

Policies and Procedures



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Please note:

1. Where reference is made to “parents” this includes carers/other adults with parental responsibility
2. That “we, our, us and the setting” can also be read as “The Wendy House”

Our policies and procedures contain the rules required for running the setting in a way which complies with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation stage and Ofsted registration, and should be adhered to.

Our policies and procedures are continually monitored and are reviewed at least once a year and are updated as necessary.



Admissions Policy

Statement of intent

It is our intention to make The Wendy House genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the community.

Aims

- To ensure admissions are fair, transparent, and inclusive.
- To provide accessible childcare to families regardless of ethnic, cultural, religious, or social background, gender, or ability.
- To support children with special/additional needs wherever possible.
- To offer flexibility of attendance patterns to meet the needs of individual children and families.

Our commitments

we will:

- Operate a waiting list
- Accept children into the setting at the age of three years using the criteria shown below. If space is available, then children will be accepted at two years of age.
- Describe the setting and its practices in terms which make it clear that it welcomes fathers, mothers, other relations, other carers, including childminders and people from all ethnic, religious, and social groups, with and without disabilities.
- Make our equality and diversity policy widely known
- Consult with families about the opening times of the playgroup to avoid excluding anyone
- Accept children with special/additional needs, and endeavour to take measures to accommodate them
- Be flexible about attendance patterns to accommodate the needs of individual children and families

Admissions Criteria

1. Children who are three and above.
2. Children who are two.
3. Children of staff, working at this preschool.
4. Children with siblings still in attendance.
5. Children with medical, social, or additional educational needs.
6. Children living outside the local area.

Allocation of Spaces/Sessions Criteria

1. Children will initially be allocated a minimum of two sessions per week. Requests for further sessions/change of sessions will be on a waiting list basis and preference will be given to those children who are in their last academic year before starting school.
2. Once children have been admitted to the group, additional sessions requested from the waiting list will be allocated before any admissions for new children are sent.
3. Normally the group will allocate up to a maximum of five sessions (15 hours) per child per week. After this number, then any requests for additional sessions above this will only be considered when all other requests/admissions for that academic term have been dealt with.
4. If a child is entitled to additional funding up to 30 hours (from September 2025) the playgroup will try to accommodate parent(s) requests.



Settling In Policy

Statement of Intent

We strive to create a preschool environment where children feel safe, happy, and stimulated, and where they build warm, trusting relationships with our staff. We also value strong partnerships with parents, ensuring they feel confident in their child's well-being and empowered as active participants in the preschool experience.

Aim

We aim to make the setting a warm and welcoming place where children can settle quickly and confidently. We consider each child's individual needs and family circumstances, helping to ensure a smooth and positive transition into our preschool.

Our commitment

In order to achieve this we will:

- have a key working system in place in accordance with the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Your child's keyworker will be responsible for collating developmental records, reflecting the full picture of the child at preschool.
- the key person encourages positive relationships between all children, spending time with them each day.
- encourage parents to attend settling in sessions with their child during the weeks the before an admission is planned.
- make it clear to families from the outset that they will be supported by the setting for as long as it takes to settle their child here.
- reassure parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling in.
- encourage parents, where appropriate, to separate from their children for brief periods at first, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
- younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be available to re-settle them.
- we reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
- introduce new families into the group on a staggered basis, for example two new children a session for a week rather than ten new children all at once.
- encourage children to use the toilet by themselves. It is not this groups policy to observe them and assist unless the child asks for this, or the parent has stated that assistance may be required for a short period.
- when a child with special/additional needs is unable to settle, it may be suggested that a parent or carer stays until a time when all are confident that the child is happy to be left. If necessary, a weekly review will be conducted by the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO), assigned member of staff and the Manager. The parent will also be invited to attend.
- The Wendy House uses a variety of ways to provide parents with information. These include written information (including our emailed information pack, policies and a privacy notice), Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, information/notice boards, parents evening, Whats app messages/broadcasts and individual meetings with parents on request.
- The setting to have at least two emergency contacts for each child.



Parental Involvement Policy

Statement of intent

Parents are the first and most important educators of their children. We believe that children benefit most from early years education and care when parents and the playgroup work together in partnership.

Our aim

- To support parents as their children's first and most important educators.
- To involve parents in the life of the playgroup and their children's education.
- To support parents in their own continuing education and personal development

Our commitment

To fulfil these aims we will:

- not exclude any child, who may, for any reason, not yet be toilet trained and who may still be wearing nappies or equivalent. We will work with parents towards toilet training, unless there are medical or other developmental reasons why this may not be appropriate at the time.
- have means to ensure all parents are included – that may mean we have different strategies for involving parents who work or live apart from their children.
- ensure ongoing communication with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families.
- make all new parents aware of our policies and procedures.
- encourage and support parents to play an active part in the governance and management of the preschool.
- ensure that all parents have opportunities to contribute from their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the group and to welcome the contributions of parents, whatever form these may take.
- involve parents in shared record keeping about their own child, either formally or informally.
- ensure that parents have the opportunity to be informed on a regular basis about their child's progress.
- ensure parents have access to their children's written records.
- ensure that all parents are fully informed about meetings, and to hold such meetings at times and in venues that enable those wishing to attend the opportunity to do so.
- display any relevant notices/information.
- inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints and that we welcome any suggestions made.
- provide opportunities for parents to learn about what goes on in their child's preschool. For example, stay and play sessions, social media posts about activities



Equipment And Resources Policy

Statement of intent

We believe that high-quality early years care and education is supported by providing children with developmentally appropriate resources, toys, and equipment that are safe, clean, and provide opportunities for learning and development.

Aim

We aim to provide children with resources and equipment that support the development and extension of their knowledge, skills, interests, and abilities

Our commitment

In order to achieve this aim:

- we provide play equipment and resources which are safe and - where applicable – conform to the BS, EN and ISO safety standards or Toys (Safety) Regulation (1995).
- we provide a sufficient quantity of equipment and resources for the number of children in attendance during a session
- we provide resources which promote all areas of children's learning and development, which may be child or adult-led.
- we include a range of raw materials which can be used in a variety of ways and encourages an open-ended approach to creativity and problem solving.
- we select books, play equipment and resources which promote positive images of people of all races/colours, cultures and abilities, are non-discriminatory and avoid racial and gender stereotyping.
- we provide play equipment and resources which promote continuity and progression, provide sufficient challenges and meet the needs and interests of all children, and offer challenges to develop physical, social, personal and emotional skills.
- we provide man made, natural and recycled materials which are clean, in good condition and safe for the children to use.
- we provide furniture which is suitable for children and adults.
- we display resources and equipment where children can independently choose and select them.
- we check all resources and equipment regularly as they are set out at the beginning of each session and put away at the end of each session. We repair and clean, or replace any unsafe, worn out, dirty or damaged equipment.
- we plan the provision of activities and appropriate resources so that a balance of familiar equipment/resources and new exciting challenges are offered.



