Policies and Procedures

Written by: DO, LH, HK
Date: November 2026
Review by: November 2027

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First Aid, Accident/incidents

Paediatric First Aid training will be provided to all staff whenever possible. When a new member of staff has joined the setting without a current certificate, training will take place within a reasonable period of time. A competent training provider will be selected to provide Paediatric First Aid training that meets the criteria set out in the EYFS Statutory framework.

A first aider will always be on site when children are present. A first aider will attend all outings. A first aider will always be present when children are eating.

A first aid box is located in the kitchen area of both rooms. Bum bag first aid kits are taken on outings. First aid boxes will be checked regularly and replenished as needed.

All accidents will be assessed by a first aider to identify any treatment needed. All accidents requiring first aid will be treated by a qualified first aider.

All accidents/incidents will be recorded on an accident form. Details of how, where, when and to whom the accident happened must be recorded by the member of staff who saw and dealt with the injury. The treatment given must also be recorded. The form will then be signed by a member of management and the child's parent. The form will then be kept on record.

The most senior member of staff must be informed immediately of all accidents/incidents. This person will decide if the child's parent needs to be contacted.

In the event of a child needing medical attention the parent or an ambulance will be called depending on the severity of the situation. Under no circumstance will a child be taken in a member of staff's car or on public transport.

In the event of a serious injury details of the accident will be recorded in the same way; plus the management will complete a RIDDOR form, further risk assessment and Ofsted will be informed in line with their reporting procedures.

Accident and incident forms are reviewed periodically to identify trends and recurring incidents that may need further action.

Illnesses and injuries

We refer to the current Public Health Agency guidance for exclusion periods for all communicable diseases - please refer to their website for up-to-date information or ask a member of staff. Please seek medical advice if you are unsure or concerned.

Coughs and colds do not normally require exclusion unless they are severe or the child is distressed.

The nursery will ensure that at least one person with a current paediatric first aid certificate is on the premises at all times. We aim for all staff to be first aid trained and those who are not are booked to train in the near future. A first aider will be present on all outings.

The first aid boxes will be checked and replenished regularly. A first aid box will be taken on all outings.

Records will be kept of all accidents and first aid treatments in the appropriate accident book. More serious accidents, including those that require medical treatment will be recorded in accordance with RIDDOR.

Parents will be asked to sign the accident book when collecting their child. If a more serious accident occurs or any serious bumps to the head take place the parents will be contacted by telephone.

Parents will be required to provide details of an emergency contact; in the event of the child receiving an injury or becoming ill at nursery when the parents are unobtainable.

In the event of an emergency or child becoming suddenly unwell:

- A First Aider will be notified and take responsibility for deciding upon the appropriate action.
- The First Aider will assess the situation and decide whether the child needs to go straight to hospital or whether they can safely wait for their parent/carer to arrive.
- If the child needs to go straight to hospital, an ambulance will be called. The parents will also be contacted. A member of staff will accompany the child to the hospital and will consent to medical treatment being given in accordance with the emergency treatment form.
- If the child does not need to go straight to hospital but their condition means they should go home, the parents will be contacted and asked to collect their child. In the meantime, the child will be made as comfortable as possible and be kept under close supervision.

Health & Hygiene

Our nursery promotes a healthy lifestyle and a high standard of hygiene in its day-to-day work with children and adults. This is achieved in the following ways:

Health:

Being good role models and sharing information through stories and other teaching methods; ensuring children understand how to keep themselves healthy including diet, exercise and good oral health.

Food: All meals and snacks provided will be nutritious and pay due attention to children's particular dietary requirements. The EYFS nutrition guidance will be taken into consideration.

Outdoor play: Children will have the opportunity to play outside daily, throughout the year in the nursery outside play area, the country park and on local outings.

Illness: Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they are unwell, and to inform the nursery as to the nature of the infection. This will allow the nursery to alert other parents as necessary and to make careful observations of any child who seems unwell. Parents are asked not to bring into the nursery any child who has been vomiting or had diarrhoea until at least 48 hours has elapsed since the last attack. If the children of nursery staff are unwell, the children will not accompany their parents/carers to work in the nursery. If the child is on prescribed medication the medicine policy will be followed.

Living with Covid: We will follow the latest guidance and respond to outbreaks accordingly.

Injury: The nursery will ensure that the first aid equipment is kept clean, replenished and replaced as necessary. Sterile items will be kept sealed in their packages until needed. There will always be on the premises at least one qualified first aider trained to administer first aid to children.

Information sources: Parents will have the opportunity to discuss health issues with nursery staff and will have access to information available to the nursery. The nursery will maintain links with health visitors and gather health information and advice from the local health authority information services and/or other health agencies.

Hygiene:
To prevent the spread of all infection, adults in the group will ensure that the following good practices are observed:
Personal hygiene: Hands washed after using the toilet and before handling food. Children encouraged to blow and wipe their noses when necessary and to dispose of soiled tissues hygienically. Younger children’s noses will be wiped as needed. Individual towels are used to dry hands.

Cleaning and clearing: Any spills of blood, vomit or excrement wiped up and flushed away down the toilet. Plastic gloves are available when cleaning up spills of body fluids. Floors and other affected surfaces disinfected using antibacterial spray or bleach diluted according to the manufacturer's instructions. Fabrics contaminated with body fluids will be sealed in a bag for parents to take home and wash. Spare laundered pants and other clothing available in case of accidents, and polythene bags available in which to wrap soiled garments.
All surfaces cleaned daily with an appropriate cleaner.

Food: The nursery will observe current legislation regarding food hygiene, registration and training. In particular, each adult will:

- Always wash hands under running water using an antibacterial soap provided before handling food and after using the toilet.
- Not be involved with the preparation of food if suffering from any infectious/ contagious illness or skin trouble.
- Never cough or sneeze over food.
- Use different cleaning cloths for kitchen and toilet areas.
- Prepare raw and cooked food in separate areas.
- Keep food covered and stored appropriately.

Medicine

If a child comes with medicine to nursery the following procedure must be followed:

- The medicine must be signed in, on a medicine sheet, by the parent or carer, with relevant times and dosage.
- Medicines must not be left in the child's bag.
- All medicines must be stored in the medicine box on a high shelf or in the fridge.
- Medicine will be given by a qualified member of staff.
- Only prescribed medicines and infant paracetamol (one dose per day) are permitted. If you feel your child needs cough mixture or other remedies please ask your doctor for it on prescription.
- Teething remedies may be given but must also be signed in at the office.

The nursery keeps a stock of infant paracetamol for use if a child is unwell, suffering from a temperature and/or in pain from teething or other illness.
In this instance:

- Prior written permission will be sought via the registration form.
- The parent/carer will be telephoned for permission before infant paracetamol is given.
- If parents are not contactable, medicine will only be given if the child has been on site longer than the minimum recommended time between doses.
- The dosage given will be as indicated by the maker's instructions.

In the case of ongoing medicine, the parents may provide written consent for the medicine to be given. When the period of medicine is over the parent should provide written confirmation of this.

If the administration of any prescribed medicine requires any technical/medical knowledge then training will be sought and provided.

Food and Drink policy

The sharing of refreshments is an important social experience as well as reinforcing children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating. Children eat all meals and snacks seated in a suitable seat and under the close supervision of an adult. An adult holding a First Aid Certificate will be present during all meal and snack times.

The nursery will ensure that it fulfils all the requirements of the registering authority.
Before a child starts nursery, staff will ensure they are aware of their dietary needs, including the texture/stage of food required and any preferences, allergies or intolerances. Appropriate arrangements will be made to meet their needs.

- In the case of a serious or complex allergy it may be appropriate to seek further support, such as training or medical advice. This will be put in place before the child can start nursery to ensure their needs can be met.
- When a child has an allergy or intolerance parents must have completed the nursery and caterer allergen questionnaires before their child starts nursery.
- Allergy action plans are in place for children who have known allergies or intolerances that require medication.

All staff involved in the preparation and handling of food will have completed Food Hygiene training and Safer Eating training.

Children's dietary requirements are clearly displayed on the Dietary requirements list, the child's dinner mat, and easy read stars displayed in the kitchen areas. Managers will ensure that all staff are aware of any dietary preferences, allergies or intolerances and will be responsible for ensuring food and drink provided is suitable for each child's needs.

Menus are planned in advance and food offered is fresh, wholesome and balanced. All meals and snacks provided are nutritious, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, additives, preservatives and colourings; paying due regard to the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance. The menu will include food from a range of cultures, ensuring that children from all backgrounds encounter familiar tastes and that all children have the opportunity also to try unfamiliar foods. Menus are available for the information of parents. Water is constantly available for children. Milk provided for children is whole or semi-skimmed and pasteurised.

Food is prepared in a way that prevents choking. Choking guidance is displayed in the kitchen area. Children will always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff when eating. If a choking incident requires intervention details will be recorded of where and how the child choked and parents will be informed. All incident records are reviewed periodically to identify trends and recurring issues, with appropriate action put in place.

At Muddy Ducks we believe that Birthdays should be recognised, celebrating each individual child; we welcome Birthday cakes as they represent an integral part of how we celebrate birthdays in the UK. Parents are welcome to bring fruit or a cultural alternative; this can be discussed with a manager.

Risk assessment

The nursery will take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to the children, the staff team and any visitors are kept to a minimum.

Risk assessments will be carried out to identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis. Records will be kept of these aspects, including when they should be checked and by whom.

All risk assessments will be reviewed regularly; at least once a year.

The nursery management team will be aware of the requirements of Health and Safety legislation and will relay this to the nursery team.

