

Community Pre-schools Health and Safety Policy and Procedures

Our Health and Safety Policy outlines the principles, procedures, and responsibilities necessary to maintain a safe and hygienic environment for all children, staff, volunteers, parents, and visitors within the pre-school setting.

We are committed to providing a safe, healthy, and inclusive environment for all children in our care, as well as our staff and visitors. Our aim is to minimise risks and hazards through ongoing assessment, training, and improvement of our procedures. We believe that safety is a shared responsibility and encourage active participation from everyone within our community.

Objectives

- To promote and maintain the highest standards of health, safety, and hygiene for children, staff, and visitors.
- To identify, assess, and manage potential risks and hazards in the pre-school environment.
- To ensure that all staff and volunteers are well-informed, trained, and competent to carry out their responsibilities regarding health and safety.
- To ensure compliance with all health and safety legislation, guidance, and best practices.
- To encourage children to learn about safety, healthy habits, and personal hygiene in age-appropriate ways.
- To maintain clear procedures for handling emergencies, accidents, and incidents

Roles and Responsibilities

Management and Leadership

- Ensure that the Health and Safety Policy is implemented, regularly reviewed, and updated as required.
- Conduct risk assessments of premises, equipment, and activities on a regular basis.
- Provide resources for health and safety training and equipment.
- Maintain records of incidents, accidents, and risk assessments.
- Communicate policy changes to all staff, volunteers, and families.

Staff and Volunteers

- Follow all health and safety procedures and report hazards or incidents promptly.
- Participate in regular training and refreshers on health and safety matters.
- Always supervise children, ensuring safe play, movement, and activities.
- Maintain cleanliness, orderliness, and security of the premises.
- Model safe behaviours and encourage children to adopt them.

Children

- Encouraged to be aware of their own personal safety in an age-appropriate manner.
- Encouraged to practice good hygiene, handwashing, and healthy habits.

Parents and Visitors

- Must adhere to the health and safety procedures when on the premises.
- Report any safety concerns to staff immediately

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments are carried out regularly to identify potential hazards and reduce risks to children and adults. Areas covered include, but are not limited to:

- Indoor and outdoor play areas
- Entry and exit points
- Toilets and wash facilities
- Kitchen and food preparation sites
- Equipment and materials used by children
- Fire and electrical safety

Following each risk assessment, appropriate control measures are put in place, and all staff are informed of any changes.

Premises and Equipment Safety

- Regular inspections of the building and grounds are conducted for damage, wear, or hazards. (Buildings Management Committee)
- All equipment and toys are checked frequently to ensure they are clean, safe, and age appropriate.
- Dangerous substances or items (e.g., cleaning products, sharp tools) are kept out of reach of children and securely stored.
- Electrical devices are maintained and used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions.
- Windows, doors, and gates are kept secure to prevent unauthorized entry or exit.

Hygiene and Infection Control

- Routine cleaning and sanitising schedules are enforced throughout the premises.
- Handwashing is required before eating, after toilet use, and at other key times.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) is available for handling bodily fluids or first aid.
- Procedures are in place for the safe disposal of waste, including nappies and sharps.
- Staff are trained to recognize symptoms of infectious diseases and follow exclusion policies.
- Parents are notified promptly if their child becomes ill or shows symptoms of contagious illness.

Food Safety and Nutrition

- All food is stored, prepared, and served in line with food safety standards.
- Staff are trained in safe food handling, allergy management, and choking prevention.
- Menus are balanced, nutritious, and suitable for children's dietary needs.
- Children are supervised during meals and snacks to reduce the risk of choking or food sharing.

First Aid and Medical

- At least one staff member with current First Aid certification is always present.
- First Aid kits are accessible, fully stocked, and checked regularly.
- Records are kept of all accidents, injuries, and first aid treatments administered.
- Procedures are in place for the safe administration of prescribed medication with parental consent.
- Staff are trained to deal with allergies, asthma, and other medical conditions as required.

Fire Safety

- Fire risk assessments are carried out and fire safety equipment is maintained.
- Fire exits are clearly always marked and accessible.
- Regular fire drills are conducted with all staff and children.
- Staff and children are trained to recognize fire alarms and evacuate quickly and safely.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

- Child protection policies are in place and regularly updated in line with local authority guidance.
- All staff and volunteers undergo background checks and safeguarding training.
- Clear procedures exist for reporting and acting on concerns of abuse or neglect.
- Confidentiality is maintained at all times, except where safety is at risk.

Accidents, Incidents, and Emergencies

- All accidents and incidents are recorded and reviewed to identify trends or areas for improvement.
- Emergency contact lists are maintained and updated regularly.
- Clear procedures are in place for evacuation, lockdown, or shelter-in-place situations.
- Parents and relevant authorities are notified as required by law and policy.
- Staff practice responding to different emergency scenarios through regular drills and simulations.

Training and Professional Development

- Health and safety induction is provided for all new staff and volunteers.
- Ongoing training is scheduled to keep up with changes in legislation, best practice, and emerging risks.
- Records of training and qualifications are kept and reviewed regularly.

Communication and Consultation

- Health and safety matters are regularly discussed during staff meetings.
- Feedback and suggestions are encouraged from staff, parents, and children.
- Policy documents are made accessible to all

Monitoring and Review

- The effectiveness of health and safety procedures is monitored through audits, inspections, and feedback.
- The policy will be reviewed annually or following any significant incident or change in legislation.
- Action plans are developed to address weaknesses or areas of concern, with responsibilities clearly assigned.