Health, Safety & Hygiene Policy

The health and safety of young children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers.

Risk Assessment

Safety checks on premises, both indoors and outside, are made at the start of each day/session. Where more than five staff and volunteers are employed the risk assessment is written and reviewed regularly.

Our risk assessment process includes:

- assessing the level of risk and who might be affected.
- checking for hazards, faulty equipment, and risks on the premises both indoors and outside, and in our activities and procedures for both children and adults;
- deciding which areas need attention; and
- developing an action plan which specifies the action required, the timescales for action, the person responsible for the action and any funding required.

A full risk assessment (including fire safety) is carried out every six to twelve months.

Insurance Cover

We have public liability insurance and employers' liability insurance. A copy of the Employers Liability certificate is displayed in the entrance hall.

Awareness raising

- Health and safety training is included in the staff handbook/folder, and is discussed regularly at staff meetings.
- We have a no smoking or vaping policy.
- Children are made aware of health and safety issues through discussions, planned activities and routines.
- Children will have the opportunity to play in the fresh air throughout the year. We therefore recommend:
 - that all children should bring sun hats to preschool during warm weather.
 - If protective sun cream is required then this must be applied by the parent/ carer – the staff are not responsible for this. Please discuss with the manager in circumstances where a medical professional has identified a medical need for sun cream to be applied more frequently.
 - Children should bring a named coat, hat and gloves during colder weather.
 - Children are to wear footwear suitable for the weather that fits correctly, comfortably and allows them to run, climb, and explore safely.

Children's safety and security

- Only persons who have been checked for criminal records by an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) and if required are registered with Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) as child carers have unsupervised access to the children, including helping them with toileting.
- All children are supervised by adults at all times, except when children go to the toilet. Staff are deployed in appropriate numbers for adequate supervision of all children, and changes are made as appropriate, depending on where the majority of children are located.
 - Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults are present.
 - All staff are aware of the procedures in operation for the safe arrival and departure of the children and a member of staff will be at the door during these periods.
- A register of children will be taken at the beginning of each session. This is vital in case of emergency evacuation.
- The arrival and departure times of adults – staff, volunteers and visitors- are recorded.
- Our procedures prevent unauthorised access to our premises.
- Procedures prevent children from leaving our premises unnoticed

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Buildings and garden

- all electrical/gas equipment conforms to safety requirements and is checked regularly.
- Low level windows are made from materials which prevent accidental breakage or are made safe.
- We take precautions to prevent children's fingers from being trapped in doors.
- All floors are checked daily to ensure they are clean and not uneven or damaged.
- Children do not have unsupervised access to kitchen – cooking activities are supervised at all times
- In the kitchen all surfaces are clean and non-porous and there are separate facilities for hand washing and washing up.
- Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials are stored out of children's reach.
- Outdoor area and equipment are checked for safety before use and the area is securely fenced.
- All outdoor activities are supervised at all times.

Hygiene

- We receive information from the Environmental Health Department and Public Health England to ensure that we keep up-to-date with the latest recommendations.
- Our daily routines encourage the children to learn about personal hygiene including washing hands after using the toilet.

We implement good hygiene practices by:

- cleaning tables between activities;
- checking toilets regularly;
- wearing protective clothing as appropriate e.g. aprons and disposable gloves;
- providing sets of clean clothes. Spare laundered pants, and other clothing, available in case of accidents and polythene bags available in which to wrap soiled garments. Parents are to wash and return these please.
- providing tissues and wipes. The children are encouraged to blow and wipe their noses when necessary.
- Wipes, paper towels and tissue are disposed of appropriately.
- encouraging children to shield their mouths when coughing.
- children with pierced ears are not allowed to try on or share each other's earrings.
- fabrics contaminated with bodily fluids will be placed in a plastic bag, the handle tied and then handed back to parent/carer for cleaning.
- we promote the oral health of children attending the setting.

Activities

- All materials (including paint and glue) are non-toxic.
- Sand is clean and suitable for children's play.
- Children learn about health, safety and personal hygiene through the activities we provide and the routines we follow.

Animals in the Playgroup

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

Food and drink

- all staff handling food have received training in Food Hygiene.
- We purchase all our food and drink from reputable known suppliers e.g. dairies and major supermarkets. This is either delivered directly to the River Valley Centre or transported in appropriate carrying receptacles (cool bag/box if necessary). It is then stored in the cupboard allocated to the playgroup. Items requiring refrigeration are placed in the fridge.
- All food and drink is stored appropriately.
- Snack and meal times are appropriately supervised and children do not walk about with food and drinks.
- Snacks provided by the playgroup will be healthy, balanced and nutritious.
- Fresh drinking water from the cold tap and water dispensers, is available to the children at all times.
- We operate systems to ensure that children do not have access to food/drinks to which they are allergic.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the playgroup held on..... To be reviewed.....

Signed on behalf of the Wendy HouseRole.....

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- Each adult will:
 - always wash hands under running water before handling food and after using the toilet.
 - never cough or sneeze over food.
 - use different cleaning cloths for kitchen and toilet areas.
 - prepare raw and cooked food in different areas.
 - wash fresh fruits and vegetables thoroughly before use.
- refrigerator to be kept at 5°C or below during playgroup hours.

Outings and visits

- The playgroup has a written procedure (please ask if you would like to see this).
- Parents always sign consent forms before outings.
- A full risk assessment (this does not need to be in writing) for each type of outing is carried out before the outing takes place, including an assessment of required adult: child ratios, which will be adjusted so that the ratios are smaller where necessary.
- Our adult to child ratio for outings is high.
- A minimum of two staff should accompany children on outings even where parent volunteers are assisting and a minimum of two staff should remain behind with the rest of the children. (The adult:child ratio for school transition visits may vary.)
- Staff take a mobile phone on outings and a mini first aid pack. The amount of equipment will vary and be consistent with the venue and the number of children as well as how long they will be out for.
- The children are appropriately supervised to ensure no child gets lost and that there is no unauthorised access to children. Should a child become lost, then we would follow our Missing Child Policy/Procedure

Fire Safety

- Fire doors are clearly marked, never obstructed and easily opened from inside.
- Smoke detectors/alarms and fire fighting appliances conform to BS EN standards, and are fitted in appropriate high risk areas of the building and are checked as specified by the manufacturer.
- Our emergency evacuation procedures are explained to new members of staff and practiced regularly. The procedure will be explained to the children prior to the practice.
- Records are kept on our premises of fire drills and the servicing of fire safety equipment.

