



LITTLE BLOSSOM
NURSERY SCHOOL

Little Blossom Nursery School

Safeguarding Policy

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At *Little Blossom Nursery School*, the safety, welfare and well-being of every child are our highest priority. We are committed to providing a safe, secure, nurturing and inclusive environment where all children are protected from harm and are supported to learn, develop and thrive.

Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy has been developed in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, relevant Ofsted requirements, and current safeguarding and child protection guidance. It sets out the procedures and responsibilities we follow to protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm.

All members of our team have a responsibility to safeguard children. Staff are expected to remain alert to signs that a child may be at risk and to follow our safeguarding procedures if they have a concern about a child's welfare. Where appropriate, concerns will be shared with parents and carers; however, where doing so could place a child at further risk, information may need to be shared with the appropriate safeguarding professionals without prior consent.

We are committed to:

- Promoting the safety, welfare and well-being of every child.
- Providing a safe and secure environment in which children can play, learn and develop.
- Ensuring staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and receive appropriate training.
- Taking all concerns about a child's welfare seriously and responding promptly and appropriately.
- Working in partnership with parents and carers, while maintaining our responsibility to protect children.
- Following robust procedures for safer recruitment, supervision and staff conduct.
- Maintaining appropriate records of safeguarding concerns and sharing information with relevant agencies when necessary.
- Teaching children, in an age-appropriate way, about keeping themselves safe and helping them develop confidence to communicate their feelings and concerns.

Please read this policy carefully and speak to a member of the *Little Blossom Nursery School* team if you have any questions or require clarification. We encourage parents and carers to work with us to ensure that every child receives the care, protection and support they need.

Please also take particular note of our **“Sick Child Policy”**. For the protection and well-being of your child, other children and our staff, children who are unwell may be required to remain at home until they are well enough to return to Little Blossom Nursery School in accordance with our illness and exclusion procedures.

Policy Review

Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be reviewed at least once each year. An earlier review will be undertaken whenever there is a safeguarding incident, a significant change in circumstances, or new legislation, statutory guidance or professional advice that requires amendments to our procedures. The policy will be communicated to all staff and made available to parents and carers so that everyone understands their role in keeping children safe.

Introduction

CHILDREN'S VOICE – WHAT CHILDREN NEED FROM US

At *Little Blossom Nursery School*, we recognise that safeguarding is fundamentally about keeping children safe, promoting their welfare and ensuring that their voices are heard.

We are committed to a **child-centred approach** to safeguarding. We will listen to children, take their wishes and feelings seriously and respond appropriately to any concerns they communicate, recognising that young children may express their feelings and experiences through their behaviour, play, actions and interactions as well as through words.

Children need:

Vigilance: Adults who are alert and notice when something is troubling them, including changes in their behaviour, mood or presentation.

Understanding and action: To be listened to, understood and taken seriously, with appropriate action taken when they communicate a worry, concern or need.

Stability: To develop consistent, trusting relationships with familiar adults who provide reassurance, security and emotional support.

Respect: To be treated with dignity and respect and to have their abilities, individuality and developing independence recognised.

Information and involvement: To receive clear, age-appropriate information and, wherever appropriate, to be involved in decisions, concerns and plans that affect them.

Explanation: To be given an appropriate explanation about decisions and outcomes and, where their wishes cannot be followed, to understand why.

Support: To receive appropriate support in their own right, recognising their emotional and individual needs, as well as support for their family where appropriate.

Advocacy: To be supported in expressing their wishes and feelings, particularly where they may find it difficult to communicate their views independently.

*These principles support the **child-centred approach** set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*, which emphasises listening to children, considering their wishes and feelings, and ensuring that safeguarding practice is focused on the individual child.*

Our Core Safeguarding Principles

At Little Blossom Nursery School, we believe that:

1. **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.** Every member of staff, volunteer and person working within the setting has a responsibility to contribute to keeping children safe.
2. **The child's welfare is paramount.** The safety, welfare and best interests of every child will remain at the centre of our decisions and actions.
3. **Every child has the right to feel safe and be safe.** We will provide an environment in which children are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination and other forms of harm.
4. **Children who feel safe, secure and valued are better able to learn, play and develop.** We will promote children's emotional well-being as an essential part of safeguarding.
5. **Children's voices matter.** We will listen to children's wishes and feelings and take them seriously, considering their age, understanding, communication needs and individual circumstances.
6. **Safeguarding concerns will always be taken seriously.** Staff must report concerns promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, where appropriate, directly to the relevant safeguarding agency in accordance with our procedures.
7. **We will remain professionally curious.** We will not make assumptions or ignore information that may indicate a child is at risk. We will consider patterns, changes in behaviour and information from different sources when assessing concerns.
8. **We will work in partnership with parents and carers wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so.** However, the child's safety and welfare will always remain our primary consideration.
9. **We will share information appropriately.** Confidentiality will not prevent information being shared where this is necessary to protect a child from harm. Information will be shared in accordance with safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and our information-sharing procedures.
10. **We recognise that some children may be more vulnerable to abuse or neglect.** This may include children with additional needs or disabilities, children experiencing domestic abuse, children experiencing disadvantage, and children who may have difficulty communicating their wishes and feelings. We will provide appropriate support and make reasonable adjustments where necessary.
11. **All staff must understand their safeguarding responsibilities.** Staff will receive appropriate safeguarding training and will be expected to understand and follow Little Blossom Nursery School's safeguarding and child protection procedures.
12. **We will maintain appropriate safeguarding records.** Concerns, disclosures, actions and referrals will be recorded accurately, objectively, confidentially and in accordance with our safeguarding procedures.
13. **We will work with other agencies when necessary.** Where a concern indicates that a child may require additional support or protection, we will cooperate with children's social care, the police, health professionals and other relevant agencies.
14. **Safeguarding procedures will be regularly reviewed.** We will ensure that our policies and procedures reflect current legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements and good safeguarding practice.

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is informed by and should be read alongside the relevant legislation and statutory guidance applicable to early years provision in England, including:

- **Children Act 1989**, including the requirement to consider a child's ascertainable wishes and feelings, having regard to their age and understanding.
- **Children Act 2004**, including statutory safeguarding responsibilities.
- **Childcare Act 2006**, including Section 40, which places a duty on early years providers to comply with the EYFS welfare requirements.
- **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework**, including the safeguarding and welfare requirements that *Little Blossom Nursery School* must meet to keep children safe and promote their welfare.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026**, the current statutory guidance setting out how organisations and agencies should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Other relevant legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures applicable to the setting.

Little Blossom Nursery School will also have regard to guidance and procedures issued by the relevant local safeguarding partners and will update this policy when legislation, statutory guidance or local safeguarding arrangements change.

Policy Statement

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises its moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of every child in our care. We are committed to providing a safe, secure, welcoming and inclusive environment in which every child is respected, valued, listened to and protected from harm. We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that all staff have a duty to remain alert to concerns about a child's safety and welfare.

We understand that safeguarding concerns may arise in many different forms, including abuse, neglect, domestic abuse, exploitation, online harm, discriminatory behaviour, or concerns about a child's physical or emotional well-being. All staff are expected to be familiar with and follow the procedures set out in this policy.

Staff must report safeguarding concerns promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, where appropriate, directly to the relevant safeguarding authority or emergency service.

We will always place the welfare and best interests of the child at the centre of our safeguarding practice. We will listen to children, take their wishes and feelings seriously and provide appropriate support, recognising that young children may communicate concerns through their words, behaviour, play and actions.

This policy applies to all staff, managers, volunteers, students, apprentices, agency workers and other adults working with or on behalf of Little Blossom Nursery School.

OUR SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

Little Blossom Nursery School will ensure that:

- The welfare and best interests of children are our highest priority when planning and delivering activities, making decisions and managing the setting.
- Every child has an equal right to protection from harm, regardless of age, gender, sex, disability, additional needs, race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion or belief, sexual orientation, family circumstances or background.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every member of staff has a responsibility to recognise and respond appropriately to concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
- All safeguarding concerns will be taken seriously. Staff must never assume that someone else will report a concern.
- Children will be listened to and their wishes and feelings taken seriously, taking account of their age, understanding, communication needs and individual circumstances.
- Staff will respond appropriately to disclosures. Children will be listened to calmly and sensitively, without leading questions, promises of confidentiality or making judgements.
- Concerns will be reported promptly to the DSL in accordance with *Little Blossom Nursery School* safeguarding procedures. If the DSL is unavailable, staff must follow the setting's escalation procedures and ensure that concerns are not left unreported.
- Information will be shared appropriately and lawfully when this is necessary to safeguard a child. Staff must understand that safeguarding concerns should not be kept secret where sharing information is necessary to protect a child.
- All adults working with children are expected to maintain professional boundaries and follow safe working practices.
- Allegations or concerns about the behaviour of staff, volunteers, managers or other adults working with children will always be taken seriously and managed in accordance with the appropriate safeguarding procedures.
- Children and staff affected by safeguarding concerns will be offered appropriate support, while maintaining the confidentiality and safety of everyone involved.
- We will work constructively with parents and carers and relevant safeguarding partners and agencies, wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so.

AIMS OF THIS POLICY

The aims of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy are:

- To protect every child from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm.
- To provide all staff with the knowledge, training and information necessary to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.
- To ensure that staff understand how to recognise indicators of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns.
- To ensure that all staff understand how to respond appropriately when a child makes a disclosure or when a concern is identified.
- To establish clear and consistent procedures for recording, reporting, referring and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- To ensure that children are provided with a safe environment in which they can play, learn, develop and express their wishes and feelings.
- To promote a culture in which children feel able to speak to trusted adults when they are worried, upset or feel unsafe.
- To ensure that safeguarding is embedded throughout the everyday practice, management and decision-making of Little Blossom Nursery School.
- To ensure that staff understand their responsibilities regarding professional conduct, safer working practices and maintaining appropriate boundaries with children.
- To ensure that safeguarding concerns relating to adults working within the setting are responded to promptly and appropriately.
- To work effectively with parents, carers and external agencies to promote children's safety and welfare.
- To maintain accurate, secure and appropriate safeguarding records and ensure information is shared when necessary to protect children.
- To demonstrate *Little Blossom Nursery School* commitment to meeting its statutory safeguarding and welfare responsibilities.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF AT *Little Blossom Nursery School*

Every member of staff has a responsibility to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Staff are expected to:

1. Prioritise children's safety and welfare

Give the safety, welfare and best interests of children the highest priority in all aspects of their work.

2. Recognise safeguarding concerns

Remain alert to signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns, including changes in a child's behaviour, appearance, emotional state, relationships or circumstances.

Staff should remain professionally curious and consider whether there may be an underlying safeguarding concern when something does not appear right.

3. Listen to children

Listen carefully and sensitively when a child communicates a concern. Staff must take children seriously and recognise that young children may communicate through behaviour, play, facial expressions, actions or changes in their normal presentation as well as through spoken words.

4. Respond appropriately to disclosures

If a child makes a disclosure:

- remain calm and listen carefully;
- allow the child to speak without interruption;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling an adult;
- do not promise to keep the information secret;
- do not investigate or ask leading questions;
- explain that the information may need to be shared with people who can help keep them safe;
- record the child's words as accurately as possible; and
- report the concern immediately to the DSL in accordance with our safeguarding procedures.

5. Report concerns

Report any safeguarding concern, disclosure or suspicion of harm to the DSL without delay.

Staff must understand that they do not need to be certain that abuse or neglect has occurred before reporting a concern. It is the responsibility of the appropriate safeguarding professionals to assess and investigate concerns.

6. Respond to concerns about adults

Report any allegation, concern or suspicion regarding the conduct of a member of staff, volunteer, student, manager or other adult working with children immediately in accordance with the setting's Allegations Against Staff and Persons in a Position of Trust procedure.

Where the concern relates to the DSL or manager, staff must follow the setting's alternative reporting and escalation arrangements.

7. Follow safe working practices

Understand and follow *Little Blossom Nursery School* safeguarding procedures, staff code of conduct, professional boundaries, safer working practices and risk management procedures.

8. Remain alert to potential risks

Be aware of circumstances and individuals that may place children at increased risk of harm and take appropriate action when concerns arise.

Staff must never ignore, minimise or dismiss information that may indicate a child is at risk.

9. Maintain confidentiality appropriately

Respect the confidentiality of children and families while understanding that safeguarding information may need to be shared with the appropriate people or agencies when this is necessary to protect a child.

10. Complete safeguarding training

Attend and participate in safeguarding training and maintain an up-to-date understanding of *Little Blossom Nursery School* safeguarding procedures, including any changes to legislation, statutory guidance or local safeguarding arrangements.

11. Promote a safeguarding culture

Take an active role in creating an environment where children feel safe, respected, valued and listened to, and where safeguarding concerns are openly and appropriately acted upon.

All staff must remember: *safeguarding is not the sole responsibility of the DSL. The DSL provides leadership and coordination, but every adult working at Little Blossom Nursery School has a personal responsibility to act when they have a concern about a child's welfare.*

STATUTORY AND GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

This policy should be read alongside the current statutory framework and guidance applicable to early years provision in England, including:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Childcare Act 2006
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Relevant government safeguarding guidance and information-sharing guidance
- Procedures and guidance issued by the relevant local safeguarding partners.

Terminology

Safeguarding

Safeguarding means protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare. It includes taking action to prevent abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm and creating an environment in which children are safe, healthy, supported and able to learn, play and develop.

Safeguarding is broader than child protection. It includes promoting children's physical and emotional well-being, providing safe and effective care, preventing unsuitable adults from working with children, creating safe environments and responding appropriately when concerns about a child's welfare arise.

At *Little Blossom Nursery School*, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff have a duty to contribute to the safety and welfare of children and to act promptly when they have a concern.

Child Protection

Child protection is part of safeguarding and refers specifically to the activity undertaken to protect individual children who are identified as suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of abuse, neglect or other forms of harm.

Child protection involves recognising concerns, responding appropriately, sharing information where necessary, making referrals to the appropriate safeguarding agencies and working with relevant professionals and families to protect children and promote their welfare.

Little Blossom Nursery School will follow the procedures set out by the relevant local safeguarding partners when a child is considered to be at risk of significant harm or when a concern requires a referral to children's social care or another safeguarding agency.

Welfare

The welfare of the child is central to all safeguarding practice at *Little Blossom Nursery School*. We will consider each child's individual circumstances, needs, wishes and feelings and will take appropriate action to protect and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding Concern

A safeguarding concern is any information, observation, disclosure, behaviour or circumstance that causes an adult to be concerned that a child may be experiencing, or may be at risk of experiencing, abuse, neglect, exploitation or another form of harm.

Staff do not need to be certain that abuse or neglect has occurred before reporting a concern. All concerns must be taken seriously and reported in accordance with *Little Blossom Nursery School* safeguarding procedures.

Our Approach

Little Blossom Nursery School adopts a child-centred approach to safeguarding. We recognise that every child is unique and that children communicate in different ways. We will listen to children and take their wishes and feelings seriously, while ensuring that their safety and welfare remain our primary consideration.

This terminology and our safeguarding procedures are informed by the Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004, Childcare Act 2006, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, together with relevant local safeguarding arrangements and other applicable statutory guidance.

Context

Children spend a significant amount of time in early years settings, which means that staff at *Little Blossom Nursery School* are well placed to build trusting relationships with children and to recognise changes in their behaviour, appearance, emotional well-being or development.

Children may communicate that something is wrong in many different ways. They may make a direct disclosure to a trusted adult, but they may also communicate through their behaviour, play, interactions, physical presentation or changes in their usual patterns of behaviour.

Staff must therefore remain alert, professionally curious and responsive to anything that may indicate that a child is experiencing, or may be at risk of experiencing, abuse, neglect, exploitation or another form of harm.

It is important to remember that there may not always be obvious or physical signs of abuse. A single observation, change in behaviour or piece of information may appear insignificant on its own but may become more concerning when considered alongside other information.

All staff have a responsibility to:

- know and understand the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect;
- recognise that children may communicate concerns in different ways;
- listen carefully and sensitively when a child communicates a worry or concern;
- take all concerns and disclosures seriously;
- record and report concerns promptly and accurately;
- follow *Little Blossoms Nursery School* safeguarding and child protection procedures;
- know how and when to contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- understand the local safeguarding arrangements and referral procedures; and
- seek advice from the DSL or appropriate safeguarding professionals whenever they are unsure about a child's safety or welfare.

Staff do not need to be certain that abuse or neglect has occurred before reporting a concern. It is the responsibility of the appropriate safeguarding professionals to assess concerns and determine what action may be required.

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that effective safeguarding depends on adults noticing concerns, listening to children, sharing information appropriately and taking timely action to protect children from harm.

Key personnel:

The designated safeguarding Lead (**DSL**) for child protection at *Little Blossom Nursery School* **Watford** is:

Shonna Hayward

Nursery Position:

Manager, DSL and SENDCO

Contact details:

littleblossomnurserywatford@outlook.com

07791295993

The Deputy designated safeguarding Lead (**DDSL**) for child protection at *Little Blossom Nursery School* **Watford** is:

Katrina Roberts

Nursery Position:

Deputy Manager, DDSL and EYFS Lead

Contact details:

deputymanager_lb Watford@outlook.com

07791295993

Other Management involved:

Nurseries Senior Management Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Kellie Middleton

Position: Area Manager, Deputy Head of Safeguarding and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO)

Professional contact: littleblossomareamanger@outlook.com

Company Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Laura Scales

Position: Director, Head of Safeguarding and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO)

Professional contact: littleblossomnurseryschool@outlook.com

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at Little Blossom Nursery School. All staff, managers, volunteers, students, agency workers, contractors and other adults working with or having contact with children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

In accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers, effective from 1 September 2026, Little Blossom Nursery School has appointed a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the setting.

The DSL will work closely with the Manager and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), and will liaise with local statutory children's services, the police, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and other relevant agencies when required.

The EYFS requires providers to have effective safeguarding procedures, appropriate safeguarding training and a practitioner designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

Name: **Shonna Hayward**

The DSL will:

- Have appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and maintain up-to-date knowledge in accordance with the EYFS, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and advice from the relevant Local Safeguarding Partners.
- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within *Little Blossom Nursery School*.
- Have sufficient time, resources and support to fulfil the DSL role effectively.
- Act as a source of advice, support and expertise for staff, volunteers, students, agency workers and management.
- Ensure that all staff understand and follow the setting's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures.
- Ensure staff understand how to recognise signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding concerns, including concerns affecting babies and young children who may be pre-verbal or non-verbal.
- Ensure that safeguarding concerns, disclosures and allegations are responded to promptly, appropriately and in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.
- Receive safeguarding concerns reported by staff and determine the appropriate next steps in accordance with Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures.
- Ensure that staff understand that they must report concerns even where they are not certain that abuse or neglect has occurred.
- Maintain accurate, objective, contemporaneous and confidential records of safeguarding concerns, disclosures, referrals, decisions and actions taken.
- Ensure safeguarding records are stored securely and confidentially, with access restricted to authorised persons.
- Make referrals to Hertfordshire Children's Services, the police or other appropriate agencies when required.
- Follow the procedures of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and maintain appropriate links with relevant statutory, health, education and voluntary agencies.
- Ensure that staff know how to report safeguarding concerns and know who to contact if the DSL is unavailable.
- Ensure appropriate action is taken where concerns arise about a member of staff, volunteer, student, agency worker, contractor, manager or any other adult who may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Ensure that appropriate procedures are followed when an allegation or concern is made about the Manager, DSL or another senior member of staff.
- Ensure that concerns or allegations about adults are referred to the appropriate external agencies, including the LADO and/or DBS where required.
- Ensure that safeguarding training is provided to all staff and that records of training and attendance are maintained.
- Ensure that temporary staff, agency workers, volunteers and students receive appropriate safeguarding information and understand Little Blossom Nursery School's safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure that parents and carers have access to the safeguarding and child protection policy.
- Ensure that safeguarding concerns, practice and procedures are regularly reviewed and that appropriate improvements are made.
- Attend, or arrange appropriate representation at, safeguarding meetings, strategy discussions and multi-agency meetings where required.
- Ensure that safeguarding information is shared appropriately and lawfully when necessary to protect a child.
- Ensure that safeguarding arrangements take account of children who may be particularly vulnerable, including children with SEND, children known to children's social care and children who may have difficulty communicating their wishes and feelings.

DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DDSL)

Name: **Katrina Roberts**

The DDSL will support the DSL in carrying out safeguarding responsibilities and will act on behalf of the DSL when the DSL is unavailable.

The DDSL will:

- Have appropriate safeguarding and child protection training.
- Be familiar with *Little Blossom Nursery School's* safeguarding procedures and current Hertfordshire safeguarding arrangements.
- Receive and respond to safeguarding concerns when acting on behalf of the DSL.
- Ensure that concerns are recorded accurately and escalated appropriately.
- Liaise with the DSL and relevant safeguarding agencies when required.
- Take appropriate action to safeguard children during the DSL's absence.
- Assume the DSL's operational safeguarding responsibilities during any prolonged absence, subject to the setting's management arrangements.

The DSL and DDSL will work closely together to ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain effective and that appropriate safeguarding leadership is available at all times.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Manager and management team at Little Blossom Nursery School are responsible for ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and that sufficient time, resources and support are provided for the DSL and DDSL to fulfil their responsibilities.

Management will:

- Ensure that safeguarding and child protection remain a priority throughout the setting.
- Ensure that the DSL has sufficient time, resources and support to undertake their role effectively.
- Ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented consistently.
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding induction and training.
- Ensure safer recruitment procedures are followed and that all required suitability and criminal record checks are completed.
- Ensure that new employees do not commence employment until the required criminal record check has been received, in accordance with the EYFS requirements applicable from 1 September 2026.
- Ensure that appropriate criminal record and suitability checks are undertaken for volunteers, including supervised volunteers.
- Ensure that staff understand their responsibility to disclose information that may affect their suitability to work with children.
- Ensure that staff understand and follow the setting's staff code of conduct and safer working practices.
- Ensure that effective procedures are in place for managing allegations and concerns about adults working with or having contact with children.
- Ensure that concerns about poor, unsafe or inappropriate practice can be raised without fear of reprisal.
- Ensure that whistleblowing procedures are available and understood by staff.
- Ensure that safeguarding records are appropriately maintained and securely stored.
- Ensure that the setting cooperates fully with Hertfordshire Children's Services, the police, the LADO, the HSCP and other relevant safeguarding agencies.
- Ensure that the setting meets the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS framework applicable from 1 September 2026.
- Ensure that this policy and associated safeguarding procedures are reviewed and updated in line with changes to legislation, statutory guidance, the EYFS and local safeguarding arrangements.
- The 2026 EYFS strengthens requirements relating to safer recruitment, volunteers, criminal record checks and information that staff must disclose regarding their suitability to work with children.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND OTHER ADULTS

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that safeguarding concerns may arise in relation to a member of staff, volunteer, student, agency worker, contractor, manager or any other adult who has contact with children.

All allegations or concerns that an adult may have caused harm to a child, may pose a risk of harm to children, or may otherwise be unsuitable to work with children will be taken seriously and acted upon immediately.

The setting will follow its allegations management procedures and seek advice from the appropriate safeguarding professionals.

Where an allegation concerns a person working with children, including the Manager or DSL, the matter will not be investigated internally by the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Where appropriate, the setting will refer or seek advice from the:

- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- Hertfordshire Children's Services;
- Police;
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS); and/or
- other relevant safeguarding agencies.

This includes concerns or allegations involving staff, agency workers, volunteers and contractors.

The setting will also maintain procedures for responding to low-level concerns about adults working with children. Concerns will be recorded, considered and addressed appropriately even where they do not meet the threshold for referral to external agencies.

The updated Ofsted early years inspection toolkit specifically expects settings to have clear procedures for safeguarding allegations, including apparently low-level concerns, and to understand when referrals to the LADO and DBS are required.

WHISTLEBLOWING AND RAISING CONCERNS

Little Blossom Nursery School encourages an open safeguarding culture in which staff feel confident to raise concerns about poor, unsafe, inappropriate or abusive practice.

Staff must report concerns through the appropriate safeguarding or management channels.

Where a concern relates to the DSL or Manager, staff must use the alternative reporting arrangements set out in the setting's whistleblowing and safeguarding procedures.

No member of staff should feel that they must remain silent because a concern involves a senior member of staff.

Staff who raise genuine safeguarding concerns will be supported and should not experience disadvantage or reprisal as a result of raising a concern in good faith.

TRAINING AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

All staff working with children will receive safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their role.

Training will ensure that staff understand:

- their safeguarding responsibilities;
- *Little Blossom Nursery School's* safeguarding and child protection procedures;
- how to recognise signs and indicators of abuse and neglect;
- how to recognise concerns relating to pre-verbal and non-verbal children;

- how to respond appropriately when a child makes a disclosure;
- how to record and report safeguarding concerns;
- the importance of appropriate information sharing;
- safer working practices and professional boundaries;
- allegations and concerns relating to adults working with children;
- whistleblowing procedures;
- relevant Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures; and
- the role and contact details of the DSL and DDSL.

The DSL will undertake additional safeguarding training appropriate to their role, including training relating to safeguarding leadership, safer recruitment, allegations management, referral and escalation procedures and local safeguarding arrangements.

Safeguarding training will be refreshed in accordance with the current EYFS requirements, advice from the relevant Local Safeguarding Partners and the needs of the setting.

The setting will maintain an accurate record of all safeguarding training completed by staff.

LOCAL SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS – HERTFORDSHIRE

Little Blossom Nursery School will follow the safeguarding procedures and guidance issued by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and Hertfordshire County Council.

Where a professional has concerns that a child may require a safeguarding referral, the DSL or appropriate staff member will follow the current Hertfordshire referral pathway.

Where there is an immediate risk of harm or a crime is being committed, staff should contact 999.

Hertfordshire County Council currently advises professionals to use its referral arrangements for concerns about a child and provides **0300 123 4043** for urgent out-of-hours safeguarding support.

The DSL will ensure that the current Hertfordshire referral pathway and relevant safeguarding contacts are readily accessible to staff and are checked regularly for changes.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Safeguarding is **not** solely the responsibility of the DSL.

Every member of staff, volunteer, student, agency worker and other adult working with children has a responsibility to:

Notice → Listen → Respond → Record → Report

A concern does not need to be proven before it is reported.

The responsibility of staff is to recognise concerns, respond appropriately and report them to the DSL or appropriate safeguarding professional. Staff must not investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

This policy should be read alongside:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Childcare Act 2006
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers – effective from 1 September 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and guidance
- Relevant guidance relating to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), safer recruitment, information sharing and safeguarding
- Other applicable legislation and statutory guidance.

Good practice guidelines

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children, *Little Blossom Nursery School* is committed to creating a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All adults working with children are expected to demonstrate safe, respectful and professional behaviour at all times.

Our practice will be child-centred, inclusive, respectful and responsive, recognising that babies and young children may communicate concerns through their behaviour, actions, play, appearance or emotional presentation and may not always be able to verbally explain what is happening to them.

All staff and adults working with children will:

- Treat every child with dignity, respect and kindness, recognising their individuality and their right to feel safe.
- Listen carefully to children and take what they say, communicate or express seriously.
- Give children appropriate opportunities to express their wishes, feelings and views and, wherever possible, involve them in decisions that affect them.
- Recognise that babies and young children, including pre-verbal and non-verbal children and children with SEND, may communicate safeguarding concerns in different ways.
- Be alert to changes in a child's behaviour, presentation, emotional wellbeing, attendance, relationships, physical appearance or development.
- Recognise that changes in behaviour or challenging behaviour may sometimes indicate that a child is experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation, distress or another safeguarding concern.
- Never assume that challenging or concerning behaviour is simply a behavioural issue without considering whether there may be an underlying safeguarding or welfare concern.
- Respond appropriately when a child attempts to disclose something that is worrying them and follow the setting's safeguarding procedures.
- Report safeguarding concerns promptly to the DSL and never wait for certainty before reporting a concern.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and never behave in a way that could place a child or adult at risk.
- Set a positive example through our own behaviour, language, communication and interactions.
- Use age-appropriate, respectful and professional language when communicating with children.
- Never use language that is humiliating, threatening, discriminatory, sexualised, derogatory or otherwise inappropriate.
- Avoid favouritism and ensure that all children are treated fairly and consistently.
- Never engage in inappropriate physical contact, physical punishment or behaviour that could cause a child fear, distress or harm.
- Follow *Little Blossom Nursery School's* guidance on appropriate physical contact, intimate care and professional boundaries.
- Ensure that children's personal care is undertaken respectfully, appropriately and in accordance with the setting's intimate care procedures.
- Be aware of the increased vulnerability of some children and families and consider the individual circumstances of each child when assessing safeguarding risks.
- Be particularly alert to children who may be more vulnerable because of disability, additional needs, communication difficulties, family circumstances, domestic abuse, neglect, parental difficulties, previous trauma, or involvement with children's social care.
- Recognise that children may experience more than one form of harm at the same time and that safeguarding concerns may change over time.
- Be alert to safeguarding concerns arising both within and outside the setting, including concerns relating to a child's home or family circumstances, online activity or relationships.
- Follow *Little Blossom Nursery School's* procedures relating to online safety, digital technology, mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices.
- Ensure that personal mobile phones and other electronic devices are used only in accordance with the setting's policies and procedures.
- Follow the setting's procedures for photographs, videos and recording of children.
- Maintain confidentiality while understanding that safeguarding information must be shared appropriately when necessary to protect a child.
- Record safeguarding concerns accurately, objectively and promptly, using the setting's agreed recording procedures.
- Read, understand and follow all *Little Blossom Nursery School* safeguarding policies and procedures, including those relating to:
 - ✧ child protection;
 - ✧ allegations against adults;
 - ✧ low-level concerns;
 - ✧ whistleblowing;
 - ✧ safer recruitment;
 - ✧ online safety;
 - ✧ mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices;
 - ✧ intimate care;
 - ✧ physical contact;
 - ✧ behaviour;
 - ✧ bullying;
 - ✧ equality and inclusion;
 - ✧ information sharing;
 - ✧ missing children;
 - ✧ safer sleep;
 - ✧ health and safety; and
 - ✧ emergency procedures.
- Challenge and report unsafe, inappropriate or poor practice, including concerns about the behaviour of another adult working with children.
- Understand that safeguarding concerns about a colleague, manager, DSL or other senior person must still be reported and that alternative reporting arrangements are available where necessary.
- Maintain professional curiosity and avoid making assumptions about a child, family or situation.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers while ensuring that the child's safety and welfare remain paramount.
- Respect children's cultural, religious, linguistic and family backgrounds while recognising that cultural or religious beliefs must never be used to justify abuse, neglect or harmful practice.

- Promote an inclusive and anti-discriminatory environment and challenge racism, discrimination, prejudice or discriminatory behaviour.
- Reflect on their own practice and be receptive to challenge, supervision, advice and learning.
- Participate fully in safeguarding training and keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date.
- Understand the role of the DSL and DDSL and know how and when to contact them.

Professional curiosity

Little Blossom Nursery School expects staff to demonstrate professional curiosity when something does not appear right.

Staff should consider:

- What have I observed?
- What is the child communicating through their behaviour or presentation?
- Has there been a change?
- Could there be an underlying safeguarding or welfare concern?
- Is there information from another professional or family member that may be relevant?
- Am I making assumptions?
- Do I need to speak to the DSL?
- Does information need to be shared with another agency?

Staff must not dismiss concerns because an explanation has been provided or because a child or family has previously been known to the setting.

Child-centred safeguarding

The welfare and safety of the child will remain central to all safeguarding decisions.

Staff will:

- listen to children;
- take their views and feelings seriously;
- communicate with children in an age-appropriate manner;
- consider the child's individual circumstances and needs;
- ensure children are treated with dignity and respect; and
- ensure that children are supported to feel safe and know who they can talk to if they are worried.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 reinforces that safeguarding applies to all children and strengthens expectations around direct work with children, recognising vulnerability, online harms and anti-discriminatory practice.

Safer working practice

All adults working at Little Blossom Nursery School are expected to:

- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- avoid situations that could place themselves or children at unnecessary risk;
- follow the setting's supervision arrangements;
- use physical intervention only where lawful, necessary and proportionate and in accordance with the setting's procedures;
- never use physical punishment;
- never have inappropriate or secretive communications with children;
- never use personal social media to communicate privately with children;
- never photograph or record children using personal devices;
- report any accidental or unavoidable breach of professional boundaries to the DSL or Manager; and
- report any concern that another adult's behaviour may place a child at risk.

Abuse of trust

All staff, managers, volunteers, students, agency workers, contractors and other adults working with children at Little Blossom Nursery School are expected to maintain professional boundaries and conduct themselves in a manner that protects children from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Adults working with children hold a position of trust and responsibility. Any sexualised, inappropriate, exploitative or abusive behaviour towards a child is unacceptable and will be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, specific offences apply where an adult in a position of trust engages in certain sexual activity with a child under 18. These provisions provide additional protection to young people aged 16 and 17 where the adult occupies a relevant position of trust.

Staff must also understand that the legal age of consent to sexual activity in the UK is 16. However, this does not make sexual activity between a child and an adult in a position of trust lawful.

For the purposes of safeguarding at *Little Blossom Nursery School*, all children under 18 will be treated as children and protected from inappropriate or exploitative relationships with adults working with them

Staff must understand that:

- Sexual or romantic relationships between an adult working at Little Blossom Nursery School and a child are strictly prohibited.
- A child's age, apparent willingness or agreement does not remove an adult's safeguarding responsibilities.
- Staff must never engage in sexualised conversations, comments, communications or behaviour with children.
- Staff must never send, request, receive or share inappropriate photographs, videos or other material involving children.
- Staff must not use personal social media accounts, private messaging applications or other personal communication channels to establish inappropriate or secretive relationships with children.
- Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.
- Staff must not give inappropriate gifts, money or other items to individual children or develop relationships that could be perceived as favouritism or grooming.
- Staff must not arrange private meetings with children outside the setting unless this forms part of an authorised professional arrangement.
- Staff must follow Little Blossom Nursery School's policies relating to physical contact, intimate care, mobile phones, cameras, photography, online safety and professional conduct.
- Any concern that an adult may be grooming, sexually exploiting, sexually communicating with or otherwise behaving inappropriately towards a child must be reported immediately.
- Staff must report concerns even where they are uncertain whether the behaviour meets a criminal threshold.
- Staff must never investigate an allegation or concern themselves.

Abuse of position of trust

Little Blossom Nursery School will maintain a culture in which abuse of position of trust is recognised, challenged and reported.

All staff are reminded that being a trusted adult is a professional responsibility and must never be used to develop an inappropriate relationship with a child.

The Little Blossom Code of Ethical Practice sets out our expectations of staff and provides further guidance on professional boundaries and appropriate conduct for all adults working within the setting, and must be read alongside this policy.

Children Who May Be Particularly Vulnerable

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that any child can experience abuse, neglect, exploitation or other safeguarding concerns, regardless of their age, background, family circumstances or individual characteristics.

Some children may experience additional vulnerabilities because of their individual circumstances, experiences, communication needs or the circumstances of their family. Vulnerability must not be assumed solely because a child has a particular characteristic or comes from a particular background.

Safeguarding concerns may be increased by factors such as social isolation, discrimination, prejudice, communication difficulties, disability, additional needs, domestic abuse, parental difficulties, poverty or a lack of recognition that abuse or neglect may be occurring.

Little Blossom Nursery School will take a child-centred, inclusive and individualised approach to safeguarding. Staff will consider each child's circumstances and needs and will remain professionally curious where something does not appear right.

Particular attention will be given to children who may be more vulnerable, including children who:

- Have a disability, special educational need or additional communication need, including children who are pre-verbal or non-verbal.
- Have difficulty communicating their wishes, feelings or experiences.
- Are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse within their household.
- Are affected by parental substance misuse, mental health difficulties or other parental circumstances that may affect their safety or welfare.
- Are known to or have previously been involved with Children's Social Care or other safeguarding services.
- Are living away from their parents or usual carers, including children in care or children subject to alternative care arrangements.
- Are experiencing family breakdown, homelessness, temporary accommodation or housing insecurity.
- May be experiencing poverty, deprivation or social isolation.
- Are vulnerable to bullying, discrimination, harassment or abuse, including online.
- Are experiencing or are at increased risk of criminal exploitation or sexual exploitation.
- May be at risk of trafficking, modern slavery, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) or other forms of harmful practice.
- May be affected by radicalisation or extremism.
- Have experienced previous trauma, abuse, neglect or adverse childhood experiences.
- Are experiencing significant changes in behaviour, emotional wellbeing, appearance, attendance or development.
- Have limited English or another communication need that may make it more difficult for them to communicate concerns.
- Are from communities or backgrounds that may experience racism, prejudice or discrimination.
- May be particularly vulnerable because of their sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability or other personal characteristics.
- Are experiencing a combination of circumstances that may increase their vulnerability to abuse, neglect or exploitation.

COMMUNICATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that children communicate in different ways.

Staff will take account of each child's:

- age and stage of development;
- language and communication needs;
- disability or additional needs;
- cultural background; and
- individual way of expressing wishes, feelings and concerns.

Where a child or family requires safeguarding information or support in an accessible format or language, *Little Blossom Nursery School* will take appropriate steps to provide suitable communication support, including interpretation or translation where necessary.

A child's inability or difficulty to communicate verbally must never be regarded as an inability to express a safeguarding concern.

Staff will remain alert to changes in a child's behaviour, presentation, emotional wellbeing, play, communication or development, particularly where the child may have difficulty explaining what is happening to them.

PROFESSIONAL CURIOSITY

All staff are expected to demonstrate professional curiosity when a child's presentation, behaviour or circumstances cause concern.

Staff must not make assumptions based on a child's:

- family circumstances;
- culture;
- disability;
- ethnicity;
- religion or belief;
- language;
- socioeconomic circumstances;
- sex or gender; or
- sexual orientation.

Equally, staff must not allow assumptions, stereotypes or a family's circumstances to prevent them from recognising or reporting safeguarding concerns.

