



Health and Safety Policy

Statement of intent

At Playhouse Pre-School, the health, safety and welfare of children is of paramount importance.

We are committed to providing a safe, healthy, secure and well-maintained environment in which children can learn, play and develop. We recognise our responsibility to protect children, staff, volunteers, parents, visitors and contractors from avoidable risks and harm.

We take a proportionate approach to risk management. We identify hazards, assess risks and put appropriate control measures in place while still allowing children to experience challenge, independence, exploration and appropriate risk as part of their learning and development.

Our arrangements reflect the current Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework and relevant health and safety, food safety, infection control and safeguarding guidance.

Aims

To ensure this policy is effective, Playhouse Pre-School will:

- provide a safe and suitable environment for children, staff, volunteers and visitors;
- identify hazards and assess risks to children and adults;
- take appropriate action to prevent accidents and injury;
- provide safe, suitable and well-maintained equipment and resources;
- ensure that the premises are clean, adequately ventilated, suitably heated and maintained;
- ensure that children are appropriately supervised at all times;
- provide staff with appropriate information, training, instruction and supervision;
- ensure that staff understand their individual health and safety responsibilities;
- maintain appropriate records of accidents, incidents, risk assessments and safety checks;
- work with Longmeadow Primary School where matters relating to the shared site or landlord's responsibilities affect Playhouse;
- ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for emergencies, evacuation and first aid;
- review this policy and associated procedures regularly.

Responsibilities

Owner

The Owner has overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate health and safety arrangements are in place at Playhouse.

Manager

The Manager is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of health and safety arrangements, including:

- monitoring health and safety standards;
- ensuring appropriate risk assessments are completed and reviewed;
- ensuring staff understand relevant procedures;
- arranging appropriate training;
- ensuring accidents and incidents are recorded and reviewed;
- ensuring identified hazards are addressed;
- liaising with Longmeadow Primary School regarding site-wide health and safety matters;
- taking appropriate action following an accident, incident or identified hazard.

All staff have a responsibility for maintaining health and safety and must report hazards or concerns promptly to the Manager.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff, volunteers and other adults working at Playhouse must:

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others;
- follow Playhouse policies and procedures;
- only undertake activities for which they are appropriately trained or competent;
- use equipment safely and appropriately;
- report hazards, defective equipment, accidents and incidents promptly;
- maintain appropriate supervision of children;
- follow infection-control, food-safety, safeguarding and emergency procedures;
- maintain appropriate professional conduct;
- ask for advice if they are unsure how to carry out a task safely.

Staff must not deliberately misuse or interfere with safety equipment or procedures.

Contractors and Visitors

Contractors working for Playhouse or on the wider Longmeadow Primary School site must comply with relevant health and safety requirements and any reasonable instructions given by Playhouse or Longmeadow Primary School.

Contractors must take reasonable care for children, staff and other people who may be affected by their work.

Where building work, maintenance or repairs are taking place, appropriate arrangements will be made to prevent children accessing unsafe areas, tools, materials or equipment.

Visitors will be appropriately supervised where necessary and their arrival and departure will be recorded.

Risk Assessment

Playhouse uses risk assessment to identify hazards and put appropriate control measures in place.

Risk assessments will consider:

- the age and developmental stage of the children;
- the number of children and adults;
- the needs of individual children;

- babies and younger children who may require additional safety measures;
- children with medical, dietary, physical, sensory or additional needs;
- indoor and outdoor environments;
- equipment and resources;
- planned activities;
- outings;
- food preparation and cooking activities;
- infection-control measures;
- fire and emergency arrangements;
- staff and visitor safety.

Daily checks will be carried out before children use the environment to identify immediate hazards.

Formal risk assessments will be reviewed regularly and whenever there is a significant change, accident, incident or newly identified hazard.

Risk assessments will identify the action required, who is responsible and, where appropriate, a timescale for completion.