Banned dog breeds will not be kept or invited onto the premises at any time.

All risk assessments will be kept together in the risk assessment folder.

Safe recruitment and suitable people

All staff and volunteers having direct contact with children, or working on the premises when children are present, will undergo a Disclosure and Barring service criminal record check (DBS), this will include a barred list check. Until the DBS and barred list check has been received, they will not be able to begin work or volunteer. The number and date of issue of the DBS will be kept on record and the forms returned or destroyed. ID will be checked to confirm each person's identity.

All staff will be given an interview and/or play trial.

All contracts will be offered subject to a three-month probationary period to ensure the person's suitability.

Apprentices will not be left unsupervised for the duration of their three-month probation period.

At least one written reference will be obtained for all employees, including students and volunteers, before their employment/placement commences.

- We will send a reference request form which will ensure the reference is completed in conjunction with our request for a reference.
- We will ensure the reference is received from a legitimate source; for example, checking the email address it has been received from is that of a workplace rather than a personal email.
- When an employer chooses not to use our paperwork, we will ensure that the reference is addressed to Muddy Ducks Nursery, or a Senior Member of the Management. Open references that are not on our paperwork will not be accepted.
- In the first instance we will request a reference from the candidates current or last employer/training provider/education setting, ensuring the person is appropriate to complete a reference; such as a manager rather than a colleague.
- If the person is not currently in a role with children, we will secure a second reference from their last place of employment within the sector whenever possible. This may not be possible if the setting has ceased trading and are not contactable.
- References will not be accepted from family members.
- References will be followed up if information is vague or insufficient.
- Discrepancies between references and the application form will be followed up with the employee and/or referee.
- The reason for leaving their current employment will be established.
- Any concerns will be resolved before employment commences.
- References for current or previous employees will be provided in a timely manner.

We will notify Ofsted and the local authority in the event of a significant staff change; change of Nursery Manager. The nursery will give Ofsted details of any order, determination, conviction, caution, or other grounds for disqualification from registration regarding anyone employed by the setting.

We will keep records containing the name and addresses of staff members, volunteers and directors of nursery.

Staff and prospective staff are made aware of their responsibility to disclose any information which may affect their suitability to work with children including, but not limited to, arrests, charges, convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that take place either before, during or after their employment with the company has ceased.

Occasional volunteers without a DBS check, such as a parent helping with an outing, will be supervised at all times and will not support any personal care or enter the toileting areas. Students, such as work experience students, who are under 16 cannot have a DBS check, will be supervised at all times and will not support any personal care or enter the toileting areas.

Safeguarding children

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) are Donna Overton, and Helen Kinch. The deputy safeguarding lead is Laura Hawkins. DSLs will attend suitable training and update meetings in line with government guidance. DSLs are available to provide support, guidance and advice to all practitioners on an ongoing basis, and for specific safeguarding issues as required.

Harm is defined as;

- ill-treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment that are not physical)
- impairment of physical or mental health
- impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development
- It also includes, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

We intend to create an environment in which children are safe from abuse and harm, and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. In order to achieve this, we will:

Exclude known abusers; It will be made clear to applicants for posts within the nursery that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We will follow our policy for Safe Recruitment; Management reserve the right to seek advice from the Wokingham Safeguarding Children's partnership/ Wokingham Council Early Years Department. All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed until the nursery is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.

Seek and supply training; We will supply training for all adults to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse. All staff will be alert to any issues of concern in a child's life at home or elsewhere. Safeguarding training is delivered through a variety of methods, such as online training, face to face training, mentoring, email or written updates. Our experienced senior team are room based enabling us to support staff in recognising and reacting appropriately to safeguarding issues. Monthly emails with important information and safeguarding scenarios are sent to all staff members. Safeguarding support is given at each termly supervision to ensure staff are confident in implementing the policy and procedures on an ongoing basis. Safeguarding training will be given in line with the Government guidance.

Prevent abuse by means of good practice; Adults who are not employed by the nursery, e.g. students, will not be unsupervised at any time and will not enter the toilet areas when children are present. Children are always within sight or hearing of an adult.
Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them; this will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

Keep records; Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a confidential 'Cause for Concern' record will be set up, quite separate from the usual

ongoing records of children's progress and development. The record will include timed and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation; where possible, the exact words spoken by the child; the date, name and signature of the recorder. Such records will be kept in a separate file and will only be accessible to nursery management, other appropriate members of staff, such as the key person. These records will be shared in line with the Information Sharing Duty Statutory Guidance.

Our duty to share information;
Information will be shared in line with the Information Sharing Duty Statutory Guidance.
Under the information sharing duty, information must be shared where it is relevant to safeguarding and promoting a child's welfare, including where concerns relate to early help, prevention and unmet need. There is no requirement for a child to meet a particular statutory threshold before information can be shared.
The information sharing duty applies to information that may help another relevant person exercise their functions, including assess risk, make a decision, provide support or take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child. This information may be about a child, or another named individual connected to a child. The information sharing duty applies to both children with known needs, and those with needs being identified for the first time.
The duty to share information with others applies where organisations and practitioners:
• Consider that they hold relevant information;
• Or receive a request for relevant information from another organisation and practitioner (the requestor).
Where the information sharing duty applies, organisations and practitioners must share information with another relevant person, or the requestor, if it is considered that sharing may help the recipient's relevant functions, including assess need, make a decision, provide support or take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child. Organisations in scope of the information sharing duty have a safeguarding function that, where relevant to the information held, may be facilitated upon sharing.
The common law duty of confidentiality (CLDoC) does not apply to information shared in compliance with the information sharing duty, meaning that confidential information can be shared without consent under the CLDoC, and without the need to consider whether sharing is in the overriding public interest.

Respond appropriately to child protection issues and liaise with other bodies;
The nursery operates in accordance with guidelines laid down by the registering authority.

Confidential records will be kept for children about whom the nursery is anxious. The first concern will be the child. Changes in children's behaviour/appearance will be investigated. Children whose condition or behaviour has given cause for concern will be listened to, reassured and helped to understand that they themselves are valued and respected and have not been at fault.
Parents may be the first point of reference, however Information will always be shared in line with the Information Sharing Duty Statutory Guidance.
All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, but will be shared in line with the Information Sharing Duty Statutory Guidance.

When an enquiry has been made to the Wokingham Borough Council Referral and Assessment Team, the nursery will await the decision of the Referral and Assessment Team and take the course of action as directed. The action taken by the Referral and Assessment Team may be:

- No further action, which may include information to signpost to other agencies;
- Early help - referrals for intervention and prevention services within the Common Assessment Framework and Early Help services range of provision;
- Identity of lead professional;
- Back to referrer;
- Child in Need services - assessment to be undertaken by Children's Social Care (Section 17 CA 1989);
- Looked After Child status;
- Child Protection services – assessment and child protection enquiries to be undertaken by Children's Social Care (Section 47 CA 1989) with active involvement of other agencies such as the police.

The nursery will maintain ongoing contact with the local authority, together with names and telephone numbers of individual social workers, to ensure that it would be easy, in any emergency, for the nursery and the Wokingham Safeguarding Children's partnership to work well together.

If a volunteer or member of staff is accused of any form of child abuse, guidance will be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO) and their procedures will be followed. The nursery will inform Ofsted of any allegations of harm or abuse by anyone living, working, or looking after children at the setting. The nursery will inform the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed or leaves the company, with a pending investigation, in relation to the safety of children.
Confidential records will be kept of any allegations and of all subsequent proceedings.

Support families; The nursery will take every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff and volunteers in the group. Where a child protection issue is suspected, the nursery will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed. Confidential records kept on a child will be shared with parents. With the proviso that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount, the nursery will do all in its power to support and work with the child's family.

Monitor absences; The nursery will follow up if a child is absent for a prolonged period of time, or absent without notification from the parent/carer. Attempts will be made to contact all of the child's named contacts in order until a reply is received. The nursery will take into consideration patterns or trends of absence and the personal circumstances of the family when deciding if an absence is considered to be prolonged. The child and family's vulnerability will be an important factor of consideration. Concerns will be referred to the Wokingham Borough Council Referral and Assessment Team, and/or the police for a welfare check.

Prevent Duty; All schools, registered early years childcare providers and registered later years childcare providers are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.
As a setting we aim to build children's resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values; please see our separate policy, and giving children the skills they need to challenge extremist views, by promoting self-confidence and self-awareness and tolerance of others.

If we have concerns regarding a child's welfare we will follow our normal child protection procedures. Prevent also has a distinct referral process for individuals who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, enabling specialist assessment and consideration of support, where appropriate, through the Prevent and Channel frameworks.

We aim to reduce the risk of children in our care becoming radicalised by:

- Risk Assessment; being aware of changes in children's or their family's behaviour, and reporting any behaviour of concern to the Lead Safeguarding Practitioner. This includes monitoring absences of children.
- Working in Partnership with other agencies, such as the Wokingham Safeguarding Children's partnership. The Police and Local Charities may also be sources of support when needed. We will work in partnership with Parents and carers and will signpost towards appropriate support.
- Training; our lead safeguarding practitioners will have Prevent Awareness training and will support other staff in understanding their duties.
- Using IT safely; all children are closely monitored when using IT equipment within the setting. Use of social networking sites is strictly prohibited.

Domestic abuse; Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. But it isn't just physical violence – domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse. It can happen in any relationship, and even after the relationship has ended. Both men and women can be abused or abusers. Domestic abuse can seriously harm children and young people. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships. It's often difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening, because it usually takes place in the family home and abusers can act very differently when other people are around.
Children who witness domestic abuse may:

- become aggressive
- display anti-social behaviour
- suffer from depression or anxiety
- not do as well at nursery - due to difficulties at home or disruption of moving to and from refuges.