First aid and medication

- Most staff have a current paediatric first aid training certificate (relevant to infants and young children) and at least one member of staff with a current certificate is on the premises or on an outing at any one time.
- Our first aid kit;
 - complies with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981;
 - is regularly checked by a designated member of staff and re-stocked as necessary;
 - is easily accessible to adults;
 - is kept out of the reach of children.
- At the time of admission to the playgroup, parents' written consent for emergency medical advice or treatment is sought. Parents sign and date their written approval.
- Our Accident Book is kept safely and accessibly, all staff know where it is kept and how to complete it, and it is reviewed regularly.
- Ofsted and the local office of the Health and Safety Executive are notified of any serious injury requiring treatment by a General Practitioner or hospital, or the death of a child or adult.
- We meet our legal requirements for the safety of our employees by complying with RIDDOR (the Reporting of Injury, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations).
- Children taking prescribed medication must be well enough to attend the session.
- while it is not policy to care for sick children, who should be at home until they are well enough to return. we will agree to administer medication as part of maintaining their health and well-being or when they are recovering from an illness. We will normally only accept these when prescribed by a doctor (or other medically qualified professional) when it is to be administered more than three times a day (there will be circumstances when additional medication is advised, but may not be labelled as prescribed e.g. pain relief). It must be in date and prescribed for the current condition. The playgroup will not administer medicines containing aspirin, unless it has been prescribed for that child

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by a doctor.

- Children's medication, including prescribed drugs are stored in their original containers, are clearly labelled, with the child's name and instructions and are inaccessible to the children. They are stored in individual, named plastic wallets, in the kitchen (locked away when the setting is closed) and in normal circumstances will only be administered by the playgroup's manager, deputy or SENCO's. Medicines stating that they require refrigeration will be kept in the fridge.
- Parents give prior written permission for the administration of medication. The administration is recorded accurately each time it is given and parents sign the record book to acknowledge the administration of all oral medicine given. Any asthma inhalers must be surrendered to a member of staff so they may be kept in a safe place. If the inhaler is required then this must be administered in the presence/or with the assistance of a member of staff. Any administration of medicine must be with regard to the rules of our Insurance Policy and therefore if the Manager feels that it is inappropriate for the playgroup staff to administer the medication, then parents are asked to respect his/her wishes.
- If any child has a specific medical need which requires individual training or support, then we will seek out the appropriate specialist knowledge and training in order to support that child for one or more members of staff.
- if a child needs life saving medication and invasive treatments, then we will require additional documentation and training to satisfy and cover our insurance requirements.

Sickness

- Ofsted is notified of any infectious diseases which a qualified medical person considers notifiable, and Public Health England will be contacted and we will act on any advice given (www.gov.uk/phe)
- Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they have any infection, and to inform The Wendy House as to the nature of the infection so that we can alert other parents, and make careful observations of any child who seems unwell.
- We ask that we are notified at the earliest opportunity of your child's absence and reason. If we haven't heard from you within half an hour of the first session of absence, our child's 1st contact parent/carer will receive a text message asking for confirmation.
- If a child becomes ill during preschool hours, then depending upon the severity of the child's condition, either the parent or other nominated persons will be called, or emergency medical care will be sought. The child will always be made as comfortable as possible.
- After diarrhoea and/or vomiting, parents are to keep children home for 48 hours.
- Members of staff who have had vomiting and/or diarrhoea will not return to work for 48 hours.
- If the children of preschool staff are unwell, the children will not accompany their parents/carers to work at The Wendy House.
- Cuts or open sores, whether on adults or children, may be covered with sticking plaster or other dressing.
- Parents are notified if there is a case of headlice at the setting. Children with nits and/or headlice are not excluded, but must be treated to remedy the condition (Parent(s) will be informed discreetly if a member of staff sees that a child has headlice).

Safety of adults

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

Records

In accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage, we keep records of:

- adults authorised to collect children from preschool;
- the names, addresses and telephone numbers of emergency contacts in case of children's illness or accident;
- the allergies, dietary requirements and illnesses of individual children (if necessary we will complete a risk assessment);
- the times of attendance of children, staff, volunteers and visitors;
- accidents and incidents – (The interpretation of what constitutes and whether it is an accident or incident, is down to the discretion of the person in charge at the session when the event occurs, e.g. minor squabbles are not recorded.)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the playgroup held on..... To be reviewed.....

Signed on behalf of the Wendy HouseRole.....



Staffing And Employment Policy

Statement of intent

We provide a high staffing ratio to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality. Our staff are appropriately qualified and are checked for criminal and other records through the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) in accordance with statutory requirements.

Methods

- Our adult to child ratio complies with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- A minimum of two staff/adults are on duty at any one time.
- We hold regular staff meetings to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss children's progress, their achievements and any difficulties which may arise from time to time.
- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
- All staff have job descriptions which set out their staff roles and responsibilities.
- We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered on the basis of their suitability for the post, regardless of marital status, age (18 and over), gender, gender reassignment, disability, pregnancy and maternity, culture, religious belief, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by imposing conditions or requirements which are not justifiable.
- Staff must have a sufficient understanding and use of English to ensure the well-being of children.
- All managers/persons in charge will hold a relevant level 3 qualification as a minimum.
- We provide staff induction training in the first six months of employment. All policies and procedures will be introduced within an induction plan.
- We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervision meetings and appraisals and encouraging continued professional development.
- Staff wellbeing checks are carried out every half term by a trained mental health first aider.
- We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.
- We use Ofsted guidance on obtaining references and enhanced criminal record checks through the DBS for staff and volunteers who will have substantial access to children. The playgroup follows safer recruitment requirements as detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage effective September 2025.
- Training opportunities are available to all staff, both paid and volunteer members, through various routes.