Where something does not appear right, staff should consider:

- What have I noticed?
- What is the child communicating?
- Has there been a change?
- Could there be an underlying safeguarding concern?
- Do I need to speak to the DSL?

Staff must report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) even where they are uncertain whether abuse or neglect has occurred. Staff must not investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to ensuring that every child receives equal protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Safeguarding practice will be inclusive, anti-discriminatory and respectful.

The setting will not tolerate racism, prejudice, discriminatory behaviour, harassment or maltreatment of children because of their race, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation, language, nationality or any other personal characteristic.

Where discrimination or prejudice presents a safeguarding concern, it will be addressed through the setting's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE

The categories above are not an exhaustive list of children who may be vulnerable.

Every child must be considered as an individual. Staff must remain alert to any indication that a child may be experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or other harm, regardless of whether the child falls within one of the categories identified above.

***Little Blossom Nursery School* will always prioritise the individual child's safety, welfare, wishes and needs when considering safeguarding concerns.**

SUPPORT FOR THOSE INVOLVED IN A SAFEGUARDING OR CHILD PROTECTION MATTER

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that safeguarding and child protection concerns can be distressing for children, families and staff. We are committed to ensuring that anyone involved in a safeguarding matter is treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect while maintaining the child's safety and welfare as the highest priority.

Support for children

Where a child is involved in a safeguarding or child protection concern, Little Blossom Nursery School will:

- Take all concerns, observations and disclosures seriously.
- Listen to the child calmly and sensitively and provide reassurance that they have been heard.
- Take account of the child's age, stage of development, communication needs and individual circumstances.
- Ensure that the child is treated with dignity, respect and sensitivity throughout the safeguarding process.
- Provide appropriate emotional and practical support within the setting.
- Ensure that the child knows which trusted adults they can speak to if they are worried or need help.
- Avoid asking leading or unnecessary questions and ensure that staff do not investigate concerns themselves.
- Record concerns, disclosures and actions accurately and promptly.
- Make referrals to Children's Services, the police, health services or other relevant agencies where appropriate.
- Work with relevant professionals to ensure that the child's safeguarding and welfare needs continue to be considered.
- Provide appropriate support following a safeguarding incident or disclosure and monitor the child's ongoing wellbeing.

Support for parents and carers

Little Blossom Nursery School will work openly and respectfully with parents and carers wherever this is consistent with safeguarding requirements. We will:

- Treat parents and carers fairly, respectfully and without discrimination.
- Provide appropriate information about safeguarding concerns and actions where it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- Explain, where possible, the reasons for safeguarding actions and referrals.
- Recognise that safeguarding concerns may cause significant distress, anxiety or uncertainty for families.
- Provide information about appropriate sources of support where this may be helpful.
- Work in partnership with Children's Services and other relevant agencies where a child requires additional safeguarding support.

However, information will not be shared with parents or carers where doing so could increase the risk of harm to the child, compromise a safeguarding enquiry, prejudice a criminal investigation or otherwise be contrary to professional safeguarding advice.

The DSL will seek advice from the appropriate safeguarding agency where there is uncertainty about whether information should be shared.

Support for staff

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that involvement in a safeguarding matter can be emotionally difficult for staff.

Staff involved in safeguarding concerns or allegations will be provided with appropriate support, including:

- access to the DSL or an appropriate manager for advice and support;
- appropriate supervision and opportunities to discuss the impact of safeguarding work;
- reasonable opportunities to step away from duties where this is necessary to manage immediate distress, subject to maintaining appropriate staffing and supervision;
- information about appropriate external support services where required;
- access to the setting's staff wellbeing arrangements;
- appropriate support during and following safeguarding meetings, referrals or investigations; and
- clear information about the procedures being followed, where this can lawfully be provided.
- Where an allegation is made against a member of staff, the setting will ensure that the individual is treated fairly and respectfully while ensuring that the child's safety and the integrity of any safeguarding investigation remain paramount.

Allegations involving staff or other adults

Where a safeguarding allegation concerns a member of staff, volunteer, student, agency worker, Manager, DSL or any other adult working with children:

- The concern will be taken seriously and reported immediately through the appropriate safeguarding procedures.
- The person who is the subject of the allegation will not be responsible for investigating the concern.
- Appropriate advice will be sought from the Hertfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or other relevant safeguarding agencies where required.
- Alternative reporting arrangements will be used where the concern relates to the Manager or DSL.
- Confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible.
- Information will only be shared with those who need it for safeguarding, employment or legal purposes.
- The setting will follow its Allegations Against Staff, Disciplinary, Complaints and Whistleblowing Procedures, as appropriate.
- The setting will cooperate fully with the LADO, Children's Services, police and other relevant agencies.

Confidentiality and information sharing

Little Blossom Nursery School understands that safeguarding information is sensitive and must be handled responsibly.

However, confidentiality must never prevent information from being shared when this is necessary to protect a child.

Staff must:

- only share safeguarding information with appropriate people;
- follow the setting's information-sharing procedures;
- keep safeguarding records secure and confidential;
- not discuss safeguarding concerns with colleagues who do not need the information;
- not discuss safeguarding matters with other parents, carers or members of the public;
- not promise a child or another person that information will remain secret; and
- refer any uncertainty about information sharing to the DSL.

Information will be shared in accordance with applicable data protection legislation and safeguarding guidance. The safety and welfare of the child will remain the primary consideration.

Safeguarding records

All safeguarding records will be:

- accurate;
- factual and objective;
- dated and signed/attributed to the person making the record;
- completed as soon as reasonably possible;
- stored securely;
- accessed only by authorised individuals; and
- retained in accordance with the setting's record-keeping and data protection procedures.

Safeguarding records will be kept separately from general children's records where appropriate and will be transferred securely when required.

External support and multi-agency working

Where appropriate, Little Blossom Nursery School will work with:

- Hertfordshire Children's Services;
- the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership;
- the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- the police;
- health professionals;
- early help services;
- education professionals;
- specialist safeguarding services; and
- other relevant statutory or voluntary organisations.

The setting will cooperate fully with safeguarding assessments, enquiries, strategy discussions, child protection conferences and other multi-agency processes where required.

Whistleblowing and complaints

All staff are encouraged to raise concerns about unsafe practice or safeguarding failures.

Staff will be supported to use the setting's Whistleblowing Procedure where they have concerns about the actions, conduct or decisions of another member of staff, including senior staff.

Where a concern cannot appropriately be raised internally, staff will be provided with information about the appropriate external reporting arrangements.

Little Blossom Nursery School will not tolerate victimisation or retaliation against anyone who raises a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

Our commitment

Little Blossom Nursery School will ensure that the welfare and best interests of the child remain at the centre of every safeguarding decision.

We will support children, families and staff appropriately while maintaining professional boundaries, confidentiality and the need to share information where this is necessary to safeguard a child.

No child, parent, carer or member of staff will be discouraged from raising a genuine safeguarding concern.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to providing a safe, secure and suitable environment in which children can play, learn, explore and develop their independence.

In accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, *Little Blossom Nursery School* will take all reasonable steps to ensure that children and staff are not exposed to unnecessary risks and will be able to demonstrate how risks are identified, assessed, removed, minimised and managed.

Our approach to risk management is proportionate and child-centred. We recognise that children need appropriate opportunities to take manageable risks as part of their learning, development, confidence and independence. The aim of risk assessment is therefore not to remove all risk, but to identify and manage hazards so that children can safely experience appropriate challenge and exploration.

DAILY SAFETY CHECKS

At the beginning of each day, before children arrive, staff will check the nursery environment, including:

- indoor areas;
- outdoor play areas;
- entrances and exits;
- play equipment;
- furniture and resources;
- toilets and changing areas;
- sleep and rest areas;
- kitchen and food preparation areas;
- security arrangements; and
- any other areas accessible to children.

Checks will identify hazards that could present a risk to children, staff or visitors.

Any hazard identified will be dealt with promptly and appropriately. Where an immediate risk cannot be resolved, access to the affected area, equipment or activity will be restricted until appropriate control measures have been implemented.

Staff will continue to monitor the environment throughout the day because risks can change as children, staff, equipment and activities change.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessments will be undertaken where appropriate for:

- the nursery premises and environment;
- indoor and outdoor activities;
- play equipment and resources;
- outings and trips;
- unfamiliar environments;
- transportation;
- special events and activities;
- Outside Agencies
- individual children's needs where additional risks may need to be considered;
- changes to the environment or provision;
- specific activities involving increased or unusual risk; and
- any other situation where a potential risk to children or staff has been identified.

Risk assessments will consider:

What could cause harm?

Who could be at risk?

How significant is the risk?

What measures can remove or reduce the risk?

Who is responsible for implementing the control measures?

When will the risk assessment be reviewed?

Where appropriate, risk assessments will identify the aspects of the environment that need to be checked regularly, when they should be checked and by whom, together with the measures required to remove or minimise identified risks.

OUTINGS AND VISITS

Children must be kept safe while on outings.

Before an outing, *Little Blossom Nursery School* will consider the potential risks and hazards associated with the destination, activity, journey and environment and identify appropriate measures to remove, minimise or manage those risks.

Risk assessments for outings will consider:

- the destination and environment;
- the activity being undertaken;
- children's individual needs;
- accessibility;
- supervision arrangements;
- staff-to-child ratios;
- transportation and travel arrangements;
- safeguarding and security;
- water, traffic and other environmental hazards where relevant;

- emergency arrangements;
- first-aid provision;
- contact arrangements; and
- what action will be taken if circumstances change.

The EYFS specifically requires providers to assess potential risks and hazards for outings and identify steps to remove, minimise and manage those risks, including consideration of staff-to-child ratios.

UNFAMILIAR ENVIRONMENTS

Where reasonably practicable, an unfamiliar environment will be assessed before children attend.

This may include visits to:

- parks;
- libraries;
- community facilities;
- museums;
- farms;
- sports facilities;
- other educational settings; or
- any other location children may visit as part of the nursery's provision.

Where it is not reasonably practicable to complete an assessment in advance, staff will assess the environment on arrival and before children enter or participate in the activity.

Staff will continue to monitor the environment throughout the visit and will respond immediately to any new or unexpected hazards.

INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN AND ADDITIONAL RISKS

Risk assessments will take account of children's individual circumstances where these may affect their safety.

This may include consideration of:

- age and stage of development;
- special educational needs or disabilities;
- medical or additional care needs;
- mobility or sensory needs;
- communication needs;
- behavioural or emotional needs;
- allergies or dietary requirements;
- individual vulnerabilities; and
- any other relevant information.

Where an individual child requires additional control measures, these will be communicated to relevant staff and incorporated into the child's care and safety arrangements.

WRITTEN RISK ASSESSMENTS

Not every risk assessment needs to be recorded in writing.

However, Little Blossom Nursery School will determine when a written risk assessment is appropriate to:

- inform staff practice;
- communicate control measures;
- demonstrate how risks are being managed;
- support consistency between staff;
- manage specific or significant risks; or
- provide evidence of effective risk management to parents, Ofsted or other relevant professionals.

Written risk assessments will be completed using the nursery's approved risk assessment format and stored securely.

REVIEWING RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk assessments will be reviewed:

- regularly;
- when there is a significant change to the environment, equipment, activity or circumstances;
- when a new hazard is identified;
- following an accident, incident or near miss where appropriate;
- when a child develops an additional need that affects risk;
- following relevant changes to legislation or statutory guidance; and
- whenever management considers that a review is necessary.

Reviews will consider whether existing control measures remain effective and whether further action is required.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff are responsible for maintaining a safe environment.

Staff must:

- follow relevant risk assessments and control measures;
- carry out required daily safety checks;
- remain alert to changing risks;
- immediately address hazards within their ability to manage safely;
- report hazards, defects or concerns to the Manager or appropriate person;
- report accidents, incidents and near misses;
- never knowingly ignore an identified risk;

- ensure children are appropriately supervised;
- consider children's individual needs when managing risks; and
- inform management when an existing risk assessment no longer reflects the actual circumstances.

Staff must not assume that a risk assessment remains appropriate simply because it has previously been completed.

BALANCING SAFETY WITH LEARNING

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that children learn through play, exploration, experimentation and appropriate challenge.

We will therefore use a proportionate approach to risk management that enables children to:

- explore their environment;
- develop physical skills;
- develop independence;
- make appropriate choices;
- develop confidence;
- experience manageable challenges; and
- learn how to recognise and manage risks themselves.

Risk management will not unnecessarily restrict children's learning opportunities where risks can be appropriately controlled.

RECORD KEEPING AND INFORMATION

Risk assessments and associated records will be maintained securely and made available to relevant staff.

Records will be made available to Ofsted when required.

Where appropriate, relevant information about risk-management arrangements may be shared with parents and carers, while respecting confidentiality and data-protection requirements.

The EYFS requires providers to maintain records and make relevant information available to parents/carers, professionals, Ofsted and other appropriate agencies.

SAFEGUARDING AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk assessment forms part of *Little Blossom Nursery School's* wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Where a risk relates to the safety, welfare or protection of a child, staff must report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in accordance with the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Risk assessments will be used alongside safeguarding procedures and will not replace the need to report a safeguarding concern.
Our commitment

Little Blossom Nursery School will maintain a proactive approach to risk management that protects children while enabling them to enjoy safe opportunities to play, explore, learn, develop independence and experience appropriate challenge.

We will review our risk-management arrangements in response to changes in legislation, statutory guidance, the EYFS, our environment, our provision or learning from incidents.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Policy Statement

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to providing a safe, secure, healthy and suitable environment in which children can play, learn, explore and develop.

The safety and welfare of children is our highest priority. We will take all reasonable steps to identify, prevent and manage hazards and risks and will ensure that staff understand their responsibilities for maintaining a safe environment.

Our health and safety arrangements will comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework, applicable legislation and relevant health and safety guidance. The EYFS requires providers to maintain safe premises and equipment, carry out appropriate risk assessments, promote good health and ensure children are kept safe.

SAFE PREMISES AND ENVIRONMENT

Little Blossom Nursery School will:

- Take reasonable steps to ensure that children are protected from hazards both indoors and outdoors.
- Carry out daily checks of the premises before children arrive.
- Ensure that indoor and outdoor areas are safe, secure, clean and suitable for children's use.
- Ensure that equipment, furniture and resources are safe, suitable and maintained appropriately.
- Remove, repair or isolate defective equipment immediately.
- Ensure that children cannot access areas that are unsafe or unsuitable for them.
- Maintain appropriate security arrangements to prevent children leaving the premises unsupervised.
- Ensure that doors, gates, entrances and exits are appropriately secured.
- Ensure that children are appropriately supervised at all times.
- Ensure that outdoor play areas are checked regularly and are safe for children to use.
- Maintain appropriate procedures for emergencies, evacuation and lockdown where applicable.
- Ensure that emergency exits remain accessible and are clearly identified.
- Maintain appropriate fire safety arrangements, including smoke alarms and other required fire safety equipment.
- Ensure that carbon monoxide detection is provided where appropriate and maintained in accordance with relevant requirements.
- Ensure that gas and electrical appliances, fittings and equipment are safe, appropriately maintained and do not present an unnecessary risk to children.
- Ensure that electrical equipment and other potentially hazardous equipment is appropriately secured and inaccessible to children unless being used as part of a supervised activity.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Little Blossom Nursery School will maintain appropriate risk assessments for the premises, activities, equipment, outings and other situations where children may be exposed to potential hazards.

Risk assessments will identify:

- the hazard;
- who may be at risk;
- the level of risk;
- measures to eliminate or reduce the risk;
- who is responsible for implementing the control measures; and
- when the assessment should be reviewed.

Risk assessments will be reviewed regularly and whenever there is a significant change to the environment, equipment, activity or circumstances.

They will also be reviewed following an accident, incident or near miss where appropriate.

Further information is contained within the **Little Blossom Risk Assessment and Risk Management Policy**.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

Children will be appropriately supervised at all times.

Staff will consider:

- children's ages and stages of development;
- the number of children present;
- the environment;
- the activity taking place;
- individual children's needs;
- additional vulnerabilities or risks; and
- staff-to-child ratios.

Supervision will be active, purposeful and appropriate to the circumstances rather than relying solely on children being within sight of an adult.

Staff will remain alert to changes in the environment and children's behaviour and will respond promptly where a safety concern arises.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Children will be provided with appropriate opportunities to play and learn outdoors.

Before children access outdoor areas, staff will ensure that:

- the area is safe and secure;
- equipment is suitable and safe;
- hazards have been identified and addressed;
- appropriate supervision is in place; and
- children are dressed appropriately for the weather and activity.

Outdoor play will be managed in a way that allows children to experience appropriate challenge while maintaining their safety.

KITCHEN AND FOOD SAFETY

Where children take part in cooking or food-related activities, appropriate precautions will be taken to prevent injury.

Children will be supervised and will not be exposed unnecessarily to:

- hot surfaces;
- boiling water;
- sharp utensils;
- electrical appliances;
- cleaning chemicals; or
- other hazardous equipment.

Where food is provided by the nursery, it will be stored, prepared, cooked and served hygienically.

The EYFS requires food and drink provided to children to be healthy, balanced and nutritious, and fresh drinking water must be available and accessible. The setting must obtain information about children's dietary requirements, allergies and intolerances and ensure this information is shared with relevant staff.

Little Blossom Nursery School will maintain appropriate procedures for:

- food hygiene;
- allergies and intolerances;
- special dietary requirements;
- choking prevention;
- food preparation and storage; and
- safer eating.

At mealtimes, there will always be a member of staff present who holds a valid paediatric first aid certificate, as required by the EYFS.

Further information is contained within the **Little Blossom Safer Mealtimes Policy**.

SAFER SLEEP

Little Blossom Nursery School will follow the EYFS safer sleep requirements for babies and young children.

Where children sleep or rest at the setting:

- appropriate safer sleep arrangements will be provided;
- sleeping children will be appropriately monitored;
- staff will follow the setting's safer sleep procedures;
- sleep areas will be maintained at a safe temperature and in a suitable condition; and
- individual children's sleep needs will be considered.

The September 2026 EYFS places the safer sleep requirements directly within the statutory framework.

Further information is contained within the **Little Blossom Safer Sleep Policy and Procedure**.

HEALTH, HYGIENE AND INFECTION CONTROL

Little Blossom Nursery School will promote good health, including oral health, and will take appropriate steps to prevent the spread of infection.

We will:

- maintain high standards of cleanliness;
- ensure appropriate handwashing facilities are available;
- encourage children to wash their hands appropriately;
- support children to develop good personal hygiene habits;
- follow appropriate nappy-changing and toileting procedures;
- clean and disinfect equipment and surfaces as required;
- manage bodily fluids safely;
- follow appropriate infection-control procedures;
- ensure appropriate ventilation;
- follow current public health guidance when managing infectious illnesses; and
- provide parents and carers with appropriate information about exclusion periods and infectious illnesses.

Children will be supported to understand and practise good personal hygiene as part of everyday routines.

ILLNESS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Where a child becomes unwell while attending the nursery, staff will:

- assess the child's immediate needs;
- provide appropriate care and comfort;
- contact parents/carers where necessary;
- follow the setting's illness and exclusion procedures;
- seek medical assistance where appropriate; and
- record significant incidents or actions taken.