If we have concerns regarding a child's welfare we will follow our normal child protection procedures.

Child Sexual Exploitation; Child sexual exploitation (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) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. 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 involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyber-bullying 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.

If we have concerns regarding a child's welfare we will follow our normal child protection procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM); professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

If we have concerns regarding a child's welfare we will follow our normal child protection procedures.

E-safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material and behaviours. We aim to empower, protect and educate learners and staff in their use of technology and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content. For example, pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users. For example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. For example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual

sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos) and/or pornography or other explicit images and online bullying.
- commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

Acceptable use of mobile phones, tablets, smart watches and cameras; Managers are permitted to have their work-related mobile phones within the setting, for example to check work related emails, social media posts etc.
Staff and volunteers working directly with the children must not use personal mobile phones as it is inappropriate and distracts them paying full attention to the children in their care. Staff and volunteers are aware that they will be asked to leave the setting if they are found with their mobile phone upon their person. All personal mobile phones must remain in the office or personal locker during working hours. A personal mobile phone will only ever be used in the children's area, during opening times, in the event of an emergency i.e. to call an ambulance if the nursery phone is not available.

We recognise the health benefits of smart watches; however, staff must not use their watch to receive calls or check messages whilst working with the children. All staff will be vigilant of others checking smart watches and will remind them of the nursery policy, and report to a senior member of staff. Staff will not use their smart watch to take or access photos or images whilst on the nursery premises or on trips or outings.

It is reasonable to expect parents, carers and other professionals to, at times, access their mobile phone or smart watch whilst within the nursery building; this may be to take a call, check a calendar, or use a translation app. However, they are not permitted to use mobile phones or smart watches to video or take photos of the nursery children, unless they are given specific permission by a manager to take a photo of their own child; an example of this may be on their last day at nursery before leaving for school. Staff are vigilant to ensure inappropriate use of mobile phones and smart watches does not take place, and if they are concerned will challenge the person in question.

Nursery mobile phones are provided for outings and for taking photos for learning journeys. If further mobile phones are needed e.g. for larger or multiple outings a senior member of staff will be selected to take their own. Managers monitor the message logs for nursery tablets and mobile phones. All images automatically upload to 'the cloud' to enable managers to view all images taken.

A vital way to support the children's development and engage parents in their learning is through the use of photographs. This gives us a record of their activities and achievements. All parents sign to give their consent for photographs to be used in this way on their child's registration form; we also take consent for children to be photographed for publicity purposes etc.

Cameras from other sources may be present at times; such as the annual nursery photographer; all outside photographers will be closely supervised.

Acceptable use of the internet with children; the internet is a powerful source of information which extends the children's learning opportunities when used appropriately.

Children are not permitted to bring their own tablet, device, mobile phone or wearable device into the setting.

When accessing the internet on a nursery device, children will be continually supervised by an adult.

When using the internet with children, adults will:

- Continually supervise children using devices.
- Aim to use known reputable websites such as RSPB, WWF, etc.
- Not click on any external links or pop ups that may pose a risk.
- Watch any YouTube videos before showing the children to ensure they are age appropriate.
- Keep the personal information of themselves, children, families and colleagues confidential.
- Keep passwords confidential.
- Only send messages online that are polite and friendly.
- Not access social media, or chat room facilities.

To keep your child safe online outside of the setting we recommend parents/carers follow these simple rules with their child:

- I only go online with a grown up
- I am kind online
- I keep information about me safe
- I tell a grown up if something online makes me unhappy

Staff acceptable use of technology; as a professional organisation with responsibility for safeguarding, all members of staff are expected to use our IT systems in a professional, lawful, and ethical manner. To ensure that members of staff understand their professional responsibilities when using technology and provide appropriate curriculum opportunities for learners, they are asked to read and sign the staff Acceptable Use of Technology Policy as part of their induction.

Whistle blowing

Whistle blowing encourages and enables staff to raise serious concerns within the nursery, rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside. Staff are often the first to realise that there is something seriously wrong within the nursery. However, they may not want to express their concerns as they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the nursery.
We are committed to the highest possible standards of openness, and accountability. In line with that commitment, we expect staff, and others that we deal with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the nursery's operation to come forward and voice those concerns.

The policy applies to all employees, permanent and temporary, bank staff, volunteers and work experience students.

Please note that other procedures are available to employees e.g. the Grievance procedure which relates to complaints about your own employment. This policy also does not replace the Complaints Policy which is for the use of Parents, Grandparents and all other carers of children who use the nursery.

The Aims of the Policy

- To encourage you to feel confident in raising concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice.
- To provide avenues for you to raise concerns in confidence and receive feedback on any action taken.
- To ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if you are not satisfied.
- To reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if you have a reasonable belief that you have made a disclosure in good faith.

Types of Concern

- Behaviour which has harmed, or may harm a child.
- Where there is a possibility that a member of staff has committed a criminal offence against a child or related to a child that has not been disclosed.
- Behaviour towards a child or children in a way that indicates that s/he is unsuitable to work with children.
- Conduct which is an offence or a breach of law.
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation.
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other staff.
- Damage to the environment.
- Actions which are unprofessional, inappropriate or conflict with a general understanding of what is right and wrong.

We recognise that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. If what you are saying is true, you should have nothing to fear because you will be doing your duty to your employer

and those for whom you provide a service. We will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness. This policy encourages you however to put your name to your concern whenever possible. Please note that:

- Staff must disclose the information in good faith.
- Staff must believe it to be substantially true.
- Staff must not act maliciously or make false allegations.
- Staff must not seek any personal gain.

How to Raise a Concern

As a first step, you should raise concerns with the Designated Safeguarding lead, Donna Overton or Helen Kinch, in their absence Laura Hawkins, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead, will be contactable. If appropriate the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO) will be contacted. The LADO:

- Is involved in the oversight and management of allegations against people who work with children.
- Provides advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations about the most appropriate way to manage the concern or allegation.
- Helps to establish what the next steps should be.
- Makes sure that all relevant specific actions are taken.
- Monitors the progress of a case.

The contact number for the LADO is displayed in the nursery office. In an emergency the police will be called.

If the allegation is against a manager, advice from another member of management should be sought, or the LADO should be contacted directly.

Alternatively, you can contact:

- NSPCC Whistleblowing advice line is available between 8am-8pm, Monday to Friday, or 9am-6pm Saturday and Sunday. On 08000280285, or email help@nspcc.org.uk or write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London, EC2A 3NH.
- Contact Ofsted on 0300 123 3155, email them at whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk or write to them at: WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
  You can also access their guidance on making complaints: Complaints procedure - Ofsted - GOV.UK
- General guidance for Whistleblowing can be found on the government website; Whistleblowing for employees: What is a whistleblower - GOV.UK

Safety

The safety of young children is of paramount importance. In order to ensure the safety of both children and adults, the nursery will ensure safety in the following areas:

Environment

- Safety checks on premises, both outdoors and indoors, will be made before every session and repeated throughout the day as necessary.
- We will ensure children have the required kit, as outlined in the kit list, to ensure their comfort and safety when playing outdoors.
- The main entrance will be permanently locked and there will be a doorbell for visitors.
- Low-level glass is safety glass or covered with safety film, marked to British Standards.
- The nursery garden is securely fenced.
- When using public space the area will be checked for litter and other dangers.
- Equipment will be checked regularly and any dangerous items repaired/discarded.
- The layout and space ratios will allow children and adults to move safely and freely between activities.
- There will be adequate systems and equipment for the detection and control of fire.
- Fire doors will never be obstructed and fire exits will be easily identifiable.
- Heaters/electric points/wires and leads will be adequately guarded.
- A record will be kept of any checks by the Fire Safety Officer and also of fire drills and servicing of fire safety equipment. Any recommendations by the Fire Safety Officer will be carried out.
- All dangerous materials, including medicines and cleaning materials, will be stored out of reach of children.
- Large equipment will be erected with care and checked regularly.
- Equipment offered to children will be developmentally appropriate, recognising that materials suitable for an older child may pose a risk to younger/less mature children.
- Internal safety gates/barriers will be used as necessary.
- Hot food and drink will be allowed to cool before being transported to avoid burns and scolds from spillages.

Supervision

- All children will be supervised by adults at all times and will always be within sight or hearing of an adult.
- Children will only leave the group with adults who have been explicitly authorised by the parents/carers.
- Children will not have unsupervised access to the cooker, microwave or any cupboards storing hazardous materials.
- If a small group goes on an outing there will be sufficient adults to maintain appropriate ratios for children remaining on the premises.
- Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults will be present.

Adult safety

- All adults in the group, both staff and visitors, will be aware of and respect the group's safety policies.
- Adults in the group will have access to advice on safe lifting.
- If adults need to reach up for stored equipment, they will be provided with something safe to stand on.
- Adults will not be required to be in the building alone, or to leave alone after dark.
- There will be a signing in and out book for adults visiting the nursery.

Management

- Regular safety monitoring will include checking of the accident records as a basis for risk assessment.
- All adults, including parents and other carers, will be aware of the system(s) in operation for children's arrivals and departures.
- Fire drills will be held every half term.
- A register of both adults and children will be completed as people arrive and leave so that a complete record of all those present is available in any emergency.
- There will be no smoking on the premises, including the outside play area. This includes the use of vaping or e-cigarettes.
- Fire extinguishers will be checked annually by qualified fire technicians and staff will know how to use them.