Student Placement Policy

This pre-school recognizes that qualifications and training make an important contribution to the quality of the care and education provided by early years settings.

As part of our commitment to quality, we offer placements to students undertaking early years' qualifications and training and placements from schools for pupils on work experience.

- We supervise students under the age of 18 years at all times and do not allow them to have unsupervised access to children.
- Students who are placed in our preschool on a short term basis are not counted in our staffing ratios. Students who are placed for longer periods - for example, a year - may be counted in our staffing ratios provided we consider them to be competent and responsible. They must be over 18 and undertaking a relevant qualification.
- Students on long term placement and have a valid paediatric first aid certificate could be counted in our ratios (17 years and over)
- We take out employers' liability insurance and public liability insurance which covers both trainees and voluntary helpers.
- We require students to keep to our Confidentiality Policy.
- We co-operate with students' tutors in order to help students to fulfill the requirements of their course of study.
- We communicate a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
- We ensure that students placed with us are engaged in recognised early years' training which provides the necessary background understanding of children's development and activities.
- The needs of the children are paramount. Students will not be admitted in numbers which hinder the essential work of the playgroup.
- Students conducting individual child studies will obtain written permission from the parents of the child to be studied.
- Unless registered as fit persons (DBS checked), students will not have unrestricted access to children.
- We require students in our setting to have sufficient use of English to contribute to the well-being of children in our care.



The Wendy House

Nutrition Policy

Aim

At The Wendy House, we recognise that refreshments and mealtimes are an important part of the daily routine. Snack and meal times provide children with opportunities to socialise, develop independence, and learn about making healthy choices. Our setting is a suitable, clean, and safe place for children to be cared for, where they can grow and learn. We meet all statutory requirements for food safety and fulfil the criteria for meeting the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare requirements.

This policy is informed by, and gives full regard to, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Nutrition Guidance, effective from April 2025.

Providing healthy, balanced and nutritious food ensures that all children:

- *Get the right amount of nutrients and energy they need when they are growing rapidly, which is especially important for children who might not have access to healthy food at home. This can prevent children becoming overweight or obese*
- *Develop positive eating habits early on. Children's early experiences with food can shape future eating habits. This can impact children's long-term health including maintaining a healthy weight and good oral health.*

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) nutrition guidance – April 2025

General Principles

- Before a child starts playgroup, we gather information from parents about their child's dietary needs through the completed and signed daycare record, including any allergies, parents are required to update this annually (on September return)
- Information about an individual child's dietary needs is displayed so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed.
- Meal and snack times are organised as social occasions in which both children and staff participate.
- A variety of balanced and nutritious healthy snacks are provided.
- Children always wash their hands before eating.
- Snack preparation follows Food Standards Agency guidance to minimise the risk of choking.
- Fresh drinking water is constantly available via self-service (or supported) water dispensers. Children may also access their own drink bottles from home at any time, and can request water throughout the day.
- Children are encouraged to develop independence during mealtimes by making choices and feeding themselves.

Lunch Provision

- Parents are responsible for providing a packed lunch for children who stay for lunch sessions.
- Families are encouraged and supported to provide healthy, balanced meals in line with NHS guidance. Staff will share advice and resources when needed (e.g., NHS guidance on fussy eating).
- Parents are informed about appropriate preparation and contents of a lunch box/bag, and the use of an ice pack is recommended. Lunches are stored in a cool place.
- Children must not share or swap their food with others in order to protect those with allergies and to respect individual family preferences.

Milk and Alternatives

- Whole, pasteurised milk is provided for children who drink milk.
- Parents may provide alternative milk products for their child if preferred. These must be:
 - Clearly labelled with the child's name
 - Within the use-by date
 - Appropriately stored (staff will mark with the date opened).

Dietary Needs

We respect and accommodate individual medical, cultural, and personal dietary requirements, including but not limited to:

- Food allergies and intolerances
- Religious dietary preferences

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- Vegetarianism, vegan/plant-based diets, and pescatarianism
- Children with additional support needs and other special diets

As part of our commitment to inclusivity, meat products are not provided or used during snack times or cooking sessions.

Celebrations and Events

Birthdays

- For children who celebrate birthdays, the group gathers to sing Happy Birthday and watch the child blow out the candles on our faux birthday cake.
- The child receives a balloon, certificate, and sticker as part of the celebration.
- While we understand that many families like to bring in food to share, we kindly request alternatives that support our nutrition policy, such as:
 - Fruit platters
 - Non-edible treats (e.g., stickers, bubbles, balloons).

Parties

- A summer party and a Christmas party are held each year.
- During these events, children are offered a small piece of cake and biscuits, alongside fruit and savoury items.
- Parents receive full details of food provided with consent forms in advance.

Cooking Sessions

Cooking sessions are planned to help children learn about food, nutrition, and healthy lifestyles. Only safe, age-appropriate recipes and ingredients are used, and dietary requirements are always respected.

Sustainability

We are committed to teaching children about sustainability through our food practices. During snack and mealtimes, children are encouraged to:

- Reduce food waste
- Recycle packaging appropriately

Staff Training

To ensure children's safety and well-being during meal and snack times, all staff receive appropriate training, including:

- Paediatric First Aid – all staff hold a current certificate in paediatric first aid to ensure they are able to respond quickly and effectively in an emergency.
- Allergy Awareness – staff are trained to recognise signs and symptoms of allergic reactions and anaphylaxis, and are familiar with the setting's allergy management procedures.
- Choking Prevention and Response – staff are informed of safe food preparation to minimise choking risks and are confident in carrying out emergency procedures should a child choke.
- Ongoing Training and Refreshers – staff update their knowledge regularly through supervision, staff meetings, and external training to ensure good practice is maintained in line with EYFS and NHS guidance.

Working with Parents/carers

At The Wendy House, we believe that working in partnership with parents and carers is key to supporting children's health, well-being, and individual dietary needs.

- If a food intolerance is suspected, we will work closely with parents/carers to keep a food diary and monitor any patterns or reactions.
- If an allergy is suspected, we will take precautionary measures by avoiding the relevant foods until parents/carers have received guidance from a qualified medical professional.
- We maintain ongoing discussions with parents/carers about their child's nutrition, any difficulties they may experience with eating, and their dietary needs.
- Staff will signpost families to appropriate support and guidance, including NHS resources and other professional advice, where required.
- We recognise and respect that parents/carers know their children best, and we work together to make informed decisions that keep children healthy, safe, and included.