Parents and carers must inform the nursery of relevant illnesses, infectious diseases, medical conditions or changes to their child's health.

Further information is contained within the **Little Blossom Sick Child Policy and the Infection Policy**.

MEDICINES

Medicine, including prescription and non-prescription medicine, will only be administered where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent or carer.

This requirement does not prevent Little Blossom Nursery School from seeking urgent medical assistance or emergency treatment where a child is seriously ill or injured. In an emergency, staff will contact the emergency services (999) where necessary and will follow the advice and instructions of qualified medical professionals. Emergency medical treatment will not be delayed while waiting for parental consent or for a parent/carers to arrive. Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as reasonably practicable.

We will:

- obtain and maintain up-to-date information about children's medical needs;
- store medicines safely and appropriately;
- keep medicines inaccessible to children unless the medicine is required to be readily accessible for emergency treatment;
- ensure medicines are in their original packaging and clearly labelled;
- ensure staff have appropriate training where administration requires medical or technical knowledge;
- record every occasion on which medicine is administered;
- inform parents/carers on the same day that medicine has been administered, or as soon as reasonably practicable; and
- follow individual healthcare plans where appropriate.

The EYFS specifically requires written parental permission for the particular medicine and a record each time medicine is administered.

Further information is contained within the **Little Blossom Medication Policy**

FIRST AID

We will:

- ensure appropriate first-aid equipment is available;
- ensure first-aid equipment is regularly checked and replenished;
- ensure appropriate staff hold paediatric first aid qualifications;
- ensure first-aid arrangements are available during outings;
- ensure a paediatric first-aid trained member of staff is available as required by the EYFS;
- record first-aid treatment provided; and
- inform parents/carers of accidents, injuries and first-aid treatment in accordance with the setting's procedures.

Further information is contained within the **Little Blossom First Aid Policy**

ACCIDENTS, INJURIES AND INCIDENTS

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

Records will include:

- the child's name;
- date and time;
- location;
- details of what happened;
- injury or symptoms observed;
- first aid or treatment provided;
- action taken;
- name of the staff member dealing with the incident; and
- parent/carers notification where required.

Parents/carers will be informed of accidents, injuries and first aid provided in accordance with the setting's procedures.

Records requiring parental acknowledgement will be signed electronically or otherwise acknowledged in accordance with the nursery's record-keeping arrangements.

Where an accident, injury or incident indicates a potential wider risk, the relevant risk assessment will be reviewed.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

This will include arrangements for:

- fire;
 - emergency evacuation;
 - serious accidents or medical emergencies;
 - missing children;
 - lockdown or security incidents where appropriate;
 - contacting emergency services;
 - contacting parents/carers; and
 - accounting for all children and staff.
- Emergency procedures will be communicated to staff and practised regularly.

Further information is contained within the **Little Blossom Emergency Procedures**

OUTINGS

Before taking children away from the nursery premises, staff will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to maintain children's safety.

This includes:

- an appropriate risk assessment;
- appropriate staff-to-child ratios;
- suitable supervision;
- emergency contact information;
- first-aid arrangements;

- appropriate transportation arrangements;
- consideration of individual children's needs; and
- appropriate safeguarding arrangements.

Emergency contact details and relevant medical information will be taken securely on outings where required.

Personal information will be handled in accordance with the setting's confidentiality and data-protection procedures.

Further information is contained within the **Little Blossom Extended Activities and Off-site Arrangements**

SMOKING, VAPING AND NICOTINE PRODUCTS

Smoking and vaping are strictly prohibited within the nursery premises and grounds.

No member of staff, parent, visitor, contractor, volunteer or other person may smoke or vape in areas used by children.

Smoking and vaping must not take place in the presence of children or during outings.

Smoking materials, vapes, e-cigarettes, nicotine products, lighters and matches must be kept away from children at all times.

The setting will take appropriate steps to prevent children being exposed to tobacco smoke, vape emissions or related hazards.

INSURANCE

Little Blossom Nursery School will maintain appropriate insurance cover, including:

- Public Liability Insurance; and
- Employers' Liability Insurance, where required.

Relevant insurance documentation will be maintained and made available where required.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff have a responsibility for maintaining health and safety.

Staff must:

- follow the nursery's health and safety procedures;
- follow relevant risk assessments;
- maintain appropriate supervision;
- report hazards immediately;
- report accidents, incidents and near misses;
- follow infection-control procedures;
- maintain appropriate hygiene standards;
- follow medicines and first-aid procedures;
- report concerns about equipment or premises;
- attend required health and safety training; and
- take immediate action where a child is exposed to an immediate risk of harm.

Staff must never knowingly ignore a health, safety or safeguarding concern.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Manager and management team will monitor the effectiveness of the nursery's health and safety arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner where necessary following:

- changes to legislation or the EYFS;
- changes to the premises or equipment;
- an accident or serious incident;
- identified health and safety concerns;
- changes to public health guidance; or
- learning from inspections or safeguarding reviews.

Sick Child and Infection Control Policy

Policy Statement

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises its responsibility to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all children, staff, families and visitors.

We understand that it can be difficult for parents and carers to make alternative arrangements when their child is unwell. However, we have a duty to take reasonable steps to prevent the spread of infection and to ensure that children who are unwell receive appropriate care.

Little Blossom will follow the *Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework* and current *UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)* guidance regarding infection prevention, control and exclusion periods.

Parents and carers are expected to inform the nursery if their child is unwell or has been diagnosed with an infectious disease.

When a Child Is Unwell

Children should not attend nursery if they are too unwell to participate comfortably in normal activities or require a level of care that cannot reasonably be provided within the nursery environment.

If a child becomes unwell during the nursery day, staff will:

- assess the child's condition;
- provide appropriate care and comfort;
- maintain appropriate supervision;
- contact the parent/carer or emergency contact where necessary;
- keep the child appropriately separated from other children where required, while maintaining suitable supervision;
- seek medical assistance where necessary; and
- record significant illness or incidents appropriately.

Parents/carers must arrange for their child to be collected as soon as reasonably practicable when the child is considered too unwell to remain at nursery.

Diarrhoea and Vomiting

Children who have diarrhoea and/or vomiting must remain at home and must not return to Little Blossom Nursery School until at least **48 hours have passed since the child's last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting**.

For clarity, the 48-hour exclusion period starts from the time of the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting. A child should not return simply because they are feeling better if 48 hours have not yet passed.

This applies to both diarrhoea and vomiting. The purpose of this exclusion period is to help prevent the spread of gastrointestinal infections within the nursery, particularly among babies and young children.

Parents/carers must inform the nursery if their child has diarrhoea and/or vomiting and should provide the date and approximate time of the child's last episode when arranging their return.

Parents/carers must inform the nursery if their child has been diagnosed with an infectious gastrointestinal illness.

High Temperature

A child with a high temperature should not attend nursery.

If a child develops a high temperature while at nursery, the parent/carer will be contacted and asked to collect the child.

The child should remain at home until they are well enough to return and no longer have a high temperature.

Conjunctivitis

There is no general exclusion period for conjunctivitis under current UKHSA guidance.

However, *Little Blossom Nursery School* recognises that conjunctivitis can spread easily, particularly among babies and younger children who have close physical contact with each other and may frequently touch their eyes and faces. We therefore ask parents/carers to seek appropriate medical or pharmacy advice as soon as possible if they believe their child has conjunctivitis.

Where medication or treatment is recommended by a healthcare professional or pharmacist, parents/carers should, where reasonably practicable, administer the first dose at home before the child returns to nursery. This allows the parent/carer to observe their child for any unexpected reaction to the medication before attending nursery.

In particular, for children attending the Baby Room, parents/carers are strongly encouraged to seek advice and commence any recommended treatment before the child returns, due to the increased risk of infection spreading between babies through close contact, shared equipment and frequent hand-to-face contact.

A child may return to nursery when they are well enough to participate in normal activities and the parent/carer has followed appropriate medical advice.

Little Blossom Nursery School will not require antibiotic treatment solely as a condition of attending nursery where this has not been recommended by an appropriate healthcare professional.

Parents/carers should inform the nursery if their child has suspected or confirmed conjunctivitis so that appropriate infection-control measures can be implemented.

Little Blossom Nursery School reserves the right to request that a child remains at home temporarily where they are unwell or where their symptoms require a level of care that cannot reasonably be provided safely within the nursery environment.

Impetigo

Children with impetigo should remain at home until **all blisters have crusted over** or until they have received antibiotic treatment for at least **48 hours**, in accordance with current UKHSA guidance.

Chickenpox

Children with chickenpox should remain at home until **5 days** after the rash first appeared, in accordance with current UKHSA guidance.

Parents/carers should inform the nursery if their child has chickenpox.

Flu and Respiratory Infections

Children with flu or respiratory infections should remain at home where they have more than mild symptoms, including a high temperature.

Children may return when they are well enough to participate normally and no longer have a high temperature.

Scarlet Fever and Group A Streptococcal Infection

Children diagnosed with scarlet fever should remain at home until at least 24 hours after starting appropriate antibiotic treatment.

Parents/carers must inform the nursery if their child has been diagnosed with scarlet fever or another significant Group A Streptococcal infection.

The nursery will follow advice from the Health Protection Team where required.

Measles, Mumps and Rubella

Parents/carers must inform Little Blossom as soon as reasonably practicable if their child has been diagnosed with measles, mumps or rubella.

The nursery will follow current UKHSA exclusion guidance and seek advice from the local Health Protection Team where appropriate.

Whooping Cough

Children with whooping cough must remain at home:

- Infected people should stay away from the setting until they have taken antibiotics for 2 days,
- or for 21 days from onset of symptoms if no antibiotics

Parents/carers must inform the nursery if their child has been diagnosed with whooping cough.

The nursery will follow the current UKHSA exclusion period and any advice provided by the local Health Protection Team.

Head Lice

Head lice do not have a public-health exclusion period under current UKHSA guidance. However, *Little Blossom Nursery School* recognises that head lice can spread through close head-to-head contact, which can occur frequently between young children, particularly in our Baby Room and younger age groups.

If live head lice are identified on a child, parents/carers will be contacted and asked to collect their child and arrange appropriate treatment. The child should not return to nursery until treatment has been commenced.

Once appropriate treatment has been carried out, the child may return to nursery **immediately**, provided they are otherwise well enough to attend. *Parents/carers should continue to follow the treatment instructions and check their child's hair as advised.*

This is a *Little Blossom Nursery School* precautionary measure to help reduce the spread of head lice within the setting and is not a public-health exclusion requirement.

Staff will not routinely inspect or search children's hair for head lice. We will respond where live head lice are noticed during normal care or where a parent/carer informs us that their child has head lice.

Information about individual children will be treated confidentially and sensitively. We will not identify an affected child to other parents or carers.

Where appropriate, the nursery may provide general information to parents/carers about head lice and measures to reduce transmission, without identifying the child concerned.

Threadworms

Threadworms do not require exclusion from nursery.

Parents/carers should inform the nursery where appropriate so that good hygiene practices can be reinforced.

Treatment should be obtained in accordance with appropriate healthcare advice.

Slapped Cheek Syndrome (Parvovirus B19)

Parents/carers must inform *Little Blossom Nursery School* if their child has suspected or confirmed slapped cheek syndrome (parvovirus B19).

Under current UKHSA guidance, there is no public-health exclusion period for slapped cheek syndrome. Children who are otherwise well enough to attend may therefore attend nursery.

However, *Little Blossom Nursery School* recognises that slapped cheek syndrome can spread through respiratory droplets and that children are generally most infectious before the characteristic facial rash appears. Once the rash appears, the child is usually no longer infectious.

If a child is unwell, has a high temperature or is unable to participate comfortably in normal nursery activities, parents/carers may be asked to keep the child at home until they are well enough to return.

Particular consideration will be given to the Baby Room and younger children, as well as staff or families who may be pregnant or otherwise medically vulnerable.

Parents/carers should inform the nursery so that appropriate infection-control measures and information can be provided.

Pregnant staff or parents/carers who are concerned that they have been exposed to slapped cheek syndrome should seek advice from their GP or midwife, particularly during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

Parents/carers must inform Little Blossom Nursery School if their child has suspected or confirmed hand, foot and mouth disease.

Under current UKHSA guidance, there is no public-health exclusion period for hand, foot and mouth disease.

However, hand, foot and mouth disease can spread easily between young children through close contact, respiratory secretions and contact with contaminated surfaces or objects. This is particularly relevant within our Baby Room, where children have frequent close contact and may put their hands and toys in their mouths.

Children with hand, foot and mouth disease may attend nursery provided they are well enough to participate in normal activities and do not have a high temperature.

However, if a child is clearly unwell, has a high temperature, is experiencing significant discomfort or requires a level of care that cannot reasonably be provided safely within the nursery, parents/carers will be asked to keep the child at home until they are well enough to return.

Parents/carers should inform the nursery of the diagnosis so that appropriate infection-control measures can be implemented.

Staff will:

- encourage regular handwashing with soap and water;
- maintain good respiratory hygiene;
- clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and shared equipment;
- ensure that toys and equipment are cleaned appropriately;
- take particular care with hygiene in the Baby Room;
- monitor for an increase in illness among children and staff; and
- seek advice from the local Health Protection Team where an outbreak or unusual increase in cases is suspected.
- Parents/carers should not send a child to nursery simply because they have completed a particular number of days at home. The child's general health and ability to participate safely in nursery activities will be considered.

Other Infectious Diseases

Little Blossom Nursery School will follow the current UKHSA guidance on public health exclusion periods for infectious diseases.

Where there is uncertainty about whether a child should attend, the nursery will seek appropriate advice rather than applying an outdated or blanket exclusion period.

The nursery may contact the local Health Protection Team where there is:

- a suspected outbreak;
- an unusual increase in illness;
- two or more linked cases of similar illness;
- a serious or unusual infectious disease;
- uncertainty about an exclusion period; or
- a need for specialist public-health advice.

Infection Prevention and Control

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to maintaining a clean, safe and hygienic environment and to taking reasonable and appropriate measures to prevent and reduce the spread of infection between children, staff, parents/carers and visitors.

Due to the age of the children attending Little Blossom, including babies and young children who require close physical care, particular attention will be given to hand hygiene, nappy changing, cleaning of toys and equipment, respiratory hygiene and the safe management of bodily fluids.

Staff and children will be encouraged and supported to:

- Wash their hands regularly and thoroughly with liquid soap and warm running water.
- Wash hands before eating or handling food, after using the toilet, after nappy changing, after outdoor play and after contact with animals.
- Ensure hands are washed after contact with bodily fluids, including saliva, mucus, vomit, urine or faeces.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and dispose of tissues immediately, followed by handwashing.
- Cough or sneeze into the inside of the elbow where a tissue is not available.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Maintain good personal hygiene.
- Avoid sharing cups, bottles, cutlery, food, towels and other personal items.
- Follow appropriate food hygiene procedures.
- Keep cuts and abrasions covered with a waterproof dressing where appropriate.

Nappy Changing and Personal Care

Nappy changing will be carried out in the designated changing area using safe and hygienic procedures.

Staff will:

- Wash and dry their hands after every nappy change and before handling another child.

- Use appropriate disposable gloves and aprons where required.
- Dispose of soiled nappies safely.
- Clean and disinfect changing mats after each use and at the end of each day.
- Ensure children's individual creams, lotions and personal-care items are clearly labelled and are not shared.
- Maintain appropriate supervision and dignity for children during personal care.
- Follow the nursery's intimate care and nappy-changing procedures.

For further information, please see **Little Blossom Intimate Care Policy**.

Cleaning and Disinfection

The nursery will maintain appropriate cleaning schedules covering daily, weekly and periodic cleaning.

We will:

- Regularly clean toys, equipment and frequently touched surfaces.
- Give particular attention to door handles, taps, toilet areas, changing areas and shared equipment.
- Clean toys and equipment that are mouthed by babies and young children regularly.
- Clean and disinfect areas or surfaces contaminated with food, dirt, vomit, faeces, urine, blood or other bodily fluids promptly.
- Ensure cleaning equipment is appropriately cleaned or disposed of after use.
- Increase cleaning where necessary during an outbreak or where advised by the local Health Protection Team.
- Keep cleaning schedules and records up to date.

Management of Bodily Fluids

Blood, vomit, faeces, urine, saliva and other bodily fluids will be treated as potentially infectious.

Staff will use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when cleaning bodily-fluid spillages and will follow the nursery's procedures for safe cleaning and disposal.

Any bodily-fluid spillage will be dealt with immediately and safely, using appropriate cleaning and disinfecting products and following the manufacturer's instructions.

Cleaning Products and Hazardous Substances

Cleaning products, disinfectants, medicines and other potentially hazardous substances will be securely stored away from children and used only in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Staff will ensure that cleaning products are never left unattended where children could gain access to them.

Ventilation

Where reasonably practicable, rooms will be appropriately ventilated by allowing fresh air into occupied spaces, while ensuring that children remain comfortable and safe.

During periods of increased respiratory illness or an outbreak, ventilation and cleaning measures may be increased in accordance with current UKHSA advice.

Infection Outbreaks

If there is an outbreak or unusual increase in illness within the nursery, Little Blossom will reinforce hand hygiene, cleaning and other infection-control measures.

The nursery will seek advice from the local Health Protection Team (HPT) where appropriate and will follow any advice provided.

Particular consideration will be given to the Baby Room and younger children, as young children have frequent close contact and may be less able to follow hygiene measures independently.

Temporary Closure During a Serious Infectious Disease Outbreak

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, an infectious disease outbreak may become difficult to contain despite the infection prevention and control measures in place.

Where there is a significant, rapidly increasing or uncontrollable outbreak, the Manager, in consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, where appropriate, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Health Protection Team (HPT) and relevant local authority, may take additional measures to protect children, staff and families.

These measures may include:

- increasing the frequency and level of cleaning and disinfection;
- temporarily restricting the use of particular rooms, areas, toys or equipment;
- reducing mixing between groups or rooms;
- temporarily suspending particular activities;
- asking unwell children or staff to remain away from the setting in accordance with current public-health guidance; and
- where exceptionally necessary, temporarily closing the nursery or part of the nursery to allow a thorough deep clean and to help bring the outbreak under control.

Any temporary closure will be proportionate to the level of risk, based on the circumstances of the outbreak and, where appropriate, advice from the Health Protection Team. Little Blossom will aim to reopen as soon as it is safe and reasonably practicable to do so.

Where a temporary closure is being considered because of a serious infectious disease outbreak, the nursery will seek appropriate advice from the Health Protection Team and follow any public-health recommendations provided. Current UKHSA guidance states that exceptionally, decisions on closure during an outbreak should be made in consultation with the appropriate health protection/incident management arrangements.

Any closure will be communicated to parents/carers as soon as reasonably practicable, together with information about the reason for the closure, expected duration and arrangements for reopening.

Deep cleaning will be undertaken where appropriate and in accordance with current UKHSA infection-prevention and control advice. UKHSA guidance recommends that settings have plans for additional cleaning during an outbreak and that enhanced or more frequent cleaning may be advised by the Health Protection Team.