Special considerations

Some areas and activities pose particular hazards. All staff will be aware of these:

- Children playing with or near water will be continuously supervised.
- There will be safe surfaces beneath and around all climbing equipment over 60cm and such activities will be appropriately supervised.
- The log burner will be restricted by a suitable hearth gate distanced from the heat according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Systems will be in place to ensure that children are not at risk from swinging doors.
- Systems will be in place to ensure that no child can leave the premises unattended.
- A correctly stocked first aid box will be available at all times.

Security Procedure

We will ensure the nursery is safe and secure both indoors and outdoors.

The nursery security is such that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised and intruders are prevented from entering.

The main and rear entrance of the nursery will be protected by a lock, as will the garden gates. Parents will enter via the main entrance, summoning a member of staff via a doorbell.

Children will only be released into the care of individuals named by the parent. These persons should be named on the registration form, however in case of emergency they may be named by telephone call giving a detailed description of the person and/or a password.

All visitors will be asked to record their name and visiting times on the visitors register. The visitor will only be allowed entrance of the nursery after stating the purpose of the visit and ID will be requested if necessary.

All staff and children's arrival and departure times will be recorded on the appropriate register.

In the event of an intruder, the person in charge will decide on a safe place to assemble all children or will follow the emergency evacuation procedure. The police will be called and the incident will be investigated.

Lost Children

There are a limited number of situations where a child could be lost and these are:

- Where a child wanders off on a nursery outing (see policy on outings)
- Where a child escapes from the garden or building.
- Where a child is taken from the nursery by an unapproved adult (see procedures for answering the door and for the collection of children)

Should a child become lost the following action should be taken:

- Alert the member of staff in charge who will make enquiries of relevant members of staff as to when the child was last seen and where.
- Remember the safety of the other children, with regard to supervision and security.
- Ensuring that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure, one or preferably two members of staff should search the building, garden and immediate vicinity.
- If the child cannot be found within ten minutes, then the police and parents must be informed.
- Continue to search, opening up the area, and keeping in touch via mobile phone.

When the situation has been resolved members of staff should review the reasons for it happening and ensure measures are taken to ensure that it does not happen again. This should be then recorded in the incident book with the parent's signature to show they have read it and a copy sent to Ofsted.

Evacuation Procedure

Upon discovering a fire, you must activate the alarm via the nearest call point.

Upon hearing the **fire alarm** or in the event of an **emergency evacuation** staff should:

- Collect the register and evacuation keys, assemble the children and leave by the nearest fire exit; this would normally be the garden doors, unless these are blocked by the fire or flood.
- Senior staff to ensure that no children remain in the toilets, office or cloakroom. Close the fire doors behind you as you leave.
- Those who are already in the garden should assemble at the fire point on the patio.
- Staff and children will assemble at the assembly point on the patio area; once assembled registers must be called.
- The person in charge will call the fire brigade, take the visitor and staff registers.
- The person in charge will decide if it is necessary to move to the place of safety.

- **If the garden exit is blocked by fire or flood**
    - Follow above procedure but leave by the main front door and assemble in the dragonfly café garden.
    - Be aware of the potential movement of vehicles and emergency vehicles arriving.

Staff on breaks must go directly to the assembly point where the person in charge will decide if it is safe for them to enter the building to help evacuate the children.

Staffing arrangements, qualifications, training, skills and knowledge

The nursery will meet or exceed the required adult: child ratios:

Children aged under two: 1 adult: 3 children

Children aged two: 1 adult: 5 children

Children aged three and over: 1 adult: 8 children

Or if a person holding a suitable level 6 qualification is present: 1 adult: 13 children for children aged three and over. One other member of staff must be qualified to level 3 or have received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status.

The manager will hold, at least, a suitable level 3 qualification, have at least two years' experience of working in an early years setting, or have at least two years' other suitable experience. There will be a named deputy who is capable and qualified to take charge in the manager's absence. At least half of other staff will hold at least a level two qualification.

Cover for breaks will be provided where necessary. The correct number of staff will remain on the premises, should they be needed.

Bank or agency staff will be available to cover staff absences or emergencies.

Anyone aged under 17 will not be counted in ratios, except apprentices who may be included in ratios from the age of 16. Anyone aged under 17 will be supervised at all times. Students and long-term volunteers (aged 17 or over) and apprentices (aged 16 or over) can be counted in ratios at the level below their level of study, when they are considered to be suitable, competent and responsible, and they hold a valid and current paediatric first aid qualification.

The nursery will endeavour for all staff to have suitable experience, hold or be working towards a relevant qualification. All staff will be supported throughout their training.

All staff with receive an induction pack explaining their roles and responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure their understanding of this pack. It is the responsibility of the whole nursery team to induct new members of staff and ensure their understanding of their role.

Regular staff monitoring will take place including probation reviews, supervisions and appraisals.

A training matrix, alongside the staff monitoring will be used to review individual staffs training needs. All staff will have the opportunity to attend in house and local authority training.

Smoking

The nursery is a smoke free environment.

The nursery management team will ensure that no one smokes within the nursery or its grounds. This includes the use of vaping or e-cigarettes.

Staff are only permitted to smoke on designated breaks, away from the nursery grounds and should wear suitable outer clothing in order to protect their nursery uniform.

Alcohol, medicines and other substances

When working in the nursery staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to carry out their role.

Those taking medication which they believe may affect their ability to carry out their role must seek medical advice and only work if their GP confirms it is safe to do so.

Selecting Play Equipment and Toys

The toys and equipment in nursery provide opportunities for children to develop new skills and concepts in the course of their play and exploration.

The equipment we provide is appropriate for the ages and stages of the children.

The equipment will enable children, with adult support, to develop their individual potential and to work towards and achieve the curriculum aims. It will offer challenges to developing physical, social, personal and intellectual skills and conforms to all relevant safety regulations and is sound and well made.

The nursery and its equipment will feature positive images of people, both male and female, from a range of ethnic and cultural groups, with and without disabilities.

We will provide a range of raw/natural materials which can be used in a variety of ways and encourages an open-ended approach to creativity and problem solving.

All equipment is checked on a daily basis and anything that is deemed hazardous will be disposed of.

We have a budget in place to regularly replace and/or add to our toys and equipment.

Premises

The nursery will be arranged in a way that meets the needs of children, including, when possible, those with disabilities.

The nursery will meet the space requirements as set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage:

Children under two: 3.5m2 per child
Children aged two: 2.5m2 per child
Children aged three to five: 2.3m2 per child

Staff and children will be aware of the evacuation procedure and this will be clearly displayed in the nursery for visitors. The nursery has appropriate fire detection and fire control equipment. All fire control equipment is inspected regularly. Fire exits are kept clear and are clearly identifiable.

Our public liability insurance is clearly displayed in the entrance hall.

Rooms will be maintained at an adequate temperature, well lit and ventilated.

Curriculum planning, observation and assessment

The purpose of curriculum planning is to ensure a rich learning environment for each child, in which they can grow and develop, reaching their full potential. Our planning method involves minimal paperwork to ensure that the maximum time can be spent interacting with the children.

At Muddy Ducks we aim to reintroduce children to the great outdoors, enabling them to readily identify wildlife, blackberries and conkers.

Research shows that children are spending less time outdoors and now know less about the natural world than ever before; this is leading to poor physical and mental health and a lack of awareness of nature and its benefits.

We offer children the opportunity to explore the great outdoors both within the nursery garden and the wider country park. Our curriculum focuses on active free play, which is essential to healthy growth and progress. Whilst outdoors our children receive direct experience of weather, the seasons and wildlife; they will assess risks, solve problems and develop their creativity.

As a team we have discussed the skills we want our children to develop over their time at Muddy Ducks;

At Muddy Ducks we are passionate about **Outdoor Play**, **Nature** and the **Environment**.
Muddy Ducks are **Kind**
Muddy Ducks are **Curious**
Muddy Ducks are **Risk-takers**
Muddy Ducks are **Resilient**

We are Muddy Ducks!

We use both 'Development matters' and 'Birth to 5 Matters' to help shape our curriculum, and support the assessment of children.

Teachable moments

We identify teachable moments that will enrich each child's learning experience. We do this:
In advance; by identifying potential moments of interest that can be introduced to the children, such as festivals, seasons and events i.e. a Royal wedding or the moon landing anniversary.
In the moment; when spending quality time with the children, staff use their knowledge to identify teachable moments which will help each individual child progress; this may be learning to use their cutlery, finding a safe way to climb or counting how many ducks are in the pond. However it may be an **opportunistic moment**; for example we have;

- Spotted a broken-down rubbish truck which we watched closely and talked about the mechanics of the towing truck.
- Investigating the flood water after a heavy storm talking about depth, the speed of the stream and keeping ourselves safe.

- Worked as a team to build our new climbing frame, listening to the instructions, persevering and using tools safely.
- Watched and discussed how the hay baler works in the country park.

Cultural capital; we believe our curriculum greatly enhances the opportunities and experiences available to all children; this is sometimes referred to as 'Cultural capital'.

Parental involvement in the curriculum; we encourage parental involvement by sharing our daily activities via conversation, notices and social media. We encourage parents to share achievements at home through the use of 'Wow' moments slips and daily conversations. Please see our parent information and involvement policy for more information.

Supporting staff to develop their knowledge of the curriculum and child development; weekly planned activities are carried out by an experienced member of staff alongside a less experienced member of staff. This practice enables staff to develop their understanding of the learning requirements, how children learn and develop, recording observations and assessment.