Risk assessments will be proportionate and will not unnecessarily prevent children from participating in appropriate activities or developing independence.

Children's Safety and Supervision

Children will be supervised at all times in accordance with the EYFS requirements and the individual circumstances of the children.

Supervision will be appropriate to:

- children's ages and developmental stages;
- the activity taking place;
- the environment;
- individual children's needs;
- identified risks.

Particular attention will be given to the supervision of babies and younger children in the Caterpillar Room.

Children will not be left unsupervised in areas where there is a foreseeable risk of harm.

Staff will maintain appropriate awareness of where children are and what they are doing while allowing children to explore and play independently.

Children will be supported to develop an understanding of safety through age-appropriate discussions, routines and activities.

Safe Touch and Physical Assistance

Children will be treated with dignity and respect.

Staff may use appropriate physical assistance where necessary to:

- comfort a child;

- provide personal care;
- support a child who needs help;
- prevent a child from coming to harm;
- assist a child with equipment or activities;
- lift or carry a baby or younger child safely where appropriate.

Staff must use appropriate manual-handling techniques and consider the child's age, size, developmental stage and individual needs.

Physical intervention will only be used when necessary, proportionate and in accordance with the Behaviour Management and Safeguarding Policies.

Security and Arrival/Departure

Playhouse has arrangements in place to prevent unauthorised access and to prevent children leaving the premises unnoticed.

The setting will maintain appropriate records of:

- children's attendance;
- staff attendance;
- volunteers;
- visitors;
- children's arrival and departure.

Children will only be released to parents, carers or other adults authorised to collect them, in accordance with the setting's collection procedures.

Personal possessions belonging to staff and visitors will be stored safely and away from children.

Any concern about a child's whereabouts, a missing child or an unauthorised collection will be dealt with immediately in accordance with the relevant procedure.

Premises

The premises will be maintained in a suitable condition for the children attending.

Playhouse will ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that:

- areas are clean and well maintained;
- rooms are adequately ventilated;
- lighting is suitable;
- the temperature is appropriate for the children;
- floors and surfaces are safe;
- furniture is suitable for the age and development of the children;
- doors and windows are safe;
- electrical equipment is maintained safely;
- hazardous areas are inaccessible to children;
- cleaning products and other hazardous substances are securely stored;
- equipment is safely stored;
- there are appropriate arrangements for waste disposal.

Temperature and ventilation will be monitored and action taken where conditions become unsuitable.

Windows and Doors

Windows will be maintained so that children cannot climb through or access unsafe areas. Doors will be checked regularly and appropriate precautions will be taken to reduce the risk of finger trapping and other injuries.

Children will not be permitted to access areas containing hazards such as boilers, electrical switchgear, cleaning products or maintenance equipment.

Electrical Equipment

Electrical equipment will be suitable for its intended use and maintained in a safe condition.

Staff must report damaged plugs, cables, sockets or electrical equipment immediately.

Children will not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment.

Electrical equipment will be checked and maintained in accordance with the setting's risk assessment and relevant safety requirements.

Storage

Equipment, resources and materials will be stored safely.

Heavy or unstable items will be stored so that they cannot fall or collapse.

Cleaning products, medicines, chemicals and other hazardous substances will be securely stored away from children.

Where appropriate, COSHH information and safety instructions will be maintained for hazardous substances.

Outdoor Area

The outdoor area will be checked before use.

Staff will ensure that:

- fencing and gates are secure;
- the area is free from dangerous objects and contamination;
- equipment is safe and suitable;
- surfaces are appropriate;
- water hazards are appropriately controlled;
- poisonous or hazardous plants are inaccessible;
- children are appropriately supervised;
- weather conditions are considered;
- babies and younger children have an outdoor environment appropriate to their developmental needs.

Any unsafe equipment or area will be removed from use until the hazard has been addressed.

Sun, Heat and Extreme Weather

Playhouse will take reasonable steps to protect children and staff from excessive heat, sun exposure and extreme weather.