Complaints Procedures

We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family and 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 we welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time. We believe 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 playgroup and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

We have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns about the running of playgroup which aims to bring them to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the playgroup's provision talks over their worries and concerns with the setting Manager.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the setting Manager and the Chair of the Management Committee.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints; the form may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent.
- The playgroup stores written complaints from parents in a secure location.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Manager or Chair meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.

All settings are required to keep a "summary log" of all complaints that reach Stage 2 or beyond. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors. At this stage the outcome of any investigation will be dealt with, within 28 days of receiving the complaint.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Manager and the chair of the management committee. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the Manager should have the support of the chairperson of the management committee present
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it.
- This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

Stage 4

- If at the Stage 3 meeting the parent and playgroup cannot reach agreement, an external mediator is invited to help to settle the complaint. This person should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
- Staff or volunteers within the Early Years Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussion confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the playgroup personnel (playgroup Manager and chair of the management committee) and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice s/he gives.

Stage 5

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- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the playgroup Manager and the chair of the management committee is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.
- A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services & Skills (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Partners and the Information Commissioners Office

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of our registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.

The address and telephone number of Ofsted is: The National Business Unit, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD Telephone No. 0300 123 4666

Please check our notice board for details relating to Ofsted.

If a child appears to be at risk, our playgroup follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in our local authority. In these cases, both the parent and playgroup are informed and the playgroup Manager works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint followed by appropriate action.

The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) can be contacted if you have made a complaint about the way your data is being handled and remain dissatisfied after raising your concern with us. For further information about how we handled your data, please refer to the Privacy Notice given to you when you registered your child at our setting. The ICO can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or ico.org.uk

Records

A record of complaints against our playgroup and/or the children and/or the adults working in our playgroup is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.



Confidentiality Policy

The playgroup's work with children and families will sometimes bring us into contact with confidential information. We aim to ensure that all parents and carers can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children. We have record keeping systems in place that meet the legal requirements: the means that we use to store and share that information takes place within the framework of the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) and the Human Rights Act (1998). Parents may sometimes share information about themselves or their child with other parents as well as staff. The playgroup cannot be held responsible if information is shared beyond those parents with whom the person has 'confided in'.

Methods

To ensure that all those using - and working in - the playgroup can do so with confidence, we respect confidentiality in the following ways.

- Parents have ready access to the developmental records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child. Other personal records we hold may only be seen by a parent or person with parental responsibility, when a request is received in writing made to the playgroup manager/leader. Before any records are divulged, the permission of any third parties involved must be requested.
- Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning and caring for the child's needs. Staff induction includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality.
- Any concerns/evidence relating to a child's personal safety are kept in a secure, confidential file and are shared with as few people as possible on a "need-to-know" basis.
- Personal information about children, families and staff is kept securely whilst remaining as accessible as possible. This information is locked away when playgroup is closed (see Privacy Notice).
- The law requires that the information we hold must be held for a legitimate reason and must be accurate (see our Privacy Notice). If a parent says that the information we hold is inaccurate, then the parent has a right to request for it to be changed. However, this only pertains to factual inaccuracies. Where the disputed entry is a matter of opinion, professional judgement, or represents a different view of the matter than that held by the parent, we retain the right not to change that entry, but we can record the parent's view of the matter. In most cases, we would have given a parent the opportunity at the time to state their side of the matter, and it would have been recorded there and then.
- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- Students when they are observing practice in the playgroup are advised of our confidentiality policy and are required to respect it.
- Any persons joining and/or attending management committee meeting will keep confidential any matters discussed with regard to individual children/families. These children/families are not named.
- We are aware of our responsibilities under the Data Protection Legislation and where relevant the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

All the undertakings above are subject to the safety and well-being of the child. Please see also our policy on Child Protection

The legal framework for this policy is:

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

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Special Educational Needs And Disability Policy (SEND)

The following policy forms part of our Local Offer

The playgroup provides an environment in which all children are supported to reach their full potential. This playgroup offers care for any child regardless of need, ability or disability, and shall put into place measures to ensure that such children experience all aspects of playgroup life. Parents and carers are usually the best people to understand their child's needs, however parenting can be challenging. Parents themselves deserve support when they request it. Asking for help at this playgroup will be seen as a sign of responsibility rather than as a parenting failure.

We aim to

- Have regard to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years 2015 (DfE & DoH).
- Include all children, including those with SEN and disabilities in our provision.
- Identify the specific needs of children with SEN/disabilities and meet those needs through a range of strategies.
- Work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting individual children's needs.
- Monitor and review our policy, practice and provision and if necessary, make adjustments

Methods

- We designate a member of staff to be Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and give his/her name to parents (named in the "Information for Parents" pack and detailed on our website). Our SENCO will work with all our staff to ensure our SEND provision is relevant and appropriate.
- We ensure that the provision for children with SEN/disabilities is the responsibility of all members of the playgroup.
- We ensure that our physical environment is as far as possible suitable for children with disabilities.
- We work closely with parents of children with SEN/disabilities to create and maintain a positive partnership.
- A parental consent form will be signed by the parent and group before any action is taken.
- We ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education.
- We use a system for keeping records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with SEN/disabilities.
- If it is felt that a child's needs cannot be met then further resources (human or financial) will be sought.
- We shall offer care for any child who has an advanced level of learning. An individual assessment shall be carried out and planning adapted to suit their needs.
- We work in partnership/liase with parents and other agencies including therapists, health visitors, psychologists, social workers and paediatricians. This can include other Early Years settings and schools where a child will be transferring to or have transferred from.
- Our staff attend whenever appropriate in-service training on special needs arranged by other professional bodies. When appropriate we direct parents towards any training opportunities offered.
- We use the graduated approach system for identifying, assessing and responding to children's special educational needs. This means using a step-by-step response through the various levels of intervention which are discussion of a concern, targeted support, specialist support and Education Health and Care Plan (EHC). Our SENCO will explain how children's individual needs can be met by planning support using a written plans, FACT/FACT+, EHC or Health Care Plan.

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Equality And Diversity Policy

The WendyHouse is committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children, families, staff and visitors. We aim to provide a secure environment in which all our children can grow, flourish and develop and include and value the contribution of all families. We will not tolerate behaviour from any individual who demonstrates a dislike and/or prejudice towards any other person.

