

Child Protection

Safeguarding: Children's Safety and Security

Intention

It is our priority to ensure that Handsworth Pre-School provides a safe and secure environment for children.

Scope

This policy looks in particular at the arrangements we put in place to ensure children are safe and secure. It includes measures to maintain children's safety on the Pre-School premises and when we go out on outings or visits. It also includes arrangements for supporting late or uncollected children. This policy also includes arrangements for monitoring children's attendance and how we respond to absences; as well as the arrangements for withdrawing a child from Pre-School.

This policy should be read alongside our other policies that support the safety and wellbeing of children at Pre-School. This includes, but is not limited to the policies on:

- Safeguarding: Protecting Children from Abuse
- Safeguarding: General Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding: Safer Recruitment and Staffing
- Safeguarding: Terrorism and Lockdown Policy
- Maintaining Health Care Needs – how we respond to health care needs including allergies and dietary needs
- Data Protection and Confidentiality – how we keep children's data safe and secure

The policies on Teaching and Learning; Inclusion: Behaviour, Values and Diversity; and Inclusion: Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs set out how we encourage children to develop the skills and understanding they need to keep themselves safe.

Attendance

The Pre-School maintains a register of children which identifies the days they are eligible to attend. Children are ticked in and out when they arrive and leave at Pre-School. Absences are recorded in the register, and the reasons for their absences in the 'Child Absences' file. These documents are confidential to the Pre-School, although under data protection legislation, families can request information about the records we keep on their child. More information on data protection can be found in the Data Protection and Confidentiality policy.

Parents are asked to notify the Pre-School if their child is absent. Parents should telephone the Pre-School hall or leave a message by text on the first day of their child's absence. If their child is absent due to illness, parents are asked to give an indication, if

possible, of how long they think their child may be absent. Parents are also asked to give a few general details about their child's symptoms, such as cold, tummy upset, bad night, or if, known, chicken pox, hand-foot-and-mouth etc. This helps staff manage the risks of further infection around the Pre-School and/or identify whether the illness should be notified to the health authorities, in line with the Managing Health Care Needs policy and arrangements for reporting incidents (RIDDOR).

If a child will be absent due to holidays, appointments or other family events which are known, parents are asked to inform Pre-School staff in advance of the dates and a brief reason why their child will be absent. Parents can do this on the door or via the books in their child's book bag.

Children attending Pre-School are generally below the age of compulsory schooling, and parents do not have to request permission for their child to be absent for a family event. However, it is useful for us to know when a child may be absent for holidays so we can take this into account when planning our curriculum.

Unknown Absences and Non-Attendance

If a child is absent for five consecutive Pre-School sessions, and we have not been notified, we will telephone their parent(s) to find out why the child has not attended.

If, by the tenth consecutive absence, we have been unable to contact the child's parents, we will telephone the emergency contacts named on a child's registration form.

If we are still unable to make contact with the child's family or emergency contacts after the eleventh absent session, we may telephone the police or the Local Authority safeguarding or social services to inform them that we are concerned that a child may be missing.

If a child has not attended for more than fifteen consecutive sessions, and we have been unable to contact their family directly or via emergency contacts, the policy/Local Authority, we reserve the right to remove the child from the Pre-School register and to offer their place to another.

Withdrawing your Child from Pre-School

Parents must give at least one month's notice (4 Pre-School weeks) should they wish to withdraw their child from Pre-School.

If you are paying fees for your child's place, and give us less than 4 week's notice, we reserve the right to retain the fees paid for the notice period. Any fees paid beyond the notice period will be refunded.

We provide transition information for each child leaving the setting.

Morning and Home Time Arrangements

Children enter the Pre-School through the main doors. These are locked from the inside and are opened by a member of staff in the mornings and at home time. Occasionally, due to events in the main church hall, parents are asked to enter the site via the iron gates. Again, parents are asked to wait by the gates, which will be opened only by a member of staff.

In the mornings, parents should accompany their children through to the Pre-School hall at the rear of the site. The Pre-School (Cowling Hall) doors are opened and staffed. Parents are encouraged to drop their child at the door. Staff will support your child in hanging up their coat, washing their hands and coming into the main hall to play. Once their child is inside the Pre-School hall, parents are asked to leave the premises.

If your child is settling into Pre-School, your key person may discuss individualised morning arrangements with you.