Children will have access to drinking water throughout the day.

Parents and carers will be informed of the setting's arrangements for sun protection, including appropriate clothing, sun hats and sunscreen.

Where children require sunscreen during the session, arrangements will be made in accordance with the setting's procedures and parental permissions.

Outdoor activities will be adapted or moved indoors where weather conditions create an unacceptable risk.

Babies and younger children will receive particular consideration during hot weather.

Smoking, Vaping, Alcohol, Drugs and Medication

Smoking and vaping are not permitted on the Playhouse premises.

Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or any substance that would affect their ability to care safely for children.

Staff who believe that prescribed or over-the-counter medication may affect their ability to work safely must inform the Manager and seek appropriate advice.

Alcohol must not be brought onto the premises for consumption.

If a parent or authorised collector appears unable to safely collect a child because they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, Playhouse will follow its Non-Collection of Children and Safeguarding procedures.

Hygiene and Infection Control

Playhouse follows current UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance on preventing and controlling infections in children and young people's settings. The current guidance covers hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, cleaning, toileting, PPE, environmental management, bodily fluids and waste.

Staff and children will be encouraged to practise good hand hygiene.

The setting will maintain appropriate arrangements for:

- handwashing;
- cleaning;
- toileting and nappy changing;
- management of bodily fluids;
- disposal of nappies and waste;

- cleaning of toys and equipment;
- ventilation;
- management of illness and infection.

Shared equipment and frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned as necessary.

Staff will use appropriate PPE when dealing with bodily fluids or other situations where it is required.

Children who are unwell will be managed in accordance with the Attendance Policy and current UKHSA guidance.

For diarrhoea and vomiting, children must remain away from the setting until at least 48 hours after the last episode.

The setting will follow the current UKHSA exclusion periods for specific infectious diseases rather than maintaining a fixed list within this policy.

Food and Drink

Where Playhouse provides food or drinks, these will be healthy, balanced and nutritious in accordance with the EYFS statutory requirements and the EYFS Nutrition Guidance. The guidance applies to children aged 0–5 and should be followed unless there is good reason not to.

This includes considering the different nutritional needs of babies, toddlers and older children.

Food and drink arrangements will take account of:

- children's ages and developmental stages;
- allergies and food intolerances;
- medical and dietary requirements;
- cultural and religious requirements;
- individual nutritional needs;
- safe preparation and storage;
- appropriate portion sizes;
- choking risks and safe preparation of food;
- children's developing independence.

Fresh drinking water will be available to children throughout the session.

Staff will follow the Food Hygiene and Healthy Eating policies.

Children will be appropriately supervised when eating and drinking.

Food will not be used as a reward or punishment.

Where children take part in cooking or food preparation activities, activities will be appropriately risk assessed and supervised.

Particular care will be taken with hot surfaces, hot liquids, sharp equipment, electrical equipment and foods that present a choking risk.

Information about children's allergies and dietary requirements will be readily available to staff in accordance with confidentiality and safeguarding requirements.

Activities and Equipment

Equipment and resources will be appropriate for the ages and stages of development of the children using them.

Before equipment is purchased or introduced, consideration will be given to its safety and suitability.

Staff will carry out appropriate safety checks and remove damaged or unsafe equipment from use.

Physical activities and climbing equipment will be appropriately supervised.

Children will be supported to use tools and equipment safely and in ways appropriate to their age and development.

Manual Handling

Staff will receive appropriate guidance and training for manual handling.

Where lifting or carrying children or equipment is necessary, staff will use safe techniques.

Particular care will be taken when handling babies and younger children.

Staff should seek assistance when an item or task cannot be safely managed by one person.

Animals

Animals will only be introduced to the setting where their presence is considered appropriate and has been risk assessed.

Animals must be suitable for contact with children and appropriately cared for.

Children will be supervised when interacting with animals and will wash their hands afterwards.