The legal framework for this policy is:

- The Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989, 2004
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014)
- Children & Families Act (2014)

Admissions

Our preschool setting is open to all families, and we have an admissions policy dedicated to this issue.

- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or refuse entry to our playgroup on the basis of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equality and diversity policy.
- We develop an action plan to ensure that people with disabilities, special educational needs or learning difficulties can participate successfully in the services offered by the preschool and in the curriculum offered.
- We accepts children who are not fully toilet trained and will work with parents to accomplish this.

Employment

- Long term posts are advertised, and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Disclosure & Barring Service. This ensures fairness in the selection process. All job descriptions include a commitment to equality and diversity as part of their specifications.
- We follow our legal responsibilities including the fair and equal treatment of staff regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Curriculum

The curriculum offered encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as other people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking. We do this by:

- Ensuring that children have equality of access to learning.
- Celebrating a wide range of festivals, without indoctrination into any specific faith
- Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable.
- Ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities or learning difficulties.
- Ensuring that children whose first language is not English have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning.
- Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.
- Resources will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multi-racial society.
- Materials will be selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and derogatory pictures or messages about any group of people.

Valuing Diversity in Families

We recognise that many different types of family successfully love and care for children. Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all events in the lives of the children and families of The Wendy House, and in our society as a whole, and to welcome the diversity of backgrounds from which they come.

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- We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of The Wendy House and to contribute fully.
- We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means.
- If possible, information will be clearly communicated in as many languages as necessary. Bilingual/multilingual children and families are an asset. They will be valued and their languages recognised and respected in the playgroup.

British Values

We promote the fundamental British Values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs, and these are embedded in the 2025 EYFS.

The Prevent Strategy - under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we also have a duty "to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism": www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty

We also have regard to the Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales 2015.

Food

We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of the children will be met. Further details can be found in our nutrition policy

Meetings

Meetings are arranged to ensure that all families who wish to may be involved in the running of The WendyHouse. Information about meetings is communicated by way of a newsletter, email and noticeboard.



Safeguarding Policy

The Wendy House

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Wendy Cross

Deputy:

Charlotte Ross

Statement of intent

The Wendy House works with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Our aims are to:

- promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to.
- create an environment which encourages children to develop a positive self image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or home background;
- help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults;
- encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- enable children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches; and
- work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding children.

The legal framework for this work is:

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 – s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- The Children Act (2004 - s11)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Childcare Act (2006)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations (2018)

Secondary Legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equality Act (2010)
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018)
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (2009)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Care Act (2014)
- Counter -Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
-

Further Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG, 2018)
www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children
- What to Do if You are Worried a Child is being Abused (HMG, 2015)
- Framework for the Assessment of children in Need and Their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children & Young People A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- MKSB (Milton Keynes Safeguarding Board)
- Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) - www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2008)
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (Dfe 2018)

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- Hidden Harm - Responding to the Needs of Children of Problem Drug Users (ACMD, 2003)
- Revised Prevent Duty for England and Wales (HMG, 2015)
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings, (Ofsted, 2016)

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) (Milton Keynes Safeguarding Board) guidelines and staff and parents can refer to and view this at their website address being - www.mktogether.co.uk
- We have a copy of "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused" for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which affect the wellbeing of children.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on safeguarding children issues and concerns about children's welfare, including maintaining a list of telephone numbers of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- The telephone number of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty (NSPCC) is also kept.
- If a referral is to be made to the local authority Children's Services Department, we act within the LSPs (made up of the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Group and the Chief of Police) guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

Methods

Staffing and volunteering

- We have a nominated member of staff who coordinates child protection issues – Designated Safeguarding Lead – Wendy Cross). The designated safeguarding lead and deputy have up to date Safeguarding training. If that person is not on site, then we would normally have a suitably trained named deputy available. Safeguarding issues and concerns are discussed at staff meetings. All permanent members of staff undertake basic child protection training. The nominated officer from the Management Committee, Sarah Clark – Chairperson, oversees this work.
- All staff understand that safeguarding is their responsibility.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the playgroup are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We inform all staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Disclosure & Barring Service checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the playgroup or has access to the children.
- Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If staff are taking medication that may affect this ability, they should seek medical advice and gain confirmation/evidence from a medical professional that the medication is unlikely to impair staff from their ability to care for the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to our setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the building so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- The staff have details of the groups Whistleblowing procedure in the Staff Handbook and on our staff website (each member has a copy).
- All personal mobile phones/camera equipment/other personal recording devices are kept away from areas with children whenever possible, either in a locked cupboard, or in a storage box in the kitchen, unless there has been prior agreement by the Management Committee for the use of such equipment for the benefit of the setting. Parents and visitors are requested not to use their mobile phones whilst on the premises

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- Photographs or recordings of children are taken on equipment and/or memory cards/sticks belonging to the setting, and only if we have written permission to do so.
- All Staff understand their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulations and the circumstances under which they may share information about you and your child with other agencies.

Training

All staff undertake basic online safeguarding training every 2 years with our training platform early years alliance to ensure that they are able to recognize the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. We will always consider whether any staff need to undertake annual refresher training during any 2 year period to help maintain basic skills and keep up to date with any changes to safeguarding procedures. We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns at the setting. Safeguarding is discussed and updated as necessary at every staff meeting. Staff review the safeguarding policy every year and sign to say they have read, understood and will adhere to it.

Planning

The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group they are always within sight or hearing.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behavior or actions of staff and volunteers within The Wendy House which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We ensure that all staff, volunteers and anyone else working in the setting knows how to raise concerns that they may have about the conduct or behavior of other people including staff/colleagues.
- We differentiate between allegations and concerns about the quality of care or practice and complaints and have a separate process for responding to complaints.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Partners when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
- we respond to any disclosure made by children or staff of abuse by someone else at the playgroup, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident. All alleged incidents are looked into immediately.
- all allegations however minor will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on telephone number 01908 254300 so that they can investigate. After consultation with the LADO and with his/her input, then alleged incidents and the measures taken at this stage will also be referred to OFSTED on telephone number 0300 123 1231.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out.
- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern, we will notify the DBS.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect this may be demonstrated through changes in their behaviour, or in their play. Where such changes in behaviour occur, or where children's play gives cause for concern, the playgroup investigates.
- We allow investigations to be carried out with sensitivity. Staff take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or ask questions of children.
- All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding and are aware of other factors that arise from SEN and/or disabilities. We understand that these children provide additional barriers when recognising the signs of abuse and neglect.

Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child;
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

The member of staff does not question the child, although it is okay to ask questions for the purpose of clarification.

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Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff make a record of:

- The child's name;
- The child's address;
- The age of the child;
- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- The exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
- The names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

Informing Parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are normally informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Partners does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

We are prepared to take action if we have concerns about the welfare of a child who fails to arrive at a session when expected. The designated person will take immediate action to contact the child's parent to seek an explanation for the child's absence and be assured that the child is safe and well. If no contact is made with the child's parents and the designated person has reason to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately and LSPs procedures are followed. If the child has current involvement with social care the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.

Confidentiality

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Partners, and in line with the GDPR, Data Protection Act (2018) and Working Together (2018)

Support to families

- The WendyHouse takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships among families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The setting continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Partners.
- With the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount, we do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

Child Protection

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Child Absences

We are required to follow up on child absences in a timely manner and if a child is absent for a prolonged period of time or without notification from the parent/carer. We will contact the child's first point of contact within 30 minutes of the session start time.

Children's Privacy

We ensure children's privacy is considered and balanced with safeguarding and support when changing nappies and toileting.



Whistleblowing Policy

Whistleblowing – Ofsted Whistle Blowing hotline – 0300 123 3155 Email: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

NSPCC Whistleblowing advice line – 0800 028 0285 Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

It is important to the playgroup that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by employees or people engaged in the organisations business, is reported and properly dealt with. The playgroup therefore encourages all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the playgroup or the way in which the playgroup is run.

Whistleblowing relates to all those who work with or within the playgroup who may from time to time think that they need to raise with someone in confidence certain issues relating to the organisation.

Whistleblowing is separate from the grievance procedure. If you have a complaint about your own personal circumstances you should use the normal grievance procedure. If you have a concern about malpractice within the organisation then you should use the procedure outlined below.

- Report any concerns to the manager. If this is not possible, then report your concerns to another member of the committee.
- All employees and those involved with the playgroup should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing within the organisation. You should be watchful for illegal, inappropriate or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that you become aware of.
- Any matter you raise under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation will be reported back to you.
- You will not be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that your continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training will not be prejudiced because you have raised a legitimate concern.
- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure the playgroups disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
- If you make a maliciously, vexatious or a false allegation then this will be considered to be a disciplinary offence and disciplinary action will be taken against you.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If you are told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, you should not agree to remain silent. In this event you should report the matter to the committee.



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Behaviour Management Policy

Statement of intent

The Wendy House believes that children flourish best when they know how they are expected to behave and should be free to play and learn without fear of being hurt or unfairly restricted by anyone else.

Aim

We aim to provide an environment in which there is acceptable behavior and where children understand and learn to respect themselves, other people and their environment.

Methods

- We have a named person who has overall responsibility for issues concerning behavior. Please see our website staff and responsibilities list.
- We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
- We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development - for example, distraction, praise and reward.
- We praise and endorse considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
- We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of - and respect - those used by families of the playgroup.
- Children will never be sent out of the room by themselves to an unsupervised area, except to use the toilet.
- We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with these.
- We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children.
- We only use physical restraint, such as holding, to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property.
- Children who behave in socially unacceptable ways will be given one-to-one adult support in seeing what was wrong and working towards a better pattern. This might be achieved by a period of "time out" with an adult.
- In any case of inconsiderate behaviour, 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, unless the safety of a child is in question.
- We handle children's unacceptable behaviour in ways which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development - for example by distraction, discussion or by withdrawing the child from the situation.
- We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour. We work with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.
- Adults will be aware that some kinds of behaviour may arise from a child's special needs.
- Any occasion where physical intervention is used to manage a child's behaviour will be recorded in a separate section of our incident book and the parents informed on the same day.

Bullying

At The Wendy House, we recognise that all children have the right to feel safe, secure, and respected. Bullying, whether physical, verbal, or emotional, undermines children's well-being and learning. Bullying is defined as the persistent physical, verbal, or emotional abuse of another child or children.

- We take all forms of bullying very seriously.
- Staff remain vigilant for signs of bullying, including changes in a child's behaviour, reluctance to attend, or withdrawal from peers.
- Any concerns are investigated promptly and sensitively, with the aim of understanding both the child's and family's perspective.
- Where bullying is identified, staff intervene immediately to support all children involved and to stop the behaviour.
- We encourage children to talk openly about their feelings and reassure them that it is always right to speak up.
- The child affected will be listened to, supported, and their well-being closely monitored.
- The child engaging in bullying behaviour will also be supported to understand the impact of their actions, develop empathy, and learn positive strategies for managing feelings and relationships.

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- Parents/carers of all children involved will be informed at an early stage and kept updated on actions taken.
- Staff work in partnership with families to agree strategies that promote positive behaviour and ensure bullying is not repeated.
- We promote a culture of kindness, respect, and inclusion through everyday interactions, group discussions, and stories.
- Children are supported to develop social skills, empathy, and conflict-resolution skills.
- Staff model respectful behaviour at all times.

Fantasy Aggression and Imaginative Play

From time to time, children engage in imaginative play with dramatic or aggressive themes (e.g., weapon play, shooting, blowing up, “goodies and baddies”). We recognise this as a normal part of development that provides opportunities to explore ideas of power, fairness, right, and wrong.

- We set clear behavioural boundaries around this type of play, agreed with the children and understood by them.
- Staff use these moments as teaching opportunities, guiding children in understanding empathy, respect, and consequences.
- Play is supervised to ensure that it remains safe, inclusive, and that no child feels threatened or uncomfortable.
- Children are supported to explore imaginative scenarios while learning about responsibility, kindness, and making positive choices



Uncollected Child Policy

Statement of intent

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session/day, we put into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child.

Aim

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult, we will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Procedures

1. Parents of children starting at The Wendy House are asked to provide specific information which is recorded on our Daycare Record. This includes:
 - home address and telephone number - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour's or a close relative;
 - contact details are requested for **at least two** (ideally 3) authorised adults who live within the Milton Keynes area.
 - names and relationships of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from preschool, for example a childminder or grandparent. A password system is in place.
2. Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us immediately so that we can begin to take back-up procedures. We provide parents with our contact telephone number.
3. If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, then after 10-15 minutes we adopt the following procedures:
 - The adults who are detailed on the Day Care Record and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the form are contacted;
 - All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents/carers, for example a neighbour is contacted or another member of staff may visit the child's home;
 - The child stays at the setting in the care of two DBS checked members of staff, until the child is safely collected;
 - If we are unable to contact anyone and after the full 30 minutes has passed and the child has not been collected, then we will telephone the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and ask the Duty Officer for further instructions. (phone numbers 01908 253169 or 01908 253170). If the MASH is unavailable, we will contact the local police.
 - A full written report of the incident is recorded; and
 - Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.
 - Ofsted may be informed.