Vocabulary rich environment; we aim for children to consistently develop vocabulary that enables them to communicate effectively. We do this by providing a vocabulary rich environment where children are exposed to high-quality interactions, language is modelled and new words are introduced. Children are able to speak with increasing confidence and fluency, providing a secure foundation for future learning, especially in preparation for them to become fluent readers.

We use the Match+1 techniques to develop children's vocabulary; especially those who are in need of extra support; for example, if the child says a word, the adult will add one word and repeat back to the child:

- Child – "Car" Adult – "Blue car" or "Fast Car" or "Shiny Car"
- Child – "Thomas's cat" Adult – "Thomas's Fluffy cat"

Maths rich environment; we are an NDNA Math Champions setting. We provide children with the best possible start in their mathematical development, and build the confidence and skills of our staff team by following the programme which is embedded into our day-to-day practice.

Focussed time; throughout each term each child will have focussed time with their key person. The key person will work closely with the child to ensure they are making sound progress. Observations highlighting vocabulary and teachable moments are recorded and added to the child's learning journey. A detailed report will then be written and shared with parents.

Learning journeys; each child has a learning journey scrapbook containing their observations, photographs, and examples of work, as well as their focussed time sheet and termly report. Parents are encouraged to add their own observations and photographs to their child's journal.

Additional support; Children who are in need of additional support will have extended periods of focussed time with their key worker each term. Any concerns about a child's development will be discussed with the parents and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator. Outside

support will be sought if necessary. Please refer to our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy for more information.

Moderation; each termly report is moderated by a senior colleague to ensure a consistent approach to assessment. Managers track both individuals and cohorts to ensure all children are making suitable progress. Moderation meetings, both within the nursery and within the local authority, are carried out periodically.

Two year checks; when a child joins the nursery age two years their first progress reports will form the Government required 'Two year progress check'. Parents will be asked for a copy of their health visitor report, and asked to share their nursery report with their health visitor.

Reflective Practice; is our curriculum effective?

To ensure our curriculum planning, observation and assessment methods are fit for purpose we regularly ask ourselves:

- Why does a piece of paper need to be written, what value does this have and who is it for?
- What are we doing with our children; are they experiencing awe and wonder in the curriculum?
- Are our intentions evident in our environments and our practice?
- Are the children making sufficient progress – how do we know?
- Are children who are disadvantaged or those with special education needs or disabilities making sufficient progress – how do we know?

Outings

Outings are an intrinsic part of our curriculum. We use the facilities available within the country park to support our children's learning and development as often as possible.

For all outings, including those within the country park, the following procedures must be followed:

- Children are expected to arrive at nursery by 9.30 to enable routine outings to go ahead without delay. We are unable to wait for late arrivals, but will carry the nursery telephone to advise of our location.
- Permission for each outing must be gained from the person in charge of the nursery.
- On every outing the adult: child ratios will be maintained or exceeded, in line with the appropriate risk assessment.
- When children join the nursery permission will be sought for children to go on local outings. For any trips further afield, further permission will be sought.
- A first aider must be present and a suitable first aid box must be taken.
- A mobile phone with sufficient credit and battery will be taken in order to contact the nursery or emergency services if needed.
- The children must be counted before setting off (on the coach if used) and counting must be ongoing at regular intervals throughout the outing. If the group is broken up into sub-groups a designated person in charge must be assigned and that person is responsible for counting the children at regular intervals.
- Toilet and changing facilities must be provided for the children at regular intervals. Meeting points must be pre-designated and times arranged when the party should reassemble. These must be strictly adhered to.
- Food and drinks must be provided at similar times to those in the nursery and additional drinks should be offered if the weather is warm or if energetic exercise is part of the day.
- Transport must be fully insured; drivers' details satisfactory and all seats must have safety harnesses or equivalent, unless public transport is being used. The maximum seat capacity of the vehicle must not be exceeded.

At the conclusion of each outing the member of staff in charge of the outing will discuss with the nursery manager:

- Any particular problems with transport (e.g. coach arriving late)
- Any particular problems with the venue (e.g. nowhere to shelter during rain)
- Any particular problems with specific children (illness, distress, etc.)
- Educational benefits of the visit
- Comments from parents
- Recommendations for future visits.

Prior to each outing the person in charge of the outing will refer back to the reviews and take accounts of comments when preparing for the next outing.

Complaints Procedure

We aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We welcome each individual child and family and aim to provide a warm and caring environment within which all children can learn and develop as they play. We believe children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community in general. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time.

Many concerns can be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, the following procedures should be used.

How to complain:

In the event of a more significant complaint or if staff are unable to resolve a minor complaint satisfactorily, the complaint should be put in writing to a nursery manager.

The nursery manager must acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three working days.

The nursery manager will investigate all concerns and complaints and notify the complainant of the outcome and any actions taken within 28 days.

Complaints will be recorded in the complaints log and made available to parents on request.

All complaints that require notification to Ofsted must be notified, by the setting, within 14 days of the complaint being raised.

Complaints about staff will be dealt with following our internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member following a complaint, however the complainant will be notified that the matter has been investigated.

If the complaint is not resolved to the parent/carers satisfaction they may then choose to refer the matter to the registering authority Ofsted. Parents can contact Ofsted, our registering body, at any time regarding their child's care; enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or 0300 123 4666. Contact details for Ofsted are also clearly displayed in the entrance hall of the nursery

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interests of the nursery and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

Key persons

The nursery has a key person system.

The child's key person will build a strong relationship with the child and also work with their parents to ensure that the nursery is meeting their individual needs. The key person will keep records for their key children, and document evidence appropriately.

Trainee members of staff will normally act as a buddy as this will give the trainee the opportunity to learn how to work with the parents in an effective manner.

Although the key person will be the parents' main point of contact, we will ensure that each child's individual needs are well known to all staff to ensure continuity of care.

Record keeping

The nursery will maintain records, obtain and share relevant and accurate information with parents and/or carers, other professionals working with the child, the police, social services and Ofsted as appropriate.

The nursery registration certificate will be displayed in the nursery entrance hall, where it is visible to parents.

All records will be kept up to date and be easily accessible and available for Ofsted should they request to see them.

Parents will be encouraged to inform us of changes to their personal details.

The confidentiality policy, along with the Data protection act & GDPR guidelines will be followed for all confidential information.

Records that need to be kept for a significant period will be archived and clearly marked so that they are easy to identify when needed.

Information will be shared in line with the Information Sharing Duty Statutory Guidance.

Arriving at nursery

Children are dropped off at nursery at the main porch entrance. Children are the responsibility of their parent/carer whilst in the car park area and before they have entered the nursery building.

Children need to arrive at nursery before 9am if breakfast is required. All children should arrive at nursery by 9.30, if for any reason this is not possible parents/carers should contact the nursery as soon as possible.

There may be times when parents are invited in to drop off their child; for example, whilst settling in or if the child is upset. Generally, children will walk into nursery of their own accord, or be handed to a member of staff at the door.

Confidentiality Policy

Our work will inevitably bring us into contact with confidential information. To ensure that all those using and working in the nursery can do so with confidence, we will respect confidentiality in the following ways:

- Parents will have ready access to the files and records of their own children but will not have access to information about any other child.
- Safeguarding Information will be shared in line with the Information Sharing Duty Statutory Guidance.
- Staff and students will not discuss nursery matters outside of the premises.
- Confidential information will be discussed only with those who need to know.
- Confidential information should not be passed over the telephone.
- Information given by parents/carers to the nursery manager or key person will not be passed on to other adults without permission, unless required to safeguard a child.
- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, will remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- Any concerns relating to a child's personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will only be shared with whom the manager deems necessary to maintain the child's safety.
- Students during training, when they are observing in the nursery, will be advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the nursery, which is to the safety and well-being of the child. Please also refer to our safeguarding policy.

Admissions and Enrolment Policy

It is our intention to make our nursery genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. In order to accomplish this, we will:

- Aim for the existence of the nursery to be widely known in all local communities.
- Describe the nursery and its practices in terms which make it clear that it welcomes fathers and mothers, other relations and carers, and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups, with and without disabilities.
- Monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the group to ensure that no accidental discrimination is taking place.
- Make our equal opportunities policy known.
- Be as flexible as possible about attendance patterns so as to accommodate the needs of individual children and families.
- Offer funded places for eligible children.

The nursery will offer spaces to families in a way that will ensure the nurseries maximum occupancy can be reached in order to make the most of the spaces we have available. This may mean we are only able to offer quieter days to those families who want part-time places during busy periods. However, a first come, first served policy will be used at all other times.

Children who are currently attending the nursery or who have a sibling attending will be given priority.

Registration forms must be fully complete and the registration fee, where applicable, paid in order to secure a place.

Nursery places will be confirmed via email. Fees must be received one month before starting nursery or by the date specified on the invoice.

Parental Information and Involvement

Parents are the first educators of their young children. The aim of the group is to support parents in their essential role.

We will:

- Involve parents in shared record keeping about their own child, both formally and informally, ensuring that parents have access to all written records on their own children.
- Ensure that parents are given information on a regular basis about their child's progress and have an opportunity to discuss it with staff.
- Ensure that all parents have opportunities to contribute from their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the group.
- Ensure that all new parents are aware of and can contribute to the group's systems and policies.
- Encourage parents to be involved in specific activities, and to play an active part in the structure of the group.
- Ensure that all parents are fully informed about meetings, events, workshops and training.
- Consult with families about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone.
- Hold meetings in venues which are accessible and appropriate for all.
- Welcome the contributions of parents, whatever form these may take.
- Make known to all parents the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions.
- Provide opportunities for parents to learn about the nursery curriculum and about young children's learning, in nursery and at home.