This is particularly important at *Little Blossom Nursery School* because of the young age of the children, including babies who require close physical contact and care, and the increased potential for infection to spread through shared equipment, toys and frequently touched surfaces.

Medicines

Prescription and non-prescription medicines will only be administered where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent or carer.

Medicines must be:

- in their original container;
- clearly labelled;
- within their expiry date; and
- stored safely and appropriately.

Each administration of medicine will be recorded and parents/carers will be informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

This requirement does not prevent Little Blossom from seeking urgent medical assistance where a child is seriously ill or injured. In an emergency, staff will contact 999 where necessary and follow the advice and instructions of qualified medical professionals. Emergency medical treatment will not be delayed while waiting for parental consent or for a parent/carer to arrive.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- inform the nursery when their child is unwell;
- inform the nursery of any confirmed infectious disease;
- follow the applicable exclusion period;
- provide accurate and up-to-date medical information;
- provide current emergency contact details; and
- inform staff of any medication administered to the child before attending nursery where relevant.

Review of Guidance

Little Blossom Nursery School will regularly check current UKHSA public-health guidance and update this policy where exclusion periods or infection-control recommendations change.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there are changes to legislation, the EYFS Statutory Framework, UKHSA guidance, local public-health arrangements or following an infectious disease incident.

Current UKHSA guidance: [Public health exclusion periods in children and young people's settings](#)

Further information is contained within the **Little Blossom Medicines Policy**.

MEDICINES POLICY

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that some children may require medication during the nursery day. Medication may be required for a short-term illness, a long-term medical condition, an allergy or another health need.

Little Blossom Nursery School will ensure that medicines are administered safely and appropriately and in accordance with the *Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework*, the child's individual healthcare needs and any relevant medical advice.

The nursery will have clear procedures for obtaining, recording, storing and administering medicines and for keeping information about children's medical needs up to date.

Administration of Medication

At *Little Blossom Nursery School*, routine medication will only be administered by a member of **Senior Management** who has been appropriately trained and authorised to administer medication.

Before routine medication can be administered:

- The parent/carer must complete and sign the nursery's Medication Consent Form for the particular medicine.
- The form must include the child's name, name of medication, dosage, method of administration, frequency/time of administration and any relevant instructions.
- The medication must be provided in its original container, clearly labelled with the child's name and within its expiry date.
- The completed and signed medication form must be received before the medication is administered.
- Each administration of medication will be recorded electronically on the nursery's online medication-recording system, including the date, time, medication, dosage and the name of the member of Senior Management who administered it.
- Parents/carers will be informed that the medication has been administered on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.
- If medication cannot be administered for any reason, this will also be recorded and the parent/carer informed.

Emergency Medication – Exception

Emergency medication is an exception to the above routine medication procedure.

Where a child requires emergency medication to prevent harm or because of a sudden medical emergency, staff will not delay treatment while waiting for the parent/carer to complete or sign a medication consent form.

Emergency medication may be administered in accordance with the child's individual healthcare plan, emergency protocol, prescribed instructions and staff training.

Where emergency medication is administered:

- The child's immediate safety and welfare will take priority.
- Appropriately trained staff will administer the emergency medication where required.
- 999 will be contacted where the child's condition requires emergency medical assistance.
- The parent/carer will be contacted as soon as reasonably practicable.
- The emergency medication administered and the circumstances will be recorded electronically on the nursery's online medication/incident recording system.
- A full written record will be completed as soon as possible following the emergency.
- The child's healthcare plan and risk assessment will be reviewed following the incident where appropriate.

The requirement for a parent/carer to complete and sign the routine medication form must never result in emergency treatment being delayed where immediate treatment is required.

First Dose of Medication

Where a child has been prescribed or recommended a medication that they have not previously taken, parents/carers are encouraged, where reasonably practicable, to administer the first dose at home.

This allows the parent/carer to observe the child for any unexpected reaction or side effect before the child attends nursery.

However, this will not prevent Little Blossom from administering necessary medication where there is an identified medical need and the appropriate written parental permission and instructions are in place.

Where staff are concerned about a child's reaction to medication, they will follow the child's healthcare plan or medical advice and seek appropriate medical assistance where necessary.

Emergency Medication

Where a child has a known medical condition requiring emergency medication, such as an adrenaline auto-injector, inhaler, emergency medication for epilepsy or other prescribed emergency treatment, the nursery will ensure that the medication is readily accessible to authorised staff and is stored in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and the child's individual healthcare plan.

Parents/carers must provide the nursery with up-to-date information about the child's medical condition, medication and emergency procedures. Staff who are required to administer emergency medication will receive appropriate training where the administration requires medical or technical knowledge. The EYFS requires staff training where administering medicine requires medical or technical knowledge.

In an emergency, staff will not delay seeking medical assistance while waiting for a parent/carer to arrive. Where necessary, staff will contact 999 and follow the instructions of the emergency services and the child's healthcare plan.

Refusal or Inability to Administer Medication

If a member of staff is unable to administer medication safely, or if the required written permission, medication or instructions have not been provided, the nursery will contact the parent/carer and explain the situation.

Where the medication is essential to the child's health or wellbeing, the nursery will consider the child's individual healthcare needs and seek appropriate medical advice.

Recording Medication

Little Blossom Nursery School will maintain accurate records of:

- medication received into the nursery;
- the child's name;
- the name and strength of the medication;
- dosage and method of administration;
- date and time medication is to be administered;
- written parental permission;
- each occasion medication is administered;
- the name/signature of the staff member administering the medication;
- any medication that is refused or not administered and the reason; and
- any relevant reaction or concern following administration.

Parents/carers will be informed of administration on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Storage of Children's Medication

All medication will be stored safely and appropriately.

- Medication must never be left in children's bags.
- Medication must not be accessible to children.
- Refrigerated medication will be stored in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Emergency medication must be readily accessible to staff and must not be locked away in a location that would prevent timely administration.
- Medication will be checked regularly for expiry dates.
- Expired or no-longer-required medication will be returned to parents/carers for safe disposal.

Staff Medication

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that staff may require medication for short-term or long-term health conditions. Staff are expected to act responsibly and ensure that their health and any medication they take do not place children, colleagues or themselves at risk.

Staff are not required to routinely disclose every medication they take. However, staff must inform the Manager or Senior Management where a medication, medical condition or treatment may:

- affect their ability to safely supervise or care for children;
- affect their alertness, concentration, judgement, coordination or ability to respond to an emergency;
- cause side effects that may affect their ability to carry out their duties safely;
- require reasonable adjustments or additional workplace support;
- require emergency medication to be available while they are at work; or
- otherwise have an impact on their ability to safely fulfil their role.

Where management is made aware of a medication or medical condition that may affect a staff member's ability to work safely, an individual risk assessment, medication form and/or care plan may be completed. This will consider the staff member's role, the nature of the medication or condition, any potential side effects and any adjustments or precautions required.

Staff medication must be stored safely and securely and kept inaccessible to children. Medication must not be left in personal bags, coats, drawers or other locations where children may gain access to it.

Where a staff member requires medication to be readily available for an emergency medical condition, management will agree appropriate arrangements to ensure that the medication is accessible to the staff member when required but remains secure and inaccessible to children.

Where a staff member is prescribed short-term medication, including antibiotics, they should inform management where there is a potential impact on their ability to safely carry out their duties.

Taking medication, including antibiotics, does not automatically mean that a staff member must remain away from work. Management will consider the individual's health, symptoms, medication and ability to safely undertake their role. Where necessary, medical advice, a risk assessment and/or a return-to-work discussion will be undertaken.

Any information provided by staff regarding medication or health will be treated confidentially and shared only with those who need the information to protect the staff member, children or others, subject to applicable safeguarding, health and safety and legal requirements.

Staff Training

Little Blossom will ensure that staff receive appropriate training where the administration of medication requires medical or technical knowledge.

Training may include:

- understanding the child's medical condition;
 - the purpose of the medication;
 - correct dosage and method of administration;
 - safe storage;
 - possible side effects and adverse reactions;
 - emergency procedures;
 - when to seek further medical assistance; and
 - recording and reporting requirements.
- Training will be refreshed as required and in accordance with the child's medical needs, staff competence, changes to medication or relevant guidance.

First Aid including Emergency Medical Treatment

Purpose

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to providing a safe environment for all children, staff, parents, visitors and volunteers.

This policy sets out the arrangements for providing first aid, emergency medical treatment and appropriate care to children attending the setting.

The setting will ensure that staff understand their responsibilities and that appropriate first-aid equipment, trained staff and emergency procedures are available whenever children are present.

This policy applies to all employees, agency staff, students, volunteers and other adults working at the setting.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is based on the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, relevant health and safety legislation, and current government guidance on first aid and emergency treatment.

The setting will ensure that first-aid arrangements meet the requirements applicable to its type of Early Years provision.

The policy will be reviewed whenever relevant statutory guidance or requirements change.

First Aid Arrangements

The setting will ensure that:

- Appropriate first-aid equipment is readily available.
- First-aid equipment is checked regularly and replenished when necessary.
- At least one person with appropriate paediatric first-aid training is available in accordance with EYFS requirements whenever children are present.
- Staff know who the designated first aiders are.
- Staff know where first-aid equipment is located.
- First aiders maintain their training in accordance with the requirements of their qualification.
- Emergency contact details for every child are readily accessible.
- Relevant medical information and healthcare plans are available to appropriate staff.
- First-aid arrangements are considered during outings and trips.
- First-aid arrangements are reviewed following any significant incident.

Responsibilities

The Manager

The Manager is responsible for:

- Ensuring suitable first-aid arrangements are in place.
- Ensuring appropriate staff receive paediatric first-aid training.
- Ensuring first-aid equipment is available and maintained.
- Ensuring staff understand this policy.
- Ensuring accident and first-aid records are maintained.
- Ensuring parents/carers are appropriately informed.
- Reviewing serious accidents and incidents.
- Making any required notifications to Ofsted or other relevant authorities.

Designated First Aid Lead

The First Aid Lead is responsible for:

- Checking first-aid kits regularly.
- Ensuring supplies are replaced when required.
- Monitoring first-aid records.
- Supporting staff with first-aid procedures.
- Identifying any recurring accidents or injuries.
- Reporting concerns to the Manager.

All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable steps to protect children from injury.
- Reporting accidents, injuries and incidents promptly.
- Providing first aid within the limits of their training.
- Following emergency procedures.
- Recording first-aid treatment accurately.
- Informing the appropriate senior member of staff.
- Never administering treatment beyond their training or competence.

Procedure Following an Accident or Injury

When a child has an accident or injury, staff should:

Step 1 – Assess the situation

The staff member should quickly assess:

- What has happened?
- Is the child conscious and responsive?
- Is the child breathing normally?
- Is there serious bleeding?
- Is there a suspected fracture or serious injury?
- Is there any immediate danger to the child or others?

The environment should be made safe where necessary.

Step 2 – Provide first aid

A suitably trained member of staff should provide appropriate first aid.

Staff should remain calm and reassure the child.

First aid should only be provided within the staff member's level of training and competence.

Step 3 – Obtain additional assistance

Another member of staff should be called for assistance where appropriate.

If the injury appears serious, staff should not leave the child unattended.

Step 4 – Contact emergency services

999 must be called immediately where the child requires urgent medical attention.

Examples may include:

- Difficulty breathing.
- Loss of consciousness.
- Suspected serious head injury.
- Serious bleeding that cannot be controlled.
- Suspected spinal injury.
- Serious burns.
- Severe allergic reaction/anaphylaxis.
- Choking where emergency intervention is required.
- Suspected poisoning.
- Serious fracture.
- Seizure requiring emergency medical attention.
- Any other situation where staff believe the child is seriously ill or injured.

Staff should follow the instructions provided by the emergency services.

Step 5 – Contact parents/carers

Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as reasonably practicable following an accident, injury or emergency.

Where an ambulance is called, parents/carers will be contacted immediately where possible.

If a parent/carer cannot be reached, the setting will use the child's emergency contacts.

Step 6 – Record the incident

The accident or injury will be recorded as soon as possible.

The record should include:

- Child's name.
- Date and time.
- Location.
- What happened.
- How the injury occurred.
- Injury sustained.
- First aid provided.
- Name of person providing first aid.
- Any witnesses.
- Whether medical assistance was required.
- Whether an ambulance was called.
- How and when parents/carers were informed.

Any further action required.

Emergency Medical Treatment

Where a child requires emergency medical treatment, the setting will act promptly to protect the child's health and welfare.

If emergency treatment is required:

1. Call 999.
2. Provide appropriate first aid while waiting for emergency services.
3. Follow the emergency operator's instructions.
4. Send a member of staff to meet the ambulance if appropriate.
5. Take the child's emergency information and relevant medical information with them where possible.
6. Contact the parent/carer immediately.
7. Ensure the child is accompanied by an appropriate member of staff if the parent/carer has not arrived.
8. Record the incident fully.
9. Inform the Manager/Provider.
10. Consider whether Ofsted, Hertfordshire safeguarding services or another authority must be notified.

The setting will not delay necessary emergency medical assistance while waiting for a parent/carer where immediate treatment is required.

Medication and Emergency Medication

Where a child has prescribed emergency medication, such as an adrenaline auto-injector or inhaler, the setting will follow the child's healthcare plan and medication procedures.

Emergency medication will:

- Be stored safely but remain readily accessible.
- Be clearly labelled.
- Be checked regularly.
- Be within its expiry date.
- Be administered only in accordance with the setting's medication procedures and the child's healthcare plan.
- Staff responsible for administering emergency medication will receive appropriate information and training.

Allergic Reactions and Anaphylaxis

Where a child is known to have a severe allergy, the setting will ensure that relevant staff are aware of:

- The child's allergy.
- Symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- The child's emergency medication.
- The child's healthcare plan.
- The emergency procedure.

If a child develops symptoms of a severe allergic reaction, staff will follow the child's emergency healthcare plan and call 999 where appropriate.

Emergency medication should not be withheld where it has been prescribed for the child and staff have been appropriately trained to administer it.

Choking

If a child is choking, staff who have received appropriate training will provide emergency first aid.

If the obstruction cannot be cleared promptly or the child becomes unresponsive:

Call **999** immediately and follow the emergency operator's instructions.

A paediatric first aider should provide appropriate emergency care within their training.

The incident must be recorded and parents/carers informed.

Head Injuries

Any significant head injury will be assessed promptly.

Parents/carers will be informed where a child sustains a head injury in accordance with the setting's accident procedures.

The child will be monitored for signs of deterioration.

If a child displays serious or concerning symptoms, including loss of consciousness, seizure, repeated vomiting, unusual drowsiness, difficulty waking, abnormal behaviour or other significant symptoms, **999 will be called** and emergency medical advice will be followed.

Serious Bleeding

Staff will provide appropriate first aid using suitable protective equipment.

Emergency medical assistance will be sought where:

- Bleeding is severe.
- Bleeding cannot be controlled.
- The injury is serious.
- There is a suspected major blood vessel injury.
- The child becomes unwell or shows signs of shock.
- Used dressings and contaminated materials will be disposed of safely.

Burns and Scalds

Where a child sustains a burn or scald, staff will provide appropriate first aid within their training and seek medical assistance where required.

Serious burns, burns involving sensitive areas, extensive burns or burns requiring emergency assessment will be treated as medical emergencies.

The setting will call **999** where the injury is serious or emergency medical assistance is required.

Suspected Poisoning or Ingestion of Harmful Substances

If a child is suspected of swallowing, inhaling or coming into contact with a harmful substance:

- Remove the child from immediate danger where safe to do so.
- Do not induce vomiting unless instructed by a medical professional.
- Seek urgent medical advice.
- Call 999 if the child is seriously unwell or there is an immediate emergency.
- Keep the substance/container available for identification where safe.
- Inform parents/carers.
- Record the incident.

Loss of Consciousness

If a child becomes unconscious:

- Check responsiveness and breathing.
- Call 999 immediately.
- Follow the emergency operator's instructions.
- Begin appropriate resuscitation/CPR if required and within the staff member's training.
- Use an AED if available and appropriate.
- Continue emergency care until medical professionals arrive or the child recovers sufficiently.
- The incident must be reported immediately to the Manager and recorded.

First Aid During Outings

A suitable first-aid kit and any required emergency medication will be taken on outings.

The setting will ensure that:

- A suitably trained first aider accompanies the children where required.
- Emergency contact details are available.
- Children's relevant medical information is accessible.
- Staff know how to contact emergency services.
- Parents/carers can be contacted promptly.
- Appropriate risk assessments have been completed.

First Aid Equipment

First-aid equipment will be:

- Suitable for the needs of the children.
- Clearly identified.
- Easily accessible to staff.
- Stored safely away from children.
- Checked regularly.
- Replenished after use.
- Checked for expiry dates where applicable.

The setting will ensure that suitable personal protective equipment, such as disposable gloves, is available.

Infection Control

Staff providing first aid will follow appropriate infection-control procedures.

This includes:

- Washing or sanitising hands before and after providing first aid where practicable.
- Wearing disposable gloves when dealing with blood or bodily fluids.
- Avoiding unnecessary contact with bodily fluids.
- Disposing of contaminated materials safely.
- Cleaning contaminated surfaces appropriately.
- Following the setting's infection-control procedures.

Accident Records and Notification

All accidents, injuries and first-aid treatment will be recorded in accordance with the setting's procedures.

Parents/carers will be informed of accidents and injuries involving their child as appropriate.

The setting will consider whether an incident is required to be reported to Ofsted, the local authority, the Health and Safety Executive or another relevant body.

The Manager/Provider is responsible for ensuring that any legally required notifications are made within the required timescale.

Safeguarding Considerations

Any injury that raises a safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Examples may include:

- An injury with an unexplained cause.
- Repeated injuries.
- Injuries inconsistent with the explanation provided.
- An injury where abuse or neglect is suspected.
- A child disclosing that someone caused the injury.
- A pattern of concerning accidents.

The setting's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy must be followed.

Staff must not investigate or question children unnecessarily.

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Accident, injury and first-aid records will be stored securely.

Information will only be shared with people who have a legitimate reason to receive it.

Records will be retained in accordance with the setting's record-retention requirements and data protection procedures.

Staff Training

The setting will ensure that staff receive appropriate first-aid training.

Paediatric first-aid training will be provided in accordance with current EYFS requirements.

Staff will be familiarised with:

- The location of first-aid equipment.
- Emergency procedures.
- Emergency contact arrangements.
- Children's medical needs.
- Healthcare plans.
- Medication procedures.
- Accident recording procedures.
- Safeguarding procedures.

Training will be refreshed as required.

Monitoring and Review

The Manager will regularly review accident and first-aid records to identify patterns.

Where recurring accidents or injuries are identified, the setting will review:

- Risk assessments.
- Staffing arrangements.
- Supervision.
- Equipment.
- The physical environment.
- Staff training.
- Existing procedures.

Extended Activities and Off-Site Arrangements including Outings and Trips

Where *Little Blossom Nursery School* provides or manages extended activities, outings, trips or other activities away from the nursery premises, the nursery's safeguarding and child protection procedures will continue to apply.

The safety and welfare of children will remain the nursery's highest priority during all off-site activities.