Missing Child Policy/Procedure

In the unlikely event that we suspect that a child has gone missing, then all the children will be gathered together immediately and a headcount will be taken. The Manager/setting leader will designate a member of staff to search the premises. Staff will keep calm and not let the other children become anxious or worried. If a child is lost/missing, then both the parents and the police will be contacted.

This procedure will not take longer than five minutes.

The Manager/setting leader will contact the Management Committee chair to report the incident. An investigation will be carried out with the management team where appropriate, and an incident report will be written. The setting will contact other organisations as needed on a case by case basis and Ofsted will be informed in all cases.

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Outdoor Play Policy

This playgroup allows children to access the outside play area and garden all through the year. If your child is not well enough to go outside, then please keep them at home. Any concerns regarding this should be addressed to the Manager/person in charge.

Aims Our aims are:

- to allow children to explore a larger environment and to have play opportunities in different weather conditions.
- to enable children to benefit from different challenges and assess what level of risk is involved.
- to let children have access to more physical activities and therefore encourage them to keep fit and active, leading to a healthier lifestyle.

Methods

- Children will be encouraged to wear appropriate clothing e.g. coats when cold, sun hats when warm.
- The playgroup will encourage the children to bring named Wellington Boots on a daily/weekly basis. Children who are able to change into Wellington Boots will be able to access the whole of the garden area in all weather conditions (the playgroup will store the Boots in an appropriate place, but cannot be held responsible for any Boots left whilst playgroup is not on the premises).
- In warmer weather, we advise that sun protection cream of at least Factor 30 is applied before bringing their child to playgroup (the staff do not apply sun cream). We advise that shoulders are covered and ask that sun hats are worn outside at all times.
- In extreme weather conditions access will be restricted. At other times e.g. when raining/artificial grass is too wet, play may be confined to the undercover and/or paved area.
- Free play between outside and inside is encouraged and a door between both spaces will normally be left open.
- Adult deployment will allow for adequate supervision of both outside and inside areas.
- The playgroup will be aware of any children with any Special Educational needs/disabilities and if necessary, make concessions to allow for equality of opportunity.

Access to the outside and the use, storage and/or placement of outside equipment is with the agreement and co-operation of the Management Committee of the River Valley Centre. This playgroup must work within the rules of this Community Centre and respect the fact that it is shared with other members of the community.



Sustainability policy

As part of the Department for Education's (DfE) Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, the United Kingdom aims to become the world-leading education sector in sustainability by 2030. To help achieve this, 'all education settings will have nominated a sustainability lead and put in place a climate action plan' by 2025.

The Wendy House sustainability Lead is: Wendy Cross, Manager.

Our Climate Action plan can be found on our website

<https://www.thewendyhouse-mk.co.uk/key-information/policies>

Statement of Intent

At The Wendy House, we are committed to promoting environmental sustainability and teaching children to care for the world around them. We recognise our responsibility to reduce our environmental impact and to support children in developing respect and responsibility for their environment. Through our everyday practices, activities, and curriculum, we aim to encourage children, families, and staff to make sustainable choices that contribute towards a healthier planet.

This policy links to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which highlights the importance of teaching children about the world around them, respecting living things, and building positive habits for life.

Aims

- To reduce waste and encourage reuse and recycling wherever possible.
- To promote an understanding of sustainability through children's learning and play.
- To make sustainable choices in relation to food, energy, and resources.
- To involve staff, parents, and children in sustainable practices, fostering a sense of shared responsibility.
- To continuously improve our sustainability practices and reduce our environmental footprint.

Our Commitments

1. Reducing Waste

- We minimise the use of single-use plastics and encourage the use of reusable alternatives.
- Recycling facilities are provided within the setting for paper, card, and other recyclable materials.
- Food waste from snack and mealtimes is kept to a minimum, and children are encouraged to serve themselves sensibly and only take what they need.
- Junk modelling and craft resources are sourced from recyclable and reusable materials where possible.

2. Food and Nutrition

- We provide healthy snacks and encourage parents to pack lunches in reusable containers rather than single-use packaging.
- Families are encouraged to use ice packs rather than disposable cooling options for lunch bags.
- Children are taught about where food comes from, the importance of reducing waste, and trying seasonal produce when possible.
- Cooking sessions include discussions about healthy eating, sustainability, and food waste.

3. Energy and Water

- Staff ensure that lights and electrical equipment are turned off when not in use.
- We make use of natural light and ventilation wherever possible.
- Children are supported to use water responsibly (e.g., turning taps off after use, filling cups only as much as they need).

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4. Resources and Equipment

- Resources are chosen with durability and sustainability in mind, reducing unnecessary consumption.
- Wooden, recycled, and natural materials are prioritised over plastic alternatives where possible.
- Donations of toys, books, and equipment are welcomed to extend their life cycle.

5. Curriculum and Learning

- Children are encouraged to develop an appreciation of the natural world through outdoor play, gardening, and nature-based activities.
- Activities such as recycling games, growing plants, and exploring wildlife promote children's understanding of caring for the environment.
- Books, songs, and discussions include themes of sustainability, kindness to the planet, and respect for living things.

6. Working in Partnership with Parents and the Community

- Parents are encouraged to support our sustainability ethos by providing reusable drink bottles, lunch containers, and recyclable packaging.
- We share information with families about sustainability and practical ways to support eco-friendly practices at home.
- Where possible, we engage with the local community (e.g., recycling initiatives, gardening projects, local environmental schemes).

Staff Training and Role Modelling

- Staff receive training and guidance on embedding sustainable practices into daily routines.
- Staff model sustainable behaviours such as recycling, turning off lights, and reducing waste, encouraging children to do the same.
- Ongoing reflection and discussion in team meetings ensure sustainability remains a shared priority.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the Manager and reviewed annually to ensure practices remain effective and in line with current sustainability guidance. We will continue to evaluate and improve our efforts, involving children, staff, and families in the process.