We will endeavour to ensure parents are fully informed of:

- The types of activities provided for children
- The daily routine
- The nursery team
- Food and drinks provided
- Our policies and procedures
- The complaints procedure and details for contacting Ofsted

Settling into nursery

We want children to feel safe and happy in the absence of their parents, to recognise other adults as a source of friendship, help and authority and to be able to share with their parents afterwards the new learning experiences enjoyed in the nursery. We also want parents to feel welcome and involved from the beginning. In order to accomplish this, we aim to create a partnership with parents in the following ways:

- By creating opportunities for the exchange of information.
- By ensuring plentiful opportunities for parents to inform the nursery about their child's current achievements and interests.
- By encouraging parents to visit the nursery with their children during the weeks before an admission is planned.
- By introducing flexible admission procedures, if appropriate, to meet the needs of individual families and children.
- By making clear to families from the outset that they will be welcome and supported in the nursery for as long as it takes to settle their child.
- By reassuring parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling into the nursery.
- By introducing new families into the group on a staggered basis, for example two new children a day for a week rather than ten new children all at once when possible.
- By encouraging parents, where appropriate, to separate from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences.

Children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious and unhappy. Our settling procedures aim to help parents and children to feel comfortable in the nursery, and to ensure that children can benefit from what the group has to offer and feel confident that their parents will return at the end of the day.

Equal Opportunities Policy

We are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all children and families and take positive action to eliminate discrimination in all areas of our work.

We believe that the group's activities should be open to all children and families, and to all adults committed to their education and care. We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with our nursery have an equal chance to do so.

Admissions; the nursery is open to every family in the community. Families joining the nursery are made aware of its equal opportunities policy, which is regularly reviewed.

Employment; the nursery will appoint the best person for each job and will treat all applicants fairly. Commitment to implementing the group's Equal Opportunities Policy will form part of the job description for all workers.

Families; the nursery recognises that many different types of family group can, and do, successfully love and care for children. The nursery aims to offer support to all families, including providing a translator where needed if possible.

Festivals; our aim is to show respectful awareness of all the major events in the lives of the children and families in the nursery, and in our society as a whole, and to welcome the diversity of backgrounds from which they come. In order to achieve this:

- We aim to acknowledge the festivals which are celebrated in our area and/or by the families involved in the nursery.
- Children will be made aware of the festivals which are being celebrated by their own families or others, and will be introduced where appropriate to the stories behind the festivals.
- Before introducing a festival with which the adults in the nursery are not themselves familiar, appropriate advice will be sought from parents and other people who are familiar with that festival.
- Children and families who celebrate festivals that the rest of the nursery are not familiar with will be invited to share their festival with the rest of the group, if they themselves wish to do so.
- Children will become familiar with and enjoy taking part in a range of festivals, together with the stories, celebrations and special food and clothing they involve, as part of the diversity of life.

The Curriculum; all children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Management of resources within the nursery will ensure that both girls and boys have full access to all kinds of activities and equipment and are equally encouraged to enjoy and learn from them. Appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Resources; these will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multiracial society. Materials will be selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and by using images and words which reflect positively the contribution of all members of society.

Special Needs in relation to equal opportunities; the nursery recognises that children have a wide range of needs which differ from time to time, and we will consider what part we can play in meeting these needs as they arise. Planning for nursery meetings and events will take into account the needs of people with special educational needs and disabilities. We positively encourage any outside assistance from people such as health visitors, physiotherapists, speech therapists and other outside agencies in order to provide the best care possible when a special need is identified.

Discriminatory Behaviour/Remarks; any discriminatory language, behaviour or remarks by children, parents or any other adults are unacceptable in the nursery. Our response will aim to demonstrate support for the victim(s), to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices and to make it clear that such behaviour/remarks will not be tolerated.

Language; Bilingual/multilingual children and adults are an asset to the whole group. Parents will be encouraged to speak to children in their first language at home. Children and parents who have English as a second or additional language will be valued and their languages recognised and respected in the nursery.

Food; working in partnership with parents, children's medical, cultural and dietary needs will be met.

Meetings; the nursery will make every effort to ensure that the time, place and conduct of meetings enable the majority of parents to attend so that all families have an equal opportunity to be involved in and informed about the nursery.

Behaviour Management

We believe that children and adults flourish best in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement. In order to achieve this:

- All adults will provide a positive role model for the children with regard to friendliness, care and courtesy and to offer strategies for handling any conflict.
- Rules governing the conduct of the group and the behaviour of the children will be discussed and agreed within the nursery and explained to all newcomers, both children and adults.
- All adults in the nursery will ensure that the rules are applied consistently, so that children have the security of knowing what to expect and can build up useful habits of behaviour.
- Adults in the nursery will praise and endorse desirable behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We will take positive steps to avoid a situation in which children receive adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.

When children behave in unacceptable ways:

- They will be given one-to-one adult support in seeing what was wrong and how to cope more appropriately.
- Children will be focused onto a new activity or if appropriate, such as when the child is distressed, spend short period of time away from the group with an adult, this will be within the room, for example the book corner.
- Any behaviour incidents will be handled in a developmentally appropriate fashion, respecting the individual child's level of understanding and maturity.
- Children will never be sent out of the room by themselves.
- Physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking, will be neither used nor threatened.
- Techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children such as the "naughty chair" will not be used.
- Physical restraint, such as holding, will be used only to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property. Any significant event of this sort will be recorded in the incident file, and the parent informed the same day.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes will be made clear immediately by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- In any case of misbehaviour, it will always be made clear to the child or children in question that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unwelcome.
- Adults will not shout, or raise their voices in a threatening way.
- Adults in the nursery will make themselves aware of, and respect, a range of cultural expectations regarding interactions between people.
- Recurring problems will be tackled by the whole nursery, using objective observation records to establish an understanding of the cause.
- Adults will be aware that some kinds of behaviour may arise from a child's special needs.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

We aim to provide appropriate learning opportunities for all children. Our aim is to provide for the individual developmental needs of each child in the group. All children in the group, irrespective of their special needs or disabilities, are encouraged wherever possible and appropriate to participate in all of the group's activities.
Children with special needs or disabilities, like all other children, are admitted to the nursery after consultation between parents, and the nursery manager. Our system of observation and record-keeping, which operates in conjunction with parents, enables us to monitor children's needs and progress on an individual basis.

The needs and progress of children who have special educational needs or disabilities are monitored by our group's special educational needs co-ordinator.

Our key person system ensures that each adult is especially responsible for, and close to, a small number of children, so each child receives plenty of adult time and attention.

We work closely with the parents of all the children in the group to ensure that:

- The group draws upon the knowledge and expertise of parents in planning provision for the child.
- The child's progress and achievements are shared and discussed with parents on a regular basis.
- Parents know the identity of the group's special educational needs co-ordinator.
- Parents are aware of the arrangements for the admission and integration of children with special educational needs or disabilities.
- If it is felt that a child's needs cannot be met in the nursery without additional personnel and/or equipment, funding will be sought to ensure that provision is appropriate to the child's needs.
- We will work in liaison with relevant professionals and agencies outside the group to meet children's specific needs.
- Individual children will be assessed on a regular basis via interviews with their key person and the SENCO, and observation of the child in a play setting.
- All the usual records will be kept, but in addition a special SEND folder with targets will be produced. Monitoring and target setting will be used to ascertain progress of children with Special Educational Needs or disabilities.
- Depending on individual circumstances, we feel it of paramount importance that children with SEND are offered curriculum specific objectives, and a broad and balanced curriculum in line with the other children present. It is also important that SEND children play and learn with their peers.
- If specific targets are identified for an individual, then professional help will be sought.
- Links between the nursery and external support services, including the local authority and voluntary organisations will be sought when needed via the local council’s early years team.

Promoting British Values

The DfE has recently reinforced the need "to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all settings to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs."

The government set out its definition of British values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy, and these values have been reiterated by the Prime Minister.

Our nursery ethos incorporates these values:

Democracy: We listen to children, parents and our staff team; taking everyone's view into consideration. Our behavioural expectations are clear encouraging children to cooperate, take turns and be aware of the needs and views of others, appropriately for their age.

The Rule of Law: We consistently reinforce our high expectations of children. Children are taught the value and reasons behind our behavioural expectations. Learning that they are there to protect us, that everyone has a responsibility and that there are consequences when rules are broken.

Individual Liberty: Children are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. We educate and provide boundaries for young children to make choices safely, through our provision of a safe environment and well managed risks.

Mutual Respect and Good Manners: Children are encouraged to be caring towards each other, share equipment and listen to others, in an age-appropriate manner. Our staff help children to understand how to be respectful by talking about how their actions/words can affect others. Our staff are good role models encouraging the use of please and thank you, and general good manners.

Tolerance of All Faiths and Beliefs: We aim to enhance children's understanding of all faiths and beliefs by participating in a range of celebrations throughout the year. Children have the opportunity to dress-up in clothes and try foods from other cultures. We encourage parents/carers to participate and support our multicultural events.

Celebrating British Culture; We celebrate our British culture by:

- Being active in our local community.
- Learning about the world around us; such as the seasons, wildlife and the importance of recycling.
- We celebrate special days such as Birthdays, Royal events and Pancake Day.
- We learn about the arts; such as music and local landmarks.

Major incident policy

A major incident is defined as a traumatic incident that could result in the severe injury or death of a child, or staff member.

These include:

- Adverse weather conditions such as a severe flood.
- Fire, bomb threat, explosion, terrorist attack.
- Intruders.
- Abduction or threatened abduction of a child.
- Assault on a member of staff or a child.
- Any other incident that may affect the care of the children at the nursery.
- On site road traffic accident.