The Longmeadow Primary School site does not permit dogs, and Playhouse will comply with the school's site arrangements.

Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation

Playhouse will maintain appropriate fire safety arrangements in accordance with the requirements of the premises and Longmeadow Primary School.

Fire exits will remain clear and accessible.

Staff and children will be made familiar with the emergency evacuation procedure.

Fire drills will be carried out regularly and recorded.

The needs of individual children, including babies and children with additional needs, will be considered within emergency evacuation arrangements.

Fire safety equipment and alarms will be maintained and serviced as required.

The setting's Emergency Closure and Emergency Evacuation arrangements will be followed where appropriate.

Lockdown and Invacuation

Playhouse Pre-School has procedures in place for lockdown and invacuation in the event of a serious threat or emergency where remaining inside the building is considered safer than evacuating.

Staff will follow the setting's emergency procedures and any instructions from Longmeadow Primary School or the emergency services. Children will be kept safe, supervised and accounted for, with particular consideration given to babies and younger children.

Parents/carers will be contacted when it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Staff will receive appropriate information about lockdown and invacuation procedures, which will be reviewed and practised as necessary.

First Aid

At least one person with a current appropriate paediatric first aid qualification will be available whenever children are present, including on outings, in accordance with the EYFS requirements.

First aid training will be appropriate to the age group cared for and include paediatric first aid.

The first aid kit will:

- be suitably stocked;
- be checked regularly;
- be accessible to adults;
- be kept out of children's reach.

Staff will record first aid treatment in accordance with the First Aid and Accident procedures.

Accidents, Injuries and Incidents

All accidents, injuries and relevant incidents involving children will be appropriately recorded.

Parents or carers will be informed of accidents, injuries and first aid treatment in accordance with Playhouse procedures.

Where appropriate, staff will continue to observe a child after an accident for signs of delayed injury or deterioration.

Particular care will be taken to ensure that accidents involving babies and pre-verbal or non-verbal children are properly assessed, recorded and communicated to parents.

Accident and incident records will be reviewed regularly to identify patterns or hazards and to determine whether additional preventative action is required.

Records will be retained securely in accordance with Playhouse's Data Protection and Confidentiality Policies.

Reporting Serious Incidents

Playhouse will notify Ofsted of significant events where required.

Ofsted's current guidance states that significant events affecting childcare should be reported as soon as possible and always within 14 days. This includes specified allegations of harm and other reportable events.

Where an accident or incident falls within the requirements of RIDDOR, Playhouse will report it to the Health and Safety Executive in accordance with the applicable regulations.

Medication

Medication will be managed in accordance with the Playhouse Adminstrating Medicines Policy.

Medicines will be:

- stored safely;
- kept inaccessible to children;
- kept in their original labelled containers;
- administered only with appropriate parental consent and in accordance with the relevant policy;
- recorded when administered.

Where a child requires specialist medical care or treatment, appropriate individual training will be provided to relevant staff.

Children's Health Needs

Playhouse will work with parents, carers and relevant health professionals to support children with medical or health needs.

Individual healthcare plans and risk assessments will be used where appropriate.

Staff will be made aware of relevant information on a need-to-know basis so that children's health and safety can be appropriately supported.

This includes children with conditions such as allergies, diabetes, epilepsy or other medical needs.

Records

Playhouse will maintain appropriate health and safety records, which may include:

- children's attendance records;
- staff and visitor attendance records;
- emergency contact details;
- authorised collection information;
- accident and incident records;
- risk assessments;
- fire drill records;
- first aid records;
- equipment and safety checks;
- relevant training records;
- children's medical and dietary information;
- relevant maintenance and inspection records.

Records will be stored securely and handled in accordance with data protection requirements.

This policy was agreed by the staff of Playhouse Pre-School Broadwater.

Adopted on 22nd April 2015 and will be reviewed annually

Reviewed on 24th September 2026 by Z. Munford