containers and locked away from children.
- Cleaning and disinfecting products are selected and used according to product instructions, COSHH assessment and current UKHSA infection-prevention guidance. We avoid unnecessary chemical exposure and never mix cleaning products.

Activities, Equipment and Resources

- All resources purchased or borrowed are checked for suitability and safety.
- Play spaces allow safe movement between activities and are free from trip hazards.
- Damaged equipment is immediately removed, labelled, and either repaired or disposed of.

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- Paints, glues and creative materials are non-toxic.
- Sand is clean, replaced regularly and suitable for play.
- Tools (e.g., scissors, gardening tools) are used with supervision and stored safely.
- Physical activities are continually risk-assessed and supervised.

Jewellery and accessories

- Staff do not wear hazardous jewellery, long necklaces, large rings, or high heels.
- Parents must ensure children do not wear dangerous jewellery or accessories (e.g., dangly earrings, necklaces, long scarves).
- Children may only wear stud earrings.

Safety of adults

First aid, emergencies and security

- Appropriate paediatric first-aid cover, first-aid equipment and emergency medication are available in accordance with the EYFS and the setting's First Aid and Administering Medicines policies.
- Accidents, injuries, near misses and significant incidents are recorded, reviewed and reported externally where statutory thresholds are met. Parents/carers are informed in accordance with the EYFS and relevant setting procedures.
- Emergency evacuation, fire, lockdown and other emergency arrangements are practised and reviewed. Registers, emergency contacts and essential medication can be accessed without delaying evacuation.
- Entry and exit points are controlled so children cannot leave unnoticed and unauthorised people cannot gain access. Visitors are managed in accordance with safeguarding and premises procedures.
 - Staff receive manual handling guidance, and lifting of heavy items is minimised.
 - Step-ladders and safe access equipment are provided for reaching high storage.
 - Warning signs are clear, visible, and multilingual if necessary.
 - Lone working is avoided wherever possible; where unavoidable, staff follow the Lone Working Procedure.
 - Staff sickness, near misses and accidents are recorded and analysed termly to identify trends or risks.

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Control of substances hazardous to health

Inclusion, safeguarding and individual needs

- Risk controls and emergency arrangements take account of children with SEND, medical conditions, mobility, sensory or communication needs. Reasonable adjustments and individual plans are used where required and reviewed with parents and relevant professionals.
- Health and safety practice must not compromise safeguarding. Any injury, pattern of accidents, unsafe adult practice, unexplained mark or concern that may indicate abuse or neglect is recorded and referred immediately through the setting's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.
 - All hazardous substances are stored securely and labelled.
 - Only essential cleaning substances are kept on the premises.
 - Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are kept for all chemicals.
 - Staff are trained in safe use, storage and disposal.
 - Cleaning agents are used and stored so children are not exposed to hazardous substances, fumes or wet treated surfaces; staff follow the COSHH assessment, safety data and manufacturer instructions.

Legal framework

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended 2004)
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- EYFS Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers (DfE, effective 1 September 2026)

Further guidance

- HSE: Health and Safety Law - What You Need to Know
- HSE: Health and Safety Regulation - A Short Guide
- HSE: Electrical Safety and You
- HSE: COSHH: Working with Substances Hazardous to Health
- HSE: Manual Handling - Getting to Grips with Frequently Asked Questions
- London Borough of Bromley Early Years and Childcare / Early Years Quality Team guidance and support

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- UKHSA: Health protection in children and young people's settings, including education (updated 7 September 2026)
- UKHSA: Preventing and controlling infections in children and young people's settings (updated 7 September 2026)
- HSE: Risk assessment, electrical safety, COSHH and manual-handling guidance
- Ofsted: Early years inspection toolkit and operating arrangements effective September 2026