At home time, parents are asked to wait outside the main doors to the church hall site. These doors will be opened by a member of staff. Parents can then go through to the Pre-School hall. The staff member on the Pre-School hall door will call your child's name and pass your child out to you. Your child will have their coat and any bags with them¹. Staff will only hand your child to you when they know it is safe to do so and can see clearly that you have received your child.

If parents need to drop off or collect their child outside morning and home times, they must ring the buzzer on the outside door. Staff will open this door and parents can then come and knock on the Pre-School door.

Collecting Children

When starting Pre-School parents are asked to complete a registration form which provides the following information:

- The child's home address, and parent(s)' email and telephone number
- Parent(s)' mobile telephone number
- Parent's place of work and telephone number (if applicable)
- Who has parental responsibility for the child

Parents are also asked to provide:

- The name and telephone numbers of two (or more) adults who are authorised by parents to collect their child. Parents may nominate any person aged 16 or over to collect their child. This may include their childminder, grandparent(s) etc; and

¹ Due to COVID-19, book bags and change bags are temporarily stored at Pre-School. Your child will bring home their book bag on the last day of their attendance each week. When we are able, we will send home book bags and change bags daily.

- The name and telephone number of up to two emergency contacts. These are people aged 16 or over who we may telephone in an emergency if we are unable to contact a child's parents. They may be the same or different to those people authorised to collect a child.

Parents may update and change this information if they wish or as and when they need to.

We will only allow those with parental responsibility or who are named on the registration form as authorised to collect to pick up a child. When a child starts with us, we ask parents to let us know if another adult (childminder, grandparent etc) will be regularly collecting a child.

If another adult collects the child occasionally, we ask the parents to let us know in advance, on the door, or by telephone or text. If this person is named on the registration form as authorised to collect, they may do so in line with the morning/lunchtime arrangements above. If this person is not named in the registration form, we will complete the 'Collection Log' which must be signed by the child's parent in advance. If advanced notice is 'on the day' via telephone, we will note the conversation in the collection log and will ask the person collecting to sign. We may also offer a password or ask for another form of identification from the person collecting.

If we have not received advanced notice from parents that an adult not named on the registration form is collecting their child, we will telephone the parent(s) to confirm that the child may go home with this person. If the child's parent is not contactable in this situation, we will telephone their emergency contacts. If we cannot confirm the arrangement through either the child's parent(s) or their emergency contacts, then we will telephone the police and/or the Local Authority children's social services in line with the uncollected child procedures below. We will not allow a child to go home with an adult, without parental permission.

If an adult is named as an emergency contact, but not as authorised to collect a child we will only release a child to them if:

- The parent has informed us in advance that they will be collecting
- We have contacted the person as part of our procedures above/below or in response to an emergency. Our emergency procedures are set out in our Safeguarding: General Health and Safety policy and in our Safeguarding: Terrorism and Lockdown policy.
- The child is uncollected at the end of the session and we have been unable to contact their parents or the others authorised to collect.

If the child's parents live apart and there are safeguarding concerns around the parent with whom the child does not live, we will discuss with the child's main carer the arrangements for collection of the child. We are required to follow the law and cannot refuse to release a child to their parent unless there are other legal restraints in place. If

this is the case, please talk to the Pre-School Leader and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

We will not release a child to their parent, or to any adult, if we think the child may not be safe in their care. This includes adults who are named as authorised to collect and/or emergency contacts. We will not release a child if we suspect the adult collecting may be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that may make them unsuitable to care for a child in that instance. If we suspect a parent/other adult may not be safe to care for a child, we will telephone the Local Authority's Children's Services for advice and will follow their instructions. The event will be logged in our Incident Book.

The Local Authority's Children's Service telephone number is: **020 8496 2310 (9am-5.15pm Monday – Thursday, 9am-5pm Friday).**

Late Collection or Uncollected Children

If a parent/authorised collector is running late, they should let us know as soon as possible.

If a child is not collected by 12.15pm (15 minutes after our closure time) and we have not been contacted by the parent/collector we will check the child's file, or book bag book for any information about changes to the normal collection routines. If no information is available, the Pre-School Leader/Deputy will telephone the parent(s) on the mobile numbers provided.

If this is unsuccessful, the Pre-School Leader/Deputy will telephone the other adults authorised to collect. If we are unable to contact them, we will telephone the emergency contacts given on the registration form if different from above. We will telephone others authorised to collect and emergency contacts in the order they are written on the registration form.

We will not release a child to anyone other than those named on the registration form. If we are unable to contact anyone named in the registration form by 30 minutes after closing, we will contact the Local Authority's Children's Services and follow their advice.