Before an outing or extended activity takes place, Little Blossom Nursery School will, where reasonably practicable:

- Complete an appropriate risk assessment for the activity, location, journey and any specific needs of the children attending.
- Consider additional safeguarding risks associated with unfamiliar environments, members of the public, water, roads, transport, animals, separation from the group and other foreseeable hazards.
- Ensure that appropriate staff-to-child ratios and supervision arrangements are maintained in accordance with the EYFS requirements and the needs of the children.
- Consider the individual needs of babies, young children and children with additional needs or medical conditions.
- Ensure that staff accompanying children understand their safeguarding responsibilities and the arrangements for reporting concerns.
- Ensure that appropriate emergency contact information, medical information and emergency medication are available where required.
- Have appropriate arrangements for dealing with a child who becomes unwell, injured, separated from the group or requires emergency medical assistance.
- Ensure that children remain appropriately supervised throughout the activity and are never left with an unauthorised or unsuitable adult.

Where children are transported as part of an outing or activity, Little Blossom will ensure that appropriate transport, supervision, safeguarding and safety arrangements are in place.

Activities Provided by Other Organisations

Where another organisation, contractor or external provider provides an activity or service for Little Blossom children, the nursery will take reasonable steps to establish that the provider has appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place.

Where appropriate, this will include checking:

- safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures;
- safer recruitment arrangements;
- appropriate suitability checks for adults working directly with children;
- relevant qualifications, training and experience;
- insurance and health and safety arrangements;
- risk assessments;
- procedures for responding to safeguarding concerns and allegations; and
- arrangements for emergency situations.

Little Blossom Nursery School will not knowingly use an external provider where appropriate safeguarding arrangements cannot be established. Activities on Little Blossom Premises

Where an external organisation provides an activity on Little Blossom's premises, the nursery will ensure that children remain appropriately supervised and that the external provider understands that Little Blossom's safeguarding expectations and procedures apply while they are working with our children.

External providers will not be left in sole charge of children unless the nursery has established that the appropriate safeguarding, suitability and supervision requirements have been met.

Off-Site Venues and External Activities

When children attend an activity organised by another setting, organisation or venue, *Little Blossom Nursery School* will make reasonable enquiries to ensure that effective safeguarding and child protection arrangements are in place.

Where appropriate, information about the children attending, including relevant medical, dietary, additional-needs and emergency information, will be shared with the provider on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with data protection requirements.

The DSL will be informed of any safeguarding concern arising during an off-site activity and will ensure that the appropriate local safeguarding procedures are followed.

Review During Activities

Staff will continue to monitor safeguarding and safety risks throughout an outing or extended activity. If circumstances change or a new risk arises, staff will take immediate action to protect the children and will amend the arrangements where necessary.

If an activity cannot be carried out safely, *Little Blossom Nursery School* reserves the right to cancel, postpone or terminate the activity and return to the nursery or another safe location.

The safeguarding responsibilities of Little Blossom do not stop when children leave the nursery premises. All staff remain responsible for promoting and protecting children's welfare throughout the activity.

Outings and Trips Policy

Purpose

At *Little Blossom Nursery School* we recognise that outings and trips provide valuable opportunities for children to develop their knowledge, skills, confidence and understanding of the wider world.

Outings may include visits to local parks, libraries, farms, museums, community facilities, shops, nature areas and other suitable educational or recreational venues.

The safety, welfare and individual needs of every child will remain our highest priority during all outings.

EYFS Requirements

The setting will comply with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory requirements relating to safety on outings.

Before an outing, potential risks and hazards will be considered and appropriate measures will be identified to remove, minimise or manage those risks. Staff-to-child ratios will also be considered as part of the risk assessment.

Where transport is used, vehicles and drivers will be appropriately insured.

Planning an Outing

Before arranging an outing, the manager or designated staff member will consider:

- The purpose and educational value of the outing.
- The age, developmental stage and individual needs of the children attending.
- The suitability and accessibility of the venue.
- Staffing levels and supervision arrangements.
- Potential hazards and risks.
- Weather conditions and seasonal factors.
- Travel arrangements and transport safety.
- Children's medical needs, allergies and medication.
- Food and drink requirements.
- Toilet and handwashing facilities.
- Safeguarding arrangements.
- Emergency procedures.
- Insurance requirements.
- The availability of first aid.
- Arrangements for children with SEND or additional needs.

The setting will obtain information about the venue in advance where necessary and will ensure that staff understand the arrangements before leaving the setting.

Risk Assessment

A suitable risk assessment will be completed for outings.

The risk assessment will consider, where appropriate:

- Roads, traffic and car parks.
- Water and other environmental hazards.
- Entrances and exits.
- Crowded or unfamiliar environments.
- Toilets and changing facilities.
- Slips, trips and falls.
- Animals.
- Weather, sun exposure and extreme temperatures.
- Allergens.
- Food and drink.
- Medication and medical emergencies.
- The possibility of a child becoming separated from the group.
- Transport arrangements.
- The needs of individual children.
- Staffing and supervision.

Risks will be removed or reduced wherever reasonably practicable.

Risk assessments will be reviewed when circumstances change and following any incident or near miss.

Parental/Carer Consent

Parents/carers will be informed about outings and provided with appropriate information.

Consent will be obtained for regular and one-off outings, as appropriate to the nature of the visit.

Parents/carers will be asked to provide up-to-date emergency contact information and relevant information regarding their child's medical, dietary, accessibility and other individual needs.

Staffing and Supervision

Staffing arrangements will be determined according to the individual outing and risk assessment rather than relying solely on minimum ratios.

Children will be appropriately supervised at all times.

Staff will ensure that children remain within sight or hearing as required, and particular care will be taken in busy or unfamiliar environments. EYFS guidance specifically highlights supervision and arrangements for keeping children within sight or hearing during outings.

Staff will conduct regular headcounts, particularly:

- Before leaving the setting.
- When entering or leaving transport.
- On arrival at the venue.
- When moving between areas.
- Before leaving the venue.
- On returning to the setting.

Children will be allocated to named members of staff where appropriate.

Safeguarding

The setting's safeguarding procedures remain in place during all outings.

Staff will:

- Maintain appropriate supervision.
- Follow the setting's safeguarding policy.
- Ensure children are not left alone with unauthorised adults.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Follow the setting's mobile phone and photography policy.
- Report and record safeguarding concerns in accordance with the setting's procedures.
- Any concern about a child's welfare will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Missing Child Procedure

All staff attending an outing will be familiar with the setting's missing-child procedure before departure.

If a child is found to be missing, staff will immediately:

- Alert the person in charge.
- Confirm the child's identity and last known location.
- Ensure the remaining children are safely supervised.
- Search the immediate area where appropriate.
- Contact venue staff/security where applicable.
- Contact the police/emergency services where necessary.
- Contact the child's parents/carers as appropriate.
- Follow the setting's safeguarding and incident-reporting procedures.
- Record and review the incident.

The setting will ensure staff know how to implement missing-child procedures away from the premises.

First Aid and Medication

A suitable portable first-aid kit will be taken on outings.

At least one appropriately qualified member of staff will attend, where required, in accordance with EYFS paediatric first-aid requirements.

Children's prescribed medication and emergency medication will be taken when required, including inhalers, adrenaline auto-injectors or other essential medication.

Staff will ensure medication is accessible and stored appropriately.

Emergency contact details will be carried securely.

Food and Allergies

Any food or drink provided during an outing will take account of children's dietary requirements and allergies.

Staff will ensure that appropriate precautions are taken to prevent exposure to known allergens.

Children will have access to suitable drinking water.

Good hygiene practices, including handwashing or appropriate alternatives when away from the setting, will be maintained.

Transport

Where children are transported by vehicle:

- The vehicle will be suitable for transporting children.
- The vehicle and driver will have appropriate insurance.
- Appropriate child restraints will be used where required.
- Staff will follow relevant road and transport safety requirements.
- Children will be supervised when getting on and off vehicles.
- A headcount will be completed before departure and on arrival.
- Children will never be left unattended in a vehicle.

EYFS requirements state that vehicles transporting children and their drivers must be adequately insured.

Children with SEND and Additional Needs

The setting will make reasonable adjustments to ensure children with SEND or additional needs can participate safely and meaningfully in outings.

The risk assessment will consider:

- Accessibility.
- Mobility requirements.
- Communication needs.
- Sensory needs.
- Medical needs.
- Additional staffing or supervision.
- Appropriate facilities.
- Emergency arrangements.

The setting will work with parents/carers and relevant professionals where necessary.

Weather and Environmental Conditions

Staff will consider weather conditions before and during an outing.

Appropriate measures will be taken regarding:

- Sun protection.
- Cold weather.
- Rain.
- Extreme temperatures.
- Suitable clothing.
- Hydration.
- Shelter and rest periods.

An outing may be postponed or cancelled where conditions present an unacceptable risk to children or staff.

Essential Equipment

Depending on the outing, staff may take:

- Portable first-aid kit.
- Emergency contact information.
- Setting telephone/mobile phone.
- Children's medication.
- Spare clothing.
- Nappies and changing supplies.
- Food and drinking water.
- Sun protection.
- Relevant medical information.
- Attendance/registration information.
- Appropriate identification for children and staff.

Personal information will be handled securely and in accordance with the setting's data protection procedures.

Photography and Mobile Phones

Photographs or videos of children will only be taken in accordance with the setting's photography, mobile phone and data protection policies. Staff will not use personal mobile phones to photograph children unless specifically authorised under the setting's procedures.

Emergencies and Incidents

Staff will have access to emergency contact information and know how to contact emergency services.

Any accident, injury, illness, safeguarding concern or significant incident will be dealt with in accordance with the setting's policies.

Parents/carers will be informed of incidents involving their child as appropriate.

Relevant incidents will be recorded and reviewed to identify whether changes are needed to future outings.

Insurance

The setting will maintain appropriate insurance cover for outings and will check whether any particular activity, venue or form of transport has additional insurance requirements or restrictions.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff attending outings are responsible for:

- Following the risk assessment.
- Maintaining effective supervision.
- Following safeguarding procedures.
- Carrying out regular headcounts.
- Meeting children's individual needs.
- Following emergency procedures.
- Reporting concerns or incidents immediately.
- Ensuring children remain safe and appropriately supervised.
- The manager or designated outing leader is responsible for ensuring that the outing has been appropriately planned and that staff understand their responsibilities.

Lost or Missing Child Policy and Procedure

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that the safety and welfare of children is paramount. Every reasonable measure will be taken to ensure that children remain safely supervised and accounted for at all times.

A missing child is treated as a safeguarding incident. Staff must act immediately and must not assume that a child has simply wandered away or will return.

This procedure applies whether a child goes missing from the nursery premises, during an outing, on a walk or from any other location being used by *Little Blossom*.

Preventative Measures

Little Blossom Nursery School will take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of a child becoming lost or missing, including:

- Maintaining appropriate staff-to-child ratios and effective supervision.
- Carrying out appropriate risk assessments for outings and unfamiliar environments.
- Completing headcounts and/or roll calls at appropriate points throughout an outing.
- Taking particular care when moving between locations, entering or leaving buildings, using toilets and transitioning between activities.
- Avoiding, where reasonably practicable, locations where children may be exposed to an unnecessary or significant risk of becoming separated from the group.
- Ensuring staff know which children they are responsible for supervising.
- Ensuring emergency contact details and relevant medical information are available when children are away from the nursery.
- Ensuring children are appropriately supervised near roads, car parks, water and other hazards.
- Using suitable identification arrangements for outings where appropriate, while ensuring children's personal information is not unnecessarily exposed.
- Reminding children, in an age-appropriate way, about staying with their group and seeking help from a trusted adult if they become separated.

If a Child Goes Missing

If a child cannot be located, staff must raise the alarm immediately.

The member of staff who becomes aware that the child is missing will:

1. Immediately inform the Manager, DSL or senior member of staff present.
2. Establish when and where the child was last seen and obtain a clear description of the child and what they were wearing.
3. Check the immediate area and any likely locations where the child may have gone, including toilets, play areas, entrances, exits and other accessible areas.
4. Ensure that the remaining children are kept safe and appropriately supervised. Staff must not leave the other children unsupervised while searching.
5. Organise staff to search appropriate areas while maintaining supervision of the remaining children.
6. Alert security staff, venue management or other responsible personnel immediately where the incident occurs at an external venue.
7. Request that appropriate exits are monitored or secured where this can be done safely and without placing anyone at risk.
8. Contact the police by calling 999 without delay where the child cannot be located immediately or there is any reason to believe the child may be at risk of harm.
9. Provide the police with the child's name, age, description, clothing, photograph where available, medical information, known vulnerabilities, last known location and any other relevant information.
10. Contact the child's parent/carer as soon as reasonably practicable and keep them informed of the situation.
11. Notify the DSL and ensure that the incident is recorded and managed as a safeguarding matter.

If the Child Is Found

When the child is located:

- Staff will ensure that the child is safe and assess whether they require medical attention.
- The child will be reassured and treated calmly and sensitively.
- Staff will establish, as far as is appropriate for the child's age and understanding, where the child has been and whether anything has happened to them.
- Any concern that the child may have been harmed, approached by an unknown person or otherwise placed at risk will be reported immediately to the DSL and dealt with under the nursery's safeguarding procedures.
- Parents/carers will be informed.
- Medical assistance will be obtained where necessary.
- The police and/or other relevant agencies will be updated where they have been involved.

Safeguarding Following a Missing Child Incident

A missing child incident will be treated as a serious safeguarding incident, even where the child is found quickly and appears unharmed.

The DSL/Manager will:

- complete a full incident and safeguarding record;
- record the time the child was last seen, actions taken, who was contacted and the outcome;
- notify relevant agencies where required;
- consider whether an Ofsted notification is required;
- review the relevant risk assessment and supervision arrangements;
- identify any lessons learned;
- implement additional measures where necessary to prevent recurrence; and
- ensure that staff involved are appropriately supported following the incident.

Where the incident indicates a potential safeguarding concern, the nursery will follow the appropriate *Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures* and make referrals where necessary.

Outings and Busy Public Places

When attending busy public places, staff will take additional precautions to maintain children's safety.

Where appropriate, the nursery may use identification wristbands or other suitable identification arrangements containing the nursery's contact details. Personal information about children will be kept to the minimum necessary.

Staff will carry the nursery emergency contact information and relevant information about the children attending the outing. Children will remain within the agreed supervision arrangements and staff will carry out regular headcounts.

Important

Staff must never delay contacting the police because they believe the child may return or because they wish to complete their own search first. If a child is missing and cannot be immediately located, or there is any concern that the child may be at risk of harm, 999 must be contacted immediately.

This procedure should be read alongside Little Blossom's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Outings and Trips Policy, Risk Assessment Policy, Emergency Procedures and Missing Child/Uncollected Child procedures.

EMERGENCY PLAN AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of all children, staff, visitors and other persons on the premises. All staff must be familiar with the nursery's emergency procedures, fire exits, evacuation routes, assembly point and their individual responsibilities.

General Emergency Procedure

- In an emergency, staff will remain calm and act promptly to protect the children.
- Staff will assess the situation and contact the emergency services where required.
- 999 will be called immediately where there is an immediate risk to life, serious injury or a fire.
- Children will be removed from immediate danger using the safest available route.
- Staff will maintain appropriate supervision of all children throughout the emergency.
- Children who require additional assistance, including babies and children with additional needs, will be supported in accordance with the nursery's risk assessments and emergency procedures.
- The current register will be taken during an evacuation where it is safe and practicable to do so.
- Staff will account for all children, staff, visitors, students and volunteers.
- Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as reasonably practicable where the emergency affects their child or requires the nursery to close.
- If a child requires hospital treatment, a member of staff will accompany the child until the parent/carer arrives, unless emergency services make alternative arrangements.
- No person will re-enter the building until the Fire and Rescue Service or other authorised person confirms that it is safe.

IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE

If a fire is discovered or the fire alarm sounds, staff will immediately begin the evacuation procedure.

Staff must:

- raise the alarm if it has not already sounded;
- call 999;
- evacuate the children using the nearest safe exit;
- never use an exit that is affected by fire or smoke;
- not stop to collect personal belongings;
- take the register and nursery mobile phone where this can be done safely;
- proceed to the designated assembly point;
- account for every child and adult;
- report any missing child or person immediately to the Fire and Rescue Service; and
- never re-enter the building until authorised to do so.

BABY ROOM – SAFE EVACUATION OF BABIES

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that babies cannot evacuate independently and therefore require specific arrangements to ensure they can be moved safely and quickly during an emergency.

Evacuation of Babies

If the fire alarm sounds or a fire is discovered:

- Staff will immediately begin evacuating the babies.
- Babies will be carried safely by staff members who are physically able to do so.
- Staff will only carry a number of babies that they can safely manage.
- Sufficient staff will be available to support the safe evacuation of all babies.
- Staff will have clearly allocated responsibilities so that there is no confusion during an emergency.
- Staff will take the register and emergency information where this can be done safely and without delaying the evacuation.
- Staff will use the nearest safe evacuation route.
- If the normal Baby Room fire exit is blocked or unsafe, staff will use the additional door and exit the Hub by the front door.
- Staff will never attempt to pass through fire or smoke to reach a particular exit.
- Staff will remain calm and reassure the babies throughout the evacuation.
- Once outside, staff will take the babies to the adjacent car park and check that all babies and staff are accounted for.
- Staff will remain in the adjacent car park and wait for assistance until it has been deemed safe to return to the building.
- Emergency contacts and the nursery phone will be taken where this can be done safely and without delaying evacuation.

Sleeping babies

If babies are sleeping when the fire alarm sounds, staff will not delay the evacuation unnecessarily.

Staff will safely move the babies into the designated evacuation equipment and evacuate them using the safest available route.

Checking the Baby Room

A member of staff will check the Baby Room, including accessible sleeping areas and other areas where a baby may be present, only where it is safe to do so and without delaying evacuation. Staff must never put themselves at risk or re-enter an area affected by fire or smoke.

BABY ROOM EVACUATION STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Manager will ensure that all Baby Room staff are aware of their individual responsibilities during an emergency evacuation.

The evacuation plan will identify:

- who is responsible for collecting and safely carrying the babies from the Baby Room;
- who assists staff with safely carrying babies and ensuring that no staff member carries more babies than they can safely manage;
- who takes the register and emergency information, where this can be done safely without delaying evacuation;
- who checks the Baby Room and other accessible areas, where it is safe to do so;
- who contacts the emergency services if required;
- who supervises the babies once outside;
- who is responsible for ensuring that every baby is accounted for at the adjacent car park;
- who ensures that staff and babies remain safely away from the building until it is confirmed that it is safe to return; and
- who is responsible for taking the nursery phone and emergency contacts, where it is safe and practicable to do so.

These arrangements will be reviewed whenever staffing arrangements, the number of babies attending, the premises or evacuation arrangements change.