In the event of a major incident the person in charge will contact the emergency services and, with their advice, decide on the best course of action to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

If evacuation is necessary the evacuation procedure will be followed. We will then move to a place of safety if necessary/advised to do so by the emergency services.

If it is not safe to evacuate the building, everyone involved will congregate in one area of the nursery building, deemed safest by the person in charge, and wait for further instruction from the emergency services.

Toileting and intimate hygiene

Children's privacy is considered and balanced with safeguarding and support needs during toileting and nappy changing.

Nappy Changing

- Before changing a child first consider their privacy; for example, are any visitors close by, or children in the area that do not need to be there. Ask a manager for support if needed.
- Ensure the child is securely placed on the changing mat, ensuring their head is not overhanging the mat. Children are never to be left unattended on the nappy mat.
- Make sure all items needed are to hand.
- Plastic gloves are available to wear. If you do not wish to wear gloves, ensure you wash your hands with hot water and soap after each nappy change, including between each child when changing children in a row.
- After changing the child, ensure gloves, wipes and nappies (folded) are disposed of in the nappy bin. Gloves, if worn, must be changed before changing another child.
- Spray the mat with disinfectant and wipe over.
- Staff must wash their hands with hot water and soap after changing nappies.
- Ensure the bins are emptied every evening and as needed in between.

Please note; nappy changing is an appropriate time to ensure children's noses, faces and clothes are clean and dry.

Toileting

- When supporting a child with their toileting first consider their privacy; for example, where you have positioned the potty, are any visitors close by, or children in the area that do not need to be there. Ask a manager for support if needed.
- Although independence is encouraged assistance should be given as necessary.
- Children must wash their hands with soap after visiting the toilet.
- Staff must regularly check that toilets are flushed after use, and floors are clean and dry.
- Any accidents will be dealt with in a sympathetic manner.

Toileting in the country park

- When on extended outings in the country park a toilet tent will be set up with a travel potty and changing mat. A suitable area will be chosen and privacy will be considered.
- Warm soapy water will be provided for hand washing.

Outdoor play

Research shows that children are spending less time outdoors and now know less about the natural world than ever before; this is leading to poor physical and mental health and a lack of awareness of nature and its benefits. We are worried that children who don't know nature won't be inspired to save it.

We are very lucky to be able to offer children the opportunity to explore the great outdoors both within our garden and the wider country park. We want children to grow up with a connection to nature; recognising wildlife, conkers and blackberries! We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum, focussing on active free play, which is essential to healthy growth and progress. Whilst playing outdoors our children get direct experience of weather, the seasons and wildlife; they assess risks, solve problems and develop their creativity.

Our aim is to be outdoors in rain, wind, or shine; remaining warm and dry is the most important element to create happiness and creative play regardless of the weather. We find that as long as children have good outdoor clothing, are out of any biting wind and that their hands are warm, they are happy to play outdoors regardless of the weather. We also have hot lunches and hot drinks to warm us up. We will provide you with a kit list of what your child will need for each season. You will need to ensure your child has the required kit each day they are in attendance to follow our safety procedure. We will use the Pupil premium funding to fund kit for children who are eligible. We will endeavour to keep a stock of pre-loved kit, which will act as spares, and/or we will make available to parents at a minimal cost; we are grateful to parents who are able to donate their outgrown kit.

Information sharing

"*Sharing information is an intrinsic part of any frontline practitioner's 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)

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:

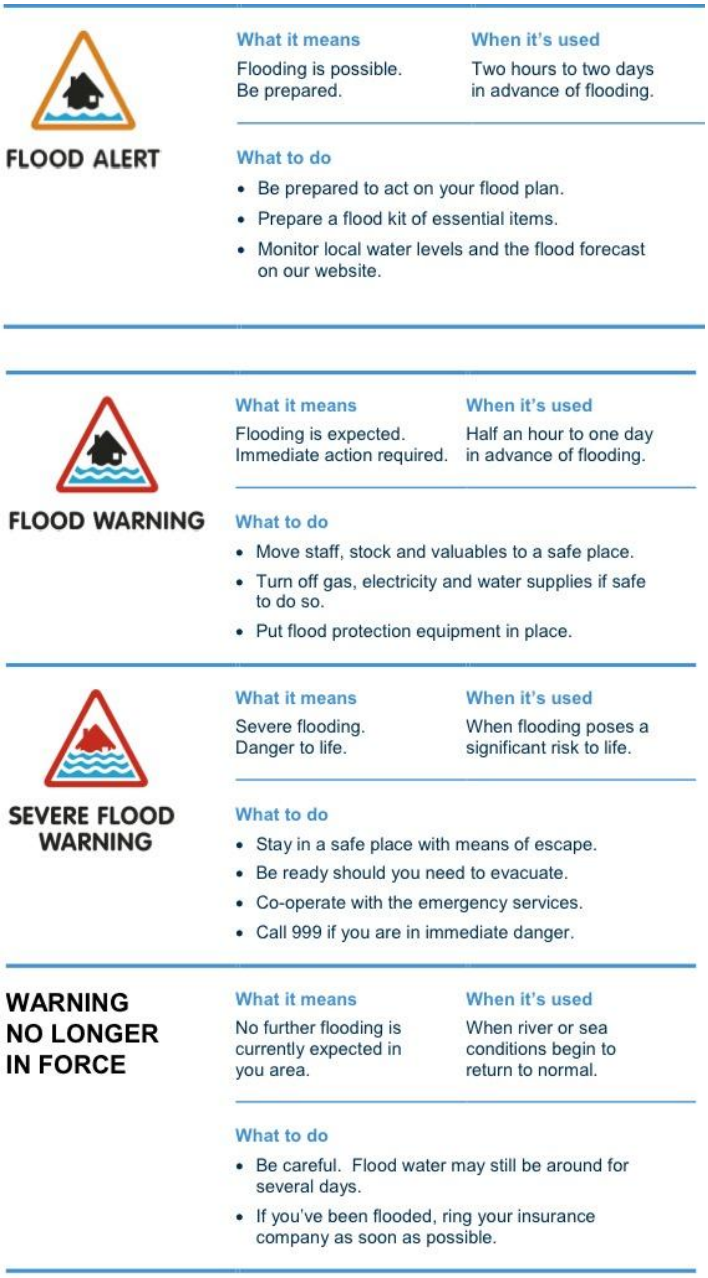
1. Processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject.
2. Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed for other purposes incompatible with those purposes.
3. Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which data is processed.
4. Accurate and where necessary, kept up to date.
5. Kept in a form that permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is processed.
6. 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, in line with the Information Sharing Duty Statutory Guidance.

Flood Plan

The nursery is signed up to the government flood alert warnings; this will enable us to prepare for anticipated flooding.

Flood warnings are as follows:



FLOOD ALERT

What it means
Flooding is possible. Be prepared.

When it's used
Two hours to two days in advance of flooding.

What to do
- Be prepared to act on your flood plan.
- Prepare a flood kit of essential items.
- Monitor local water levels and the flood forecast on our website.

FLOOD WARNING

What it means
Flooding is expected. Immediate action required.

When it's used
Half an hour to one day in advance of flooding.

What to do
- Move staff, stock and valuables to a safe place.
- Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies if safe to do so.
- Put flood protection equipment in place.

SEVERE FLOOD WARNING

What it means
Severe flooding. Danger to life.

When it's used
When flooding poses a significant risk to life.

What to do
- Stay in a safe place with means of escape.
- Be ready should you need to evacuate.
- Co-operate with the emergency services.
- Call 999 if you are in immediate danger.

WARNING NO LONGER IN FORCE

What it means
No further flooding is currently expected in you area.

When it's used
When river or sea conditions begin to return to normal.

What to do
- Be careful. Flood water may still be around for several days.
- If you've been flooded, ring your insurance company as soon as possible.

In the event of a **Flood Alert** all staff will be informed and be prepared to act if necessary. The person in charge will monitor local water levels and the government flood forecast. If necessary, our major incident and evacuation policies will be followed.

In the event of a **Flood Warning** or **Severe Flood Warning** our major incident and evacuation policies will be followed.

Uncollected child policy

In the event of a child not being collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session/day:

- After ten minutes attempts will be made to contact the parents, followed by any other person listed to collect on the registration form.
- Two members of staff will remain with the child until they are collected by a parent/carer or social services.
- The child will be offered a drink and snack if necessary.
- If the nursery cannot make contact with a parent or carer within one hour of the session finishing the manager will contact Wokingham Borough Council Referral and Assessment Team on the telephone number listed on the safeguarding poster.
- Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours in line with our late collection terms and conditions.
- Under no circumstances will staff go to look for the parent, or take the child home with them.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file including a written record of all attempts to contact the parents/ guardians and a log of all other calls and responses.

Anti-bullying policy

Bullying is not always easy to define, but is likely to include:

- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and other forms of violence or threats
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
- Emotional – excluding, tormenting, ridicule or humiliation
- Racist – racial taunts, graffiti or gestures
- Social – unwanted physical contact or abusive comments
- Homophobic – any hostile or offensive action against lesbian, gay males or bisexuals or those perceived to be these above

All of the above forms of bullying cannot just be delivered on a personal, face to face basis, but also by using existing and new technology, known as cyber bullying.

Bullying is about a pre-meditated act, which relies on a stage of cognitive development in order to think the process through.

Bullying is wrong and is damaging to individual people. We proactively implement policies and procedures to prevent this, by developing a nursery in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. We aim to deliver a safe and secure environment where all children can play and learn without fear or anxiety. We aim to make all those connected with the nursery aware of our opposition to bullying and staff have a responsibility to eradicate bullying in our nursery. We do not tolerate any kind of bullying as stated above on any grounds whatsoever, and support all parties involved to gain a full understanding of our ethos.