The child will remain in the care of two members of staff, one of whom will be the Pre-School Leader or Deputy. We will reassure the child and will not discuss our concerns in front of them.

Subject to advice from Children's Services, if no suitable adult is available to collect and care for the child, the child may become under the care of the Local Authority.

Depending on the circumstances of each incident, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by staff to care for their child.

If parents are consistently late, that is more than three times per half term, we reserve the right to charge a small fee for each subsequent late collection. This is in respect of the additional staff time taken to care for their child. Ongoing and persistent late collection may also give rise to safeguarding concerns. If this is the case, we will follow the procedures set out in the Safeguarding: Protecting Children from Abuse policy.

Outings and Visits

Parents are asked in writing in advance to give consent that their child is taken on an outing from Pre-School. This may be in the form of a note in the child's home-Pre-School book, if the visit is in support of transition.

Risk assessments are carried out prior to Pre-School outings and visits. Where staff are leading the outing, the risk assessment will include a consideration of the appropriate staff: child ratio. This will vary depending on the nature of the outing and/or the needs of the child. For transition or similar visits undertaken by an individual child, there will always be two members of staff accompanying the child.

Where parents are asked to join the staff and children on the outing, they will remain responsible for their child during the outing. If parents are unable to accompany their child on the outing, staff will provide care for a limited number of 'unaccompanied' children. This number will be determined in the risk assessments. Once this number is reached, staff are unable to take additional unaccompanied children on the outing. A parent may nominate another person over the age of 16 to accompany their child on the outing. This must be done in writing in advance. If a parent nominates another Pre-School parent to look after their child during the outing, we ask that the nominated parent should be responsible for only one child in addition to their own.

Where private transport, eg a coach, is required for the outing, the Pre-School will ensure that bookings are made with reputable companies with a track record in providing vehicles for school outings. We will ask for confirmation of appropriate insurance and will check the driver's identity. Risks associated with private transport to and from the outing will be considered as part of the outing risk assessment. Where public transport may be used – bus, train, underground etc – the risks involved will be considered as part of the outing risk assessment. This may impact on the staff: child ratio considered appropriate for the visit.

Each visit (except transition visits) will have a nominated leader and deputy, usually, but not exclusively the Pre-School Leader and Deputy. The nominated outing leader will maintain an outing register which records:

- Date and venue of outing
- Child's name
- Name of staff member responsible for child (if appropriate)
- Parent's/accompanying adult's/emergency contact's name and telephone number
- Record of child's attendance at the start and end of the visit, and as appropriate at a point in between eg: at a lunch break or at a point at which venues change.

- Total number of children attending the outing, at the relevant register check points, and at the end of the outing.

At the end of the outing, staff will ensure that children have been handed to their parent/collecting adult before ticking them out. If parents are accompanying their child on the outing, they are asked to confirm with the outing leader that they are leaving the venue/going home prior to doing so. The outing leader will then tick their child out on the register.

If a child is found to be missing during or at the end of the outing, the missing child procedures will be followed.

For each outing, staff will ensure they have with them:

- The setting mobile phone
- The outing register, including parent/adult emergency contact numbers
- A first aid kit
- Other items relevant to the nature of the trip such as a change of clothes for a child, nappies, wipes and appropriate bags for the safe storage of soiled items etc.

For transition or individual visits, two members of staff will accompany a child. At least one member of staff will take with them their personal mobile phone, for use in emergencies. Subject to need, staff may also take limited first aid items (a small bottle of water, plasters etc). Staff undertaking transition visits will ensure that the setting diary records the time they leave the Pre-School and the time they return, and a contact name and telephone number for the destination. Transition visits, accompanied by staff, will only be undertaken if the staff ratio in the setting can be maintained during their absence.

One member of staff may accompany a parent and their child on a transition or other individual visit or health appointment (if appropriate). If this is the case, the setting diary will record the time, date and venue of the appointment, and length of appointment. A contact name and telephone number will be provided. The staff member should take their personal mobile phone with them to use in an emergency.

Transition or other individual visits must be agreed in advance with the Pre-School Leader.

Missing Child

The setting register records which children are present each day. The daily risk assessment ensures that the Pre-School hall and the church site are secure each day. However, should it be suspected that a child is missing from Pre-School the following procedures will be followed:

Staff will search the Pre-School and church site. Staff will note if any of the exits from the site are unsecured.

If the child cannot be found, the Pre-School Leader will call the police, and then inform the child's parents. The Pre-School leader will follow instructions from the police. Staff will be asked to identify and record when and where the child was last seen. The incident will be reported and recorded in line with procedures set out below.