NURSERY ROOM – EVACUATION

Main evacuation route

If the main fire exit/main door from the hall is safe to use:

- Staff will gather the children calmly.
- Children will leave the hall by the front door.
- Staff and children will exit through the front of the Hub.
- Staff and children will cross the road and proceed to the designated safe location.
- Staff and children will wait for assistance until it has been deemed safe to return to the building.
- Alternative evacuation route
- If the main door/fire exit from the hall is blocked, affected by fire or otherwise unsafe:
- Staff will gather the children calmly.
- Staff will use the garden doors as the alternative evacuation route.
- Staff and children will leave through the garden doors.
- Staff and children will head around the back of the building and through the back gate.
- Staff and children will continue around the back of the building using the safest available route.
- Staff must never use an exit that is affected by smoke, fire or another immediate hazard.
- Staff and children will proceed to a safe location and remain there until it has been deemed safe to return to the building.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THE ASSEMBLY POINT?

The assembly point is the designated safe location where children, staff and visitors go after leaving the building during an emergency.

For Little Blossom Nursery School, the designated assembly point is:

📍 **Adjacent Car Park**

The assembly point is used so that:

- everyone can move away from the building and immediate danger;
- staff can carry out the register and account for every child;
- the Fire and Rescue Service can access the building;
- children can remain together and supervised; and
- staff can identify immediately whether anyone is missing.

The assembly point must be away from the building and in a location that does not obstruct emergency vehicles or place children in further danger.

Important

If the Car Park is unsafe because of the fire, smoke, falling debris, emergency vehicles, another hazard or any other reason, staff must not use it. If the Car Park is unavailable, the qualified fire marshal will use their professional judgement to determine the appropriate alternative location.

ACCOUNTING FOR CHILDREN

The Nursery Manager or Deputy Manager will be responsible for coordinating the register and ensuring that all children are accounted for.

Once at the assembly point:

- The current register will be checked.
- Each child will be physically accounted for.
- Staff will confirm the number of children present.
- Staff, visitors, students and volunteers will also be accounted for.
- Any missing child or person will be reported to the Fire and Rescue Service immediately.
- Staff will never return to the building to search for a missing child.

Staff must not assume that another member of staff has accounted for a child.

NURSERY MOBILE PHONE AND EMERGENCY CONTACTS

The nursery mobile phone will be taken during an evacuation where it is safe and practicable to do so.

It may be used to:

- contact 999;
- contact parents/carers;
- contact emergency contacts;
- communicate with management; and
- communicate with emergency services.
- Parents' and carers' emergency contact details will be maintained securely and kept up to date.

FIRE DRILLS

Little Blossom Nursery School will carry out regular fire evacuation drills.

Fire drills will consider:

- the safe evacuation of babies;
- the evacuation of children requiring additional assistance;
- the use of evacuation equipment;
- staffing responsibilities;
- the main and alternative evacuation routes;
- the assembly point;
- checking the register; and
- accounting for all children and adults.

Where appropriate, baby evacuation equipment will be included in drills so staff remain familiar with its safe use.

All fire drills will be recorded and any problems identified will be addressed promptly.

LOCKDOWN POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that, in certain emergency situations, it may be safer to remain inside the building rather than evacuate.

A lockdown may be required because of an immediate or potential threat to the safety of children, staff or visitors. This could include, for example, a dangerous individual in the vicinity, a serious security incident, a police incident, an environmental hazard or another situation where remaining inside the building is considered safer than leaving.

The decision to initiate a lockdown will be made by the Manager, Deputy Manager or another designated senior member of staff, where circumstances allow. However, staff should use their professional judgement and take immediate action to protect children where there is an imminent threat.

The safety and welfare of the children will always be the priority.

MESSAGE TO PARENTS/CARERS

If a lockdown is necessary, parents/carers may be sent the following message where it is safe and appropriate to do so:

Little Blossom Nursery School is currently operating its emergency lockdown procedure following an incident in the local area. The children and staff are safe and we are following the advice and instructions of the emergency services. Please do not attempt to attend the nursery or collect your child until we have been advised that it is safe to do so. We will provide further information as soon as we are able. Please keep telephone lines clear and only contact the nursery if it is absolutely necessary.

Information will only be shared where doing so does not compromise the safety of the children, staff or emergency response.

WHEN LOCKDOWN IS INITIATED

When the lockdown procedure is activated, staff will:

- Remain calm and reassure the children.
- Bring children inside or keep them inside wherever it is safe to do so.
- Keep children and staff in their designated safe area or move them to the safest available area.
- Secure doors and windows where possible.
- Close blinds or curtains where this can be done safely.
- Move children and staff away from windows and doors.
- Keep children quiet and calm as far as reasonably practicable.
- Silence mobile phones and other devices, unless they are required for emergency communication.
- Take the nursery register where it is safe and practicable to do so.
- Ensure babies and children requiring additional assistance remain supervised and supported.
- Follow instructions given by the police or other emergency services.
- Remain in lockdown until the all-clear has been given by an authorised person or emergency services, or it becomes necessary to move because remaining in the area is no longer safe.

Staff must not put themselves or children at additional risk in order to complete non-essential actions.

BABY ROOM DURING LOCKDOWN

Particular consideration will be given to babies because they may be unable to understand or respond to emergency instructions independently.

During lockdown:

- Babies will remain with their allocated staff wherever possible.
- Staff will move babies to the safest available secure area identified within the nursery's lockdown risk assessment.
- Babies will be kept away from windows and external doors.
- Staff will ensure babies remain supervised at all times.
- Staff will take the baby register where safe and practicable.
- Essential baby-care items may be taken where this can be achieved without compromising safety.
- Staff will maintain a calm environment and avoid causing unnecessary distress.
- If a baby requires urgent medical attention, staff will follow emergency medical procedures and contact emergency services where necessary.

The nursery will ensure that its lockdown risk assessment specifically considers how babies, sleeping children and children requiring additional support will be safely moved and supervised during a lockdown.

CHILDREN'S SAFETY DURING LOCKDOWN

Staff will use age-appropriate reassurance.

Young children should not be given frightening or detailed explanations about the nature of the threat.

Staff may use simple language such as:

"We are having a quiet time inside until it is safe to go outside."

Children will be reassured that the adults are there to keep them safe.

Lockdown procedures will be practised in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner. The nursery will avoid creating unnecessary fear or anxiety.

DOORS AND WINDOWS

Once lockdown has been initiated:

- External doors will be secured where possible.
- Windows will be closed and secured where practicable.
- Staff will not open doors to unknown individuals.
- Staff should not respond to routine doorbells or requests to enter while lockdown is in place.
- Staff will follow the instructions of emergency services regarding access to the building.
- Staff should not assume that someone at the door is authorised to enter simply because they claim to be an emergency responder.

Where possible, staff will verify emergency-service personnel before opening a secured area, while ensuring that this does not delay or obstruct emergency assistance.

IF THE FIRE ALARM SOUNDS DURING LOCKDOWN

The fire alarm **must not** automatically be ignored during lockdown.

Staff must assess the situation and follow the safest available course of action.

If there is evidence of fire, smoke or an immediate fire-related danger in the area occupied by the children, staff must evacuate using the safest available route in accordance with the Fire Evacuation Procedure.

If there is no evidence of fire and the alarm is believed to be connected with the security incident, staff should follow the instructions of the emergency services where available.

The safety of the children must remain the priority.

IF EVACUATION BECOMES NECESSARY

A lockdown does not mean that children must remain in one location regardless of the circumstances.

If remaining in the building becomes more dangerous than leaving, staff will evacuate or move the children to another safe location.

Staff will:

- assess the safest available route;
- take the children away from the immediate danger;
- take the register where safe to do so;
- account for all children and staff;
- follow emergency-service instructions; and
- move to the designated safe location or alternative assembly point where appropriate.

For a serious weapons or terrorist-related incident, staff should be familiar with the **RUN, HIDE, TELL** principles. ProtectUK guidance advises that, for adults, if there is a safe route, people should escape; if escape is not possible, they should hide, secure/barricade the area where possible, move away from doors and call 999 when safe.

For nursery staff, these principles must always be applied alongside their responsibility to protect babies and young children.

COMMUNICATION DURING LOCKDOWN

Staff should avoid unnecessary telephone calls.

The nursery will:

- keep telephone lines available for emergency communications;
- contact emergency services where required;
- provide parents/carers with information when it is safe and appropriate;
- use the nursery's established communication system where possible;
- avoid sharing unverified information; and
- follow instructions from the police or other emergency services regarding communication.

Parents/carers should not attend the nursery to collect their children during lockdown unless specifically instructed to do so by the nursery or emergency services.

FOLLOWING THE ALL-CLEAR

The lockdown will only end when:

- the police or emergency services provide an all-clear; or
- the Manager or designated senior member of staff determines, based on reliable information, that the threat has ended and it is safe to do so.

Following the all-clear:

- Staff will reassure the children.
- The register will be checked.
- Children and staff will remain supervised.
- The Manager will liaise with emergency services where required.
- Parents/carers will be informed when appropriate.
- Children will only be released in accordance with the nursery's normal collection procedures unless emergency services require alternative arrangements.
- Any injuries or concerns will be dealt with immediately.
- The incident will be recorded.
- Staff and children who may have been distressed will be offered appropriate support.
- The lockdown procedure and risk assessment will be reviewed following the incident.

PARENTS/CARERS DURING A LOCKDOWN

Parents/carers may understandably become extremely concerned and may attempt to attend the nursery.

Parents/carers will be informed that:

- they must not attempt to enter the nursery;
- they must not attempt to remove their child during lockdown;
- the nursery will follow emergency-service advice;
- collecting children during an ongoing incident could place the parent/carer, their child and others at greater risk; and

- the nursery will provide information as soon as it is safe to do so.

Parents/carers should wait for official instructions from the nursery or emergency services.

TRAINING AND LOCKDOWN DRILLS

All staff will receive information about the nursery's lockdown arrangements as part of their induction and safeguarding/emergency training.

Lockdown arrangements will be practised periodically and reviewed regularly, taking account of:

- the age of the children;
- the presence of babies;
- children with additional needs;
- the nursery's building and layout;
- staffing arrangements;
- changes to the premises;
- advice from the police or local safeguarding/security partners; and
- learning from any incidents or exercises.

Lockdown practices will be conducted sensitively and in an age-appropriate manner. The nursery will avoid unnecessary distress to babies and young children.

The nursery will maintain a record of lockdown exercises and review any issues identified.

REVIEW OF LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

The Manager will review this policy:

- at least annually;
- following a real lockdown or emergency;
- following a lockdown exercise where improvements are identified;
- following significant changes to the premises or staffing;
- following advice from the police or relevant authorities; and
- whenever new legislation or statutory guidance requires an amendment.

For an immediate threat, staff should call 999. ProtectUK also confirms that 999 should be used in an emergency and 101 for non-emergency police contact.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Policy Statement

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to providing an inclusive, welcoming and respectful environment in which every child is valued, respected and supported as an individual.

We believe that every child has the right to access high-quality early education and care, to participate fully in nursery life and to be protected from discrimination, harassment, victimisation and unfair treatment.

We recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework and other relevant legislation and guidance.

The EYFS requires providers to promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

Little Blossom Nursery School will not discriminate against children, parents/carers, staff, students, volunteers or visitors on the basis of any protected characteristic.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

Some protected characteristics have specific legal application depending on the context. Our nursery will nevertheless promote respect, dignity and inclusion for all children and families.

Aims

Little Blossom Nursery School aims to:

- ensure every child is treated fairly, with dignity and respect;
- provide equality of opportunity for all children;
- promote an inclusive environment where every child feels they belong;
- prevent and challenge discrimination, stereotyping, prejudice and harassment;
- recognise and value children's different backgrounds, cultures, languages, religions and family circumstances;
- support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND);
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled children where required;
- ensure that children's individual needs are identified and appropriately supported;
- provide resources, books, toys and activities that positively reflect the diversity of the children and families within our community;
- ensure that all children have equal opportunities to participate in activities and experiences;
- work in partnership with parents/carers and relevant professionals;
- challenge discriminatory behaviour or language appropriately;
- ensure staff understand their responsibilities in promoting equality and inclusion; and
- regularly review our practice to identify and address barriers to inclusion.

Equality and Inclusion in Practice

We will:

- recognise every child as a unique individual;
- take account of each child's interests, abilities, development, communication needs and circumstances;
- provide opportunities for all children to participate in the full range of nursery activities;
- avoid making assumptions about children or families based on their background or circumstances;
- ensure that activities and resources do not reinforce gender, racial, cultural or other stereotypes;
- encourage children to make choices about their play and learning;
- provide additional support where a child requires it;
- adapt activities, routines, resources and the environment where reasonably practicable to enable children to participate;
- celebrate similarities and differences between people;
- respect children's home languages and support children who are learning English as an additional language;
- work sensitively with families from different cultural, religious and family backgrounds; and
- ensure that no child is excluded from an activity because of a disability or additional need without careful consideration of reasonable adjustments and alternative ways of enabling participation.

The nursery recognises that inclusion means removing barriers, rather than expecting every child to participate in exactly the same way.

SEND and Disability

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to ensuring that children with special educational needs and disabilities are included, supported and able to participate fully in nursery life.

We will:

- identify children's additional needs as early as possible;
- work closely with parents/carers;
- work with the nursery's SENCO and relevant professionals where appropriate;
- follow the SEND Code of Practice and relevant local authority procedures;
- make reasonable adjustments where required;
- adapt the environment, resources, activities and communication approaches where appropriate;
- consider individual children's needs when planning activities, outings and routines;
- ensure staff receive appropriate information and training;

- monitor children's progress and wellbeing; and
- ensure that children with SEND are not disadvantaged because of their additional needs.

The Government's 2026 inclusive early years guidance emphasises that early years settings should develop inclusive practice across the whole setting and reduce barriers for children with SEND.

Race, Culture, Religion and Belief

Little Blossom values the different racial, cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds of the children and families within our community.

We will:

- provide positive representations of different cultures and communities;
- use books, toys, displays, music and activities that reflect diversity;
- respect children's and families' cultural and religious practices where reasonably practicable;
- challenge racist language, behaviour and stereotyping;
- never tolerate racial discrimination;
- support children who use English as an additional language; and
- work with parents/carers to understand and respect relevant cultural needs.

We will not make assumptions about a child's culture, religion or family based on their appearance, name, language or background.

Gender and Stereotyping

Little Blossom will not restrict children's opportunities because of their sex or because an activity is traditionally associated with boys or girls.

Children will be encouraged to explore:

- all areas of learning;
- all types of play;
- different roles and occupations;
- creative activities;
- physical activities; and
- toys and resources according to their interests.

Staff will avoid language or behaviour that reinforces unnecessary gender stereotypes.

Family Circumstances

We recognise that families have different structures and circumstances.

We will respect and value children who live with:

- one parent;
- two parents;
- grandparents;
- foster carers;
- adoptive parents;
- same-sex parents;
- blended families; or
- other carers or family arrangements.

We will avoid making assumptions about children's family circumstances and will use inclusive language.

Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

Little Blossom will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

Discriminatory behaviour may include:

- racist or discriminatory language;
- negative comments about disability;
- religious intolerance;
- homophobic or transphobic language;
- gender-based stereotyping;
- excluding another child because of their background or characteristics;
- mocking a child's disability, appearance, language or culture; or
- treating a child unfairly because of their family circumstances.

All concerns will be taken seriously.

Where discriminatory behaviour occurs, staff will:

1. intervene appropriately;
2. ensure the child who has been affected is supported;
3. challenge inappropriate language or behaviour;
4. report the concern to the Manager/SENCO/DSL where appropriate;
5. record significant incidents;
6. work with parents/carers where appropriate; and
7. review whether further support or action is required.

Where discriminatory behaviour may also represent a safeguarding concern, the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

Positive Images and Resources

We will make every reasonable effort to ensure that the nursery's:

- books;
- toys;
- dolls;
- puzzles;
- displays;
- posters;
- music;
- role-play resources; and
- learning materials

reflect the diverse backgrounds, abilities, cultures, religions and family circumstances of the children attending the nursery and the wider community.

We will regularly review resources to identify and remove inappropriate or stereotypical representations.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to promote equality and inclusion.

Staff must:

- treat every child and family with dignity and respect;
- challenge discriminatory language and behaviour;
- avoid stereotyping;
- recognise and respond to individual children's needs;
- follow reasonable adjustments identified for children;
- report concerns about discrimination;
- maintain professional and respectful communication;
- ensure that their own behaviour provides a positive example to children; and
- follow Little Blossom's safeguarding, SEND, behaviour and complaints procedures where relevant.

Staff must never deliberately discriminate against a child, parent/carer, colleague or other person.

Parents and Carers

Little Blossom welcomes parents and carers as partners in promoting equality and inclusion.

Parents/carers are encouraged to:

- share information about their child's individual needs;
- tell us about relevant cultural, religious or communication needs;
- discuss reasonable adjustments that may support their child;
- raise concerns if they believe their child has experienced discrimination; and
- work with the nursery to support their child's inclusion.

We will listen to concerns and respond fairly and appropriately.

Monitoring and Review

The Manager and management team will monitor equality and inclusion within the nursery.

We will consider:

- whether all children are participating fully;
- whether any child is experiencing barriers to participation;
- whether reasonable adjustments are effective;
- whether resources reflect diversity;
- whether discriminatory incidents have occurred;
- whether staff require further training; and
- whether policies or practices need to change.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner if there are changes to legislation, EYFS requirements, local guidance or nursery practice.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy should be read alongside:

- Equality Act 2010
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Act 1989
- Little Blossom Nursery School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Little Blossom Nursery School's SEND Policy
- Little Blossom Nursery School's Behaviour Policy
- Little Blossom Nursery School's Complaints Policy

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Policy Statement

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

The safety and welfare of every child is our highest priority. We are committed to providing a safe, secure, inclusive and nurturing environment in which children are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination and other forms of harm.

All staff, managers, volunteers, students, agency workers and other adults working with or having contact with children have a responsibility to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns.

Little Blossom Nursery School will act promptly whenever there is a concern that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering, harm. Concerns will be reported and managed in accordance with Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) procedures and current statutory guidance.

We recognise that abuse and neglect can take different forms, including:

- physical abuse;
- emotional or psychological abuse;
- sexual abuse;
- neglect;
- domestic abuse;
- child sexual exploitation;
- criminal exploitation;
- online abuse and exploitation;
- coercive or controlling behaviour;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- abuse linked to faith or belief;
- honour-based abuse;
- female genital mutilation (FGM);
- trafficking and modern slavery; and
- other forms of exploitation or harm.

Children may experience more than one type of harm at the same time. We recognise that safeguarding concerns may also arise from situations outside the nursery.

Our safeguarding practice will be child-centred, inclusive and anti-discriminatory. We will listen to children, take their views seriously and ensure that their individual needs, communication methods, age, development and circumstances are considered.

This policy is implemented alongside the EYFS Statutory Framework, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures and other relevant legislation and statutory guidance. Working Together 2026 applies in its entirety to early education and childcare settings.

SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

Little Blossom Nursery School keeps its safeguarding knowledge and procedures up to date through appropriate training, professional development, current statutory guidance and information provided by Hertfordshire safeguarding partners.

The management team will ensure that staff are aware of current safeguarding procedures and know how and to whom concerns must be reported.

The safeguarding policy and procedures will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where necessary following:

- changes to legislation or statutory guidance;
- changes to local safeguarding procedures;
- safeguarding incidents;
- serious concerns or learning from practice;
- changes to the nursery's arrangements; or
- information from safeguarding partners or Ofsted.