This policy aims to produce a consistent response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

Rough and Tumble Play
We need to recognise rough and tumble play is different to inappropriate or aggressive behaviour. Television or films, which include superheroes, often influence young children on weapon play and they will mimic this behaviour through their play. We endorse the following strategies to manage this kind of play:

- Recognise that this is pro-social play rather than aggressive
- Set boundaries for the games to be set out in
- Use planning opportunities to discuss the concept of ‘good’ and ‘bad’.
- Support the play to find alternative solutions to weapon play if appropriate, exploring different scenarios.

Hurtful Behaviour
Very young children put their own feelings before others, and even the most considerate child will have the occasional outburst due to frustration, anger or over exuberance. We acknowledge that this is a developmental area that needs to be nurtured and supported and that very young children do not intentionally wish to cause hurt. If hurtful comments are made, our strategies are:

- To recognise that very young children are not always able to manage their own feelings and deliver them appropriately and to assist them in making sense of how they are feeling.
- Offer support to children to discuss the issues through play, story times and circle time activities.

We will take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. Any incidents of bullying will be reported to the manager and a record will be kept.

Parents will be informed if their child is being bullied or bullying another child.

Parents, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact the nursery manager immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the nursery's anti bullying policy and actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the nursery. Parents are expected to help develop their child's social skills at all times, in support of the nursery ethos.

Attendance policy

A high level of attendance supports children to access the full curriculum, make good progress, and enable them to reach their full potential.

The nursery will follow up if a child is absent for a prolonged period of time, or absent without notification from the parent/carer. Attempts will be made to contact all of the child's named contacts in order until a reply is received. The nursery will take into consideration patterns or trends of absence and the personal circumstances of the family when deciding if an absence is considered to be prolonged. The child and family's vulnerability will be an important factor of consideration. Concerns will be referred to the Wokingham Borough Council Referral and Assessment Team, and/or the police for a welfare check.

We ask all parents to tell us if their child is going to be absent and to provide a reason, for example because they are sick. We ask parents to contact us between 8am and 9am on the first day their child is absent, by phone, text or email.

If we have not heard from a parent by midday we will contact the parent, and all named contacts until a suitable response is received. If we have concerns, we will make contact as early as possible; usually by 9.30am and follow our safeguarding procedures. In the case of afternoon children, we will start to contact carers from 2pm.

Parents will receive written contact stating the importance of regular attendance if their pattern of attendance is less that the desired rate. If no improvement is seen, parents will be invited for a meeting.

If it is necessary, and not seen to be putting the child at risk, nursery places may be cancelled in the case of extremely poor attendance.

We ask parents to tell us about any planned holidays in advance.

Wokingham Council funding team will be contacted if funded children are persistently absent.

Supervision policy

Effective supervision and performance reviews are fundamental to the delivery of quality services. The benefits that the right support can bring range from raised morale and standards of work to improved internal communication, teamwork and a greater sense of cohesion.

What is supervision?

Supervision is an allocated time, held regularly, where a staff member will meet with their supervisor. It is an opportunity to discuss, in confidence, and in a one-to-one situation, how they are getting on with their work and any issues or concerns that have arisen.

Supervision will identify the needs of the staff member as well as supporting and developing the skills and abilities needed to carry out their role effectively. This is also an opportunity for the staff member to confidentially discuss any issues or concerns.

If supervision is working well, it should ensure that problems are shared and dealt with at the earliest opportunity.

Supervision

Supervisions are carried out termly.

The aims of supervision are to:

- Allow you, the staff member, to share any concerns or discomfort you may be experiencing, this may be on a professional or personal basis
- Share information about work, children and families
- Identify where additional training and support may be needed
- Provide an opportunity to discuss how they and their supervisor feel about the work
- Recognise and deal with any existing or potential problems
- Provide a framework for discussion and agreeing change
- Monitor and discuss work and performance
- Clarify priorities, responsibilities and role

Supervision records will then be used in future meetings to show progress and any concerns raised by the supervisor/supervisee. Staff members will be given the opportunity to during each meeting to share their views on the supervision process, or if they so wish to speak to the nursery manager.

Lone working policy

There may be times when members of staff are required to lone work, for example, this may be when free-flowing or when children are sleeping.

- Managers will decide on an individual basis if staff are considered to be competent, and confident to lone work.
- Staff will be within sight and/or hearing of colleagues or be equipped with means to call for help; either a phone or walkie talkie.

Log burner

Only staff that have been trained on log burner safety are permitted to go within fireguard when the log burner is in use, or remains hot from earlier use. Those under 18 are not permitted to open the fire guard or go within at any time.

The fireguard is fixed in place and positioned at the correct distance from fire the log burner. Daily visual checks are made to ensure it remains in good working order.

The area inside the fireguard is kept clear when the fire is in use. This includes;

- Keeping logs and other flammable materials a suitable distance away from the fire.
- Removing the art rack or any chairs when the fire is in use.

Hot ashes from the fire are emptied into the metal bin as required and allowed to cool before the bin is emptied.

Fire gloves are provided.

The Log burner and chimney will be swept/serviced annually.

Sleep policy

At Muddy Ducks we practice outdoor sleeping in our sleep tent. While the idea of fresh air naps might seem unusual to some, it's a well-established practice in many Scandinavian countries, where babies and young children regularly sleep outdoors—even in colder weather. There are many benefits to sleeping outdoors;

1. Better, Deeper Sleep

Fresh air naturally helps regulate a child's sleep cycle. Studies show that children who nap outside tend to sleep longer and more soundly than those who nap indoors. The gentle outdoor sounds, like rustling leaves and birdsong, create a calming white noise effect, helping little ones drift into a deeper, more restful sleep.

2. Stronger Immune System

Exposure to fresh air helps build a child's immune system. Instead of being in a stuffy room where germs can spread easily, outdoor napping provides a cleaner, well-ventilated environment, reducing the likelihood of colds and viruses.

3. Improved Mood & Well-Being

Outdoor naps contribute to better mood regulation, reducing stress and promoting happiness. The combination of natural light, fresh air, and gentle movement (like a light breeze) helps children feel more relaxed and refreshed when they wake up.

4. Enhanced Cognitive Development

Spending time outdoors has been linked to improved brain function in young children. Regular exposure to nature supports sensory development, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Even during nap time, the natural environment can positively impact their development by reducing stress and promoting overall mental well-being.

5. Healthier Sleep Patterns at Night

Because outdoor napping helps regulate circadian rhythms, children who sleep outside during the day often find it easier to settle down at night. Exposure to natural light helps balance melatonin production, leading to better sleep routines at home.

Sleep routine

Most children age 2+ will routinely sleep after lunch. We aim for children to follow this routine to make the most of their time at nursery, and will work with parents to build a suitable routine for their child.

- We provide wipeable, flat rest mats for children to sleep on.
- Children age 2+ may sleep on their back or front; each child can make themselves comfortable.
- Children may have a suitable comforter, but all other toys/equipment will be kept away from the sleeping child.
- Each child has their own bedding, stored in their named sleep bag. We provide fitted sheets and fleece blankets. During cooler months we also provide fleece pyjamas and age-appropriate sleeping bags. During hotter months blankets will be replaced with a thin cotton sheet for those who like to be covered.
- Bedding should be tucked around the child to avoid head covering. If a child pulls their bedding over their head they will be uncovered.

- A member of staff will stay in the tent, observing the sleeping children. The member of staff will be deemed competent and suitable for lone working. A landline phone is available to contact indoors.
- We will move indoors if it is deemed unsuitable to sleep outside; such as extreme heat or high winds.
- Managers are aware of the recommended temperatures for sleeping, 16 -20 degrees C, and will determine the most suitable sleep area and bedding when temperatures stray outside these.

Whilst we do not care for babies at Muddy Ducks, we ensure all staff have read the latest NHS guidance on the safety of sleeping babies: reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

Screen use

Evidence suggests that too much screentime is associated with poorer cognitive and behavioural abilities in children, such as reduced verbal activity and reduced vocabulary, and can be associated with developmental delays, reduced attention and lower executive function.

Government guidance suggests:

- under 2 years - avoid screen time altogether other than in exceptional circumstances such as a video call with parents and carers
- 2-5 years - screen time should be limited to 1 hour a day, less if possible

We understand that children may already reach these screen time limits at home, and therefore restrict screens use at our setting as much as possible; the vast majority of the time children will have no access to screens at Muddy Ducks.

On occasions screen use may be carefully planned and linked to our intended learning aims; for example, watching a short clip of dragon dancing during Chinese New Year or to research an insect we have found in the garden. During the spring we have a screen linked to our video bird box, allowing us to view the life cycle of nesting birds.

At Muddy Ducks we believe that adults should be good role models in regards to screen use. We do not use online learning journals or online daily apps as we believe staff should be actively engaging with the children whenever possible, without the added task of updating apps. Children are therefore not observing adults absorbed by screens during their day at nursery.

At Muddy Ducks adults use paper systems wherever possible to enable us to model reading paper texts, and writing with pens throughout each and every day. This includes;

- Paper registers
- Paper learning journals
- Paper observations

Some children with SEND or English as an additional language may need a more tailored approach when it comes to screen use. This includes children with communication challenges which may or may not be diagnosed. Screen-based assistive technology can be an important tool to help these children and families communicate, take part in everyday activities, and create an inclusive learning environment. Professional judgement will be used to determine whether assistive technologies will support children's learning on a case-by-case basis.