If it becomes known that a child is missing from an outing, whether in the care of their parents or staff, the outing leader will:

- Find out from the staff member responsible for the child, or from their parent/responsible adult, when the child was last seen.
- Organise a search for the child. The outing risk assessment will take into account the staff: child or adult: child ratio should one or two members of staff be engaged in searching for a missing child (or caring for a child in an emergency). The safety of all the children will be maintained. If appropriate, other members of staff may be asked to cut short the outing or visit and to take the remaining children to an area of safety. The outing risk assessment will identify what actions should be taken in an emergency, including identifying a safe meeting place.
- If the missing child cannot be found within a reasonable time and/or the search will leave the remaining children unsafe, the police will be called, and their advice will be followed. If the child is not in the care of their parents/responsible adult, they will be called after the police have been notified. If appropriate, the venue security will be informed that a child is missing, and their procedures will be followed. The incident will be reported and recorded as set out below.

Staff will ensure that their response to a missing child is calm and measured. They will try to ensure that other adults/parents remain calm and measured. They will try to reduce any anxiety within the other children.

We acknowledge that a missing child is a serious and distressing incident for all involved. The Pre-School will take steps to support staff involved in the incident. The Parental Involvement and Behaviour policy sets out the steps we have in place for supporting parents. We will, however, also follow the procedures for responding to difficult behaviour from parents if necessary.

No member of staff or Committee member will speak to the media, or post on social media, about an incident involving a missing child. The Pre-School Leader and/or Chair of the Committee may be required to make public statements on the issue. These will only be done if necessary following legal advice and/or in liaison with statutory agencies.

Recording and Reporting Incidents

Where the Pre-School has had to take steps including but not limited to in response to an emergency, an uncollected child, an adult deemed unsafe to care for a child, or a missing child the event will be logged in our Incident Book.

Where a child has gone missing, the circumstances of the incident will be investigated. The investigation will generally be lead by the Chair of the Committee unless they were

directly involved in the incident. If this is the case, another responsible adult will be asked to lead the investigation. The investigation will be recorded. Any investigation into a missing child will:

- Record the date, time and circumstances of the child going missing
- Include written records of the incident from each member of staff present
- Include a written record by the Pre-School Leader/outing leader identifying the actions taken. If relevant, the record should include actions taken by the child's parents/responsible adults if on an outing. The record should include actions taken to contact other agencies such as venue security, police etc and the events following instructions given by those agencies.
- Include written conclusion(s) and recommendations. These should identify where policies and procedures can be improved to prevent the incident reoccurring. Disciplinary action, legal action and/or referrals to statutory agencies may also result.

Parents may submit a formal complaint to the Pre-School in the case of a missing child, if they felt it was appropriate to do so. In this instance, the complaint would be managed directly by the Chair of the Committee or the leader of the investigation, as appropriate. The Parental Complaints policy provides details on the procedures for making a complaint.

All incidents of a missing child, and some other incidents named above, must be reported to OFSTED and the Local Authority. Other statutory agencies may also need to be contacted. Our insurers may also need to be informed. We must contact OFSTED as soon as possible and no later than fourteen (14) days after the incident. The Pre-School will cooperate with any investigation into an incident required or led by a statutory agency; and will follow the outcomes and recommendations of those investigations.

Visitors

All visitors are asked to sign the Visitors Book and their identification will be checked before they can enter the Pre-School.

All visitors are accompanied by a member of staff throughout their visit.

Staff and Volunteers

All staff are checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to identify that they are suitable for working with children.

Regular volunteers and committee members are also checked through the DBS. All adults who are not employed staff are supervised throughout their time in the setting and will not be alone with any child.

Parents who attend for stay and play sessions are asked to sign in and out. They should not toilet their child, or any other child. They are asked to use the adult toilets in the

main hall block should they need to do so themselves. Bags must be secured in the storage area.

Suitability of Premises, Equipment and Resources

We undertake regular risk assessments, maintenance, and liaison with our landlords to ensure that the premises and the resources we offer are suitable for use by the children. Our Safeguarding: General Health and Safety policy sets out more details. The Teaching and Learning policy sets out that the resources and equipment we provide will meet relevant safety standards and will be well maintained and regularly cleaned.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Handsworth Pre-school	name of setting
Held on	7 July 2020	(date)
Date to be reviewed	6 July 2021	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee		
Name of signatory	Jonny Cooper	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	Chair	