KEY STATUTORY GUIDANCE

Little Blossom Nursery School will have regard to, and where applicable comply with, current versions of relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Children Act 1989;
- Children Act 2004;
- Childcare Act 2006;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Prevent duty guidance;
- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners and the new information
- relevant guidance concerning online safety and exploitation;
- relevant Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures; and
- other legislation and statutory guidance relevant to safeguarding children.

LOCAL SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES – HERTFORDSHIRE

Little Blossom Nursery School follows the procedures of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and Hertfordshire County Council. The DSL will ensure that staff know how to raise a safeguarding concern and where to obtain advice.

Where there is an immediate risk of harm to a child, staff will contact the emergency services by calling 999.

For urgent safeguarding concerns requiring children's social care support in Hertfordshire, the current professional safeguarding arrangements provide 0300 123 4043 for urgent out-of-hours safeguarding support. Professionals can also make safeguarding referrals through Hertfordshire County Council's current referral process.

[Hertfordshire professional safeguarding referral information](#)

The nursery will ensure that current contact details and referral procedures are readily accessible to staff and are checked regularly.

RECOGNISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Staff must remain alert to signs that a child may be experiencing abuse, neglect or another safeguarding concern.

Concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- significant or unexplained changes in behaviour;
- changes in a child's emotional wellbeing;
- unexplained injuries, bruising or marks;
- repeated injuries;
- concerning comments or disclosures;
- sexualised behaviour or language that is inappropriate for the child's age or development;
- signs of neglect;
- changes in eating, sleeping or toileting;
- a child appearing fearful of a particular person or situation;
- persistent poor hygiene or unmet basic needs;
- concerns relating to domestic abuse;
- concerns about exploitation or trafficking;
- online safety concerns;
- concerning interactions between children;
- harmful sexual behaviour; or
- any other information that causes a member of staff to be concerned about a child's welfare.

Staff must understand that they do not need to be certain that abuse has occurred before reporting a concern.

A concern must be reported promptly to the DSL or DDSL.

RECORDING AND REPORTING CONCERNS

All safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSL or DDSL without delay.

The DSL will consider the information and determine what action is required in accordance with Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures. Where a referral to children's social care, the police or another agency is required, this will be made without unnecessary delay.

Staff must not investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

Safeguarding records will be:

- factual and objective;
- dated and timed;
- recorded as soon as reasonably practicable;
- clear about what was observed, heard or disclosed;
- recorded using the child's own words where appropriate;
- kept securely and confidentially; and
- shared only where there is a lawful safeguarding reason to do so.

Records should distinguish clearly between fact, observation, information provided by others and professional opinion.

Please see the **Little Blossom Child Protection Record of Concern form to be completed.**

RESPONDING TO A CHILD WHO DISCLOSES ABUSE

If a child tells a member of staff that they or another child is being harmed, staff will:

- remain calm and listen carefully;
- take the child seriously;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling someone;
- allow the child to speak at their own pace;
- avoid leading questions;
- avoid investigating the allegation;
- avoid asking the child to repeat their account unnecessarily;
- explain, in an age-appropriate way, that the information may need to be shared with people who can help keep them safe;
- record the child's words as accurately as possible;
- record the date, time, location and people present;
- report the concern to the DSL/DDSL immediately; and
- take immediate action if the child is considered to be at immediate risk.

Staff must never promise a child that they will keep a disclosure secret.

WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises the importance of working in partnership with parents and carers.

Where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed of safeguarding concerns and actions taken.

However, parents/carers will not automatically be informed before a safeguarding referral is made.

Where informing a parent/carer could:

- place the child at greater risk;
- compromise a police investigation;
- compromise a children's social care assessment; or
- otherwise prejudice the child's safety,

the DSL will seek appropriate safeguarding advice and may make a referral without informing the parent/carer beforehand.

This decision will be recorded.

INFORMATION SHARING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that effective safeguarding depends on appropriate information sharing.

Safeguarding information will be shared lawfully and proportionately with those who need the information to protect or support a child. Confidentiality must not prevent staff from sharing information when doing so is necessary to safeguard a child.

The setting will follow current statutory information-sharing requirements and Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures.

DBS AND SAFER WORKING

Little Blossom Nursery School will follow safer recruitment procedures and ensure that appropriate suitability and background checks are completed before staff and other relevant adults work with children.

Children will only be left in the care of adults who are permitted and suitable to work with children in accordance with the EYFS, safer recruitment requirements and the nursery's safeguarding procedures. Any emergency arrangements will be managed in accordance with the applicable statutory requirements and risk assessed by management.

A DBS check is only one part of safer recruitment and does not replace appropriate references, suitability checks, induction, supervision and ongoing safeguarding vigilance.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF OR OTHER ADULTS

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that safeguarding concerns may arise about a member of staff, volunteer, student, agency worker, manager, DSL, contractor or any other adult working with or having contact with children.

Any allegation or concern that an adult may have:

- harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm,

will be taken seriously and acted upon immediately.

The concern must be reported through the appropriate safeguarding and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) procedures.

The person who is the subject of the allegation must not investigate the concern themselves.

Where an allegation concerns the Manager or DSL, alternative reporting arrangements will be used and advice will be sought from the appropriate safeguarding professionals.

The nursery will comply with all applicable Ofsted notification requirements.

OFSTED NOTIFICATION

Little Blossom Nursery School will notify Ofsted of safeguarding allegations, incidents and other notifiable events where required by the EYFS and Ofsted's current notification requirements. Notifications will be made within the timescale specified by the applicable statutory requirements.

USE OF MOBILE PHONES, CAMERAS AND RECORDING DEVICES

The use of personal mobile phones, cameras or other recording devices by parents, visitors, volunteers, students, agency workers or staff is restricted in areas where children are present.

Parents and visitors must not take photographs, videos or audio recordings of children unless this has been specifically authorised by the nursery in accordance with its policies.

Staff must not use personal devices to photograph, video or record children.

Little Blossom Nursery School may use nursery-owned devices for photographs, videos or recordings for legitimate nursery purposes, where this is permitted by the nursery's policies and appropriate parental permissions and data-protection arrangements are in place.

All images and recordings will be stored, accessed, used and deleted in accordance with the nursery's Data Protection, Privacy and Mobile Phone policies.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND LEGAL CONTACT POLICY

Policy Statement

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises the importance of understanding who has parental responsibility for each child, who has legal contact with the child and who is authorised to collect the child from the nursery.

In accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework, *Little Blossom* will obtain and maintain accurate information about:

- the child's parents and/or carers;
- anyone else who has parental responsibility for the child;
- who the child normally lives with;
- emergency contacts; and
- any relevant court orders or legal arrangements relating to the child's care or contact.

This information will be obtained before a child starts at the nursery wherever reasonably practicable and will be kept up to date throughout the child's time at *Little Blossom*.

Where there is uncertainty or a dispute regarding parental responsibility or a person's authority to make decisions for a child, the nursery will seek appropriate advice and will prioritise the child's safety and welfare.

Parents and carers must inform the nursery immediately of any changes to parental responsibility, family circumstances, contact arrangements, court orders, emergency contacts or authorised persons.

What is Parental Responsibility?

Parental responsibility is the legal rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority a person has in relation to a child and the child's property. More than one person can have parental responsibility for a child at the same time. Having parental responsibility does not, by itself, determine where a child lives or who the child has contact with.

Little Blossom Nursery School does not make decisions about who has parental responsibility. Where there is uncertainty or disagreement, the nursery may request appropriate evidence, such as a birth certificate or court order, and may seek legal or safeguarding advice where necessary.

Who May Have Parental Responsibility?

The law regarding parental responsibility is set out primarily in the Children Act 1989 and related legislation.

Generally:

- A child's birth mother has parental responsibility.
- A child's father may have parental responsibility depending on the circumstances, including where he was married to or in a civil partnership with the mother when the child was born, or where he has acquired parental responsibility through the relevant legal process.
- An unmarried father may acquire parental responsibility, including through joint registration of the child's birth, a parental responsibility agreement or a court order.
- A second female parent may have parental responsibility in circumstances recognised by law, including certain fertility-treatment circumstances.
- A step-parent does not automatically acquire parental responsibility simply because they are married to or in a civil partnership with a child's parent. They may acquire it through the appropriate legal process.
- Other people may acquire parental responsibility through a court order or other legal arrangements.
- A local authority may have parental responsibility where a child is subject to a care order. The extent of parental responsibility and the effect of any court order will depend on the circumstances.

Where a child is adopted, parental responsibility will be determined in accordance with the relevant adoption legislation and legal arrangements.

Little Blossom Nursery School staff will not provide legal advice to parents or carers. Where there is uncertainty about parental responsibility or the effect of a court order, the nursery may advise the relevant individuals to obtain independent legal advice.

Information Required by Little Blossom

Before a child starts at Little Blossom, parents/carers will be asked to provide:

- the child's full name and date of birth;
- the name and contact details of each known parent/carer;
- information about anyone else who has parental responsibility;
- information about who the child normally lives with;
- details of authorised persons who may collect the child;
- emergency contact details;
- information about any relevant court orders or legal restrictions;
- information about any person who should not have contact with or collect the child, where supported by appropriate legal or safeguarding information; and
- any other information required by the EYFS or safeguarding procedures.

During the registration process, all parents/carers will be required to complete a Parental Responsibility and Authorised Contacts Declaration Form.

This will enable *Little Blossom Nursery School* to establish who has parental responsibility for the child and who is authorised to make decisions or receive information on the child's behalf.

Where a person is listed as an emergency or authorised contact but does not have parental responsibility, they may be permitted to collect the child or receive information where authorised by a person with parental responsibility. However, they will not automatically have authority to make decisions or complete/sign forms that require parental consent, including specific medical permissions, unless they have been given the appropriate legal authority or written authorisation.

Little Blossom Nursery School will maintain appropriate records of parental responsibility and authorised contacts and will follow any relevant court orders or legal restrictions provided to the nursery.

The nursery will keep this information confidential and will process it in accordance with its Data Protection and Privacy Policy.

Legal Contact and Court Orders

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that children may have contact with parents, relatives or other people who do not live with them.

Contact arrangements may be agreed privately between those with parental responsibility or may be determined by a court.

Contact may include:

- face-to-face contact;
- overnight or staying contact;
- telephone contact;
- video contact;
- written or electronic communication; or
- other arrangements specified in a court order.

The nursery will not make assumptions about contact arrangements based solely on a parent's relationship status or family circumstances.

Where the nursery has been provided with a current court order, prohibited steps order, child arrangements order or other relevant legal documentation, the nursery will follow the requirements of that order insofar as they apply to the setting.

Parents/carers should provide the nursery with copies of relevant court orders and notify the nursery immediately if an order is changed, discharged or replaced.

Collection of Children

Only a person who is authorised by the parent/carer and who is considered suitable to collect the child will normally be permitted to do so.

The nursery may request identification and a password where staff do not know the person collecting the child.

Where staff have concerns about a person's identity, authority to collect the child, presentation, behaviour or ability to safely care for the child, the nursery may delay or refuse collection while appropriate safeguarding advice is obtained.

Where there is a dispute between parents or family members, Little Blossom will act in accordance with:

- any current court order or legal restriction provided to the nursery;
- safeguarding advice from the appropriate professionals; and
- the child's best interests and safety.

The nursery will not become involved in parental disputes or attempt to determine legal rights where these are disputed.

Where Parents Disagree

Having parental responsibility does not automatically mean that a parent can require the nursery to prevent another person with parental responsibility from exercising their legal rights.

Where parents disagree about collection, contact, information sharing or other arrangements, Little Blossom will consider the legal documentation available and seek appropriate safeguarding or legal advice where necessary.

If there is a court order restricting a person's contact with the child or preventing them from collecting the child, the nursery will follow the order and ensure relevant staff are informed on a need-to-know basis.

If staff believe that a child may be at risk of harm, safeguarding procedures will take priority and the concern will be referred to the DSL.

Children Subject to Social Care or Court Proceedings

Where a child is subject to:

- a care order;
- interim care arrangements;
- a child protection plan;
- a child arrangements order;
- a supervision order;
- special guardianship arrangements; or
- any other relevant legal or safeguarding arrangement,

the nursery will work with the appropriate professionals and follow the requirements of the relevant order or safeguarding plan.

The DSL will ensure that relevant information is shared with staff on a need-to-know basis so that the child's safety is maintained.

Changes to Family Circumstances

Parents/carers must inform Little Blossom immediately if there are changes to:

- parental responsibility;
- who the child lives with;
- contact arrangements;
- court orders;
- authorised collectors;
- emergency contacts;
- safeguarding circumstances; or
- any person who may present a risk to the child.

The nursery will update its records promptly and ensure that relevant staff are informed where necessary.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION POLICY

Little Blossom Nursery School takes a professional and respectful approach to confidentiality and the protection of personal information.

We recognise that information relating to children, families and staff is private and must be handled carefully. Confidential information will only be accessed, used and shared where there is a legitimate reason to do so and in accordance with applicable data protection legislation and the nursery's Data Protection and Privacy policies.

Confidential information and records relating to children and staff will be:

- kept securely;
- accessed only by authorised individuals who have a professional need or legal right to access the information;
- shared only where there is a legitimate and lawful reason to do so;
- handled in a way that protects the privacy and dignity of children and families; and
- retained in accordance with the nursery's record retention requirements.

Information may be shared without parental consent where this is necessary to safeguard or protect a child, where there is a legal requirement to do so, or where another lawful basis for sharing applies. Safeguarding concerns must never be withheld simply because parental consent has not been obtained.

Where information needs to be shared with children's social care, the police, Ofsted, health professionals or other relevant agencies, the nursery will follow safeguarding and information-sharing procedures.

Staff must not discuss confidential information about children, families or colleagues in public areas, on personal social media, or with anyone who does not have a legitimate need to know.

Access to Children's Records

Parents and carers will be provided with appropriate access to records relating to their child, subject to any legal restrictions or exemptions that apply. Where records contain information about another child or another individual, the nursery will consider the relevant data protection and safeguarding requirements before providing access.

PHOTOGRAPHS, VIDEOS AND DIGITAL IMAGES

Photographs and videos of children may be taken by *Little Blossom Nursery School* for appropriate nursery purposes, such as:

- children's observations and learning records;
- the nursery's online learning journal;
- internal displays and children's learning documentation;
- recording children's experiences and activities; and
- other purposes that have been appropriately authorised.

Where photographs or videos are used, the nursery will ensure that they are handled securely and in accordance with the nursery's Data Protection Policy and the permissions provided by parents/carers.

Children's full names will not normally be displayed alongside photographs in children's portfolios or displays unless there is an appropriate reason and this has been authorised.

Photographs and videos must not be taken, stored or shared for personal use.

Any image or recording that identifies a child will be treated as personal information and handled appropriately. Images will be stored securely and will not be transferred to personal devices or personal cloud-storage accounts.

USE OF MOBILE PHONES, CAMERAS AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

To protect children's privacy and safeguard children from inappropriate photography, filming or sharing, personal mobile phones, cameras, tablets and other personal devices capable of taking or sharing images must not be used in areas where children are present.

This applies to:

- staff;
- agency staff;
- students;
- volunteers;
- parents and carers;
- visitors; and
- contractors.

Staff must not use personal devices to photograph, film or record children.

Only *Little Blossom Nursery School*-owned devices may be used to take photographs or videos of children, and only for authorised nursery purposes. Staff must follow the nursery's procedures regarding the use, storage and transfer of photographs and videos. Images must be transferred to the nursery's approved secure system as soon as reasonably practicable and must not be retained on personal devices.

The use of nursery-owned devices must be authorised by management and must comply with the nursery's Data Protection Policy, safeguarding procedures and relevant parental permissions.

Any loss, unauthorised access, accidental sharing or inappropriate use of photographs, videos or other personal information must be reported to the Manager/DSL immediately.

The nursery will take appropriate action where staff, parents, visitors or other individuals breach these requirements.

Safeguarding exception

Confidentiality must never prevent information being shared when this is necessary to protect a child from harm. Staff must immediately report safeguarding concerns to the DSL and must follow the nursery's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

GDPR AND DATA PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Statement

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to protecting the privacy, confidentiality and security of personal information relating to children, parents/carers, staff and other individuals.

The nursery processes personal information in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, applicable early years requirements and relevant guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

We recognise that children require particular protection when their personal information is collected and processed. Personal information will be processed fairly, lawfully, securely and only for appropriate purposes.

Information We Collect

As a registered early years setting, *Little Blossom Nursery School* is required to collect and maintain certain information about children and their families in order to meet statutory requirements, safeguard children, provide appropriate care and education, and manage the nursery.

Depending on the circumstances, information may include:

- child's name, date of birth and address;
- parent/carer contact details;
- information about who has parental responsibility;
- emergency contacts and authorised collection arrangements;
- family and household information where relevant to the child's care or safeguarding;
- health and medical information;
- allergies and dietary requirements;
- immunisation information where required;
- GP and other relevant health-professional contact details;
- information about additional needs or disabilities;
- safeguarding and child protection information;
- attendance and collection records;
- accident, incident and first-aid records;
- photographs and videos where appropriately authorised;
- information required for funding or statutory reporting;
- financial information where necessary for the administration of nursery fees; and
- other information necessary to provide safe and appropriate care.

We will only collect information that is adequate, relevant and necessary for the purpose for which it is being processed.

Lawful Basis for Processing

Little Blossom Nursery School will identify and document the appropriate lawful basis for each type of personal information that it processes.

Depending on the purpose, this may include:

- **legal obligation** – where the nursery is required by law to collect or process information;
- **contract** – where processing is necessary to provide the nursery service;
- **legitimate interests** – where appropriate and where the nursery's interests do not override the rights and freedoms of the individual;
- **vital interests** – where information needs to be processed to protect someone's life;
- **public task**, where applicable; and
- **consent** – where consent is the appropriate lawful basis for a particular activity.

The nursery will not rely on consent where another lawful basis is more appropriate. The ICO confirms that consent is only one possible lawful basis and that the appropriate basis should be determined for each processing activity.

Where we rely on consent, it will be specific, informed and freely given, and individuals will be informed about how they can withdraw their consent.

Withdrawal of consent will not affect processing that has already taken place lawfully before consent was withdrawn.

Special Category Information

Some information collected by the nursery is considered special category data, including information relating to:

- health;
- disability;
- racial or ethnic origin;
- religious or philosophical beliefs; and
- other categories identified under UK GDPR.

Special category information requires both an appropriate lawful basis under UK GDPR and an additional condition for processing under Article 9. The nursery will ensure that the appropriate condition is identified before processing such information.

Health and safeguarding information will only be collected and shared where necessary to protect the child, meet legal or professional requirements, provide appropriate care or fulfil another lawful purpose.

Consent and Parental Permission

Where parental consent is required for a particular activity, *Little Blossom Nursery School* will obtain and record appropriate consent from a person with parental responsibility.

However, parental consent is not required for every type of information processing.

For example, the nursery may need to process information without consent where this is necessary to comply with a legal requirement, protect a child, fulfil safeguarding responsibilities or provide appropriate care.

Parents/carers will be informed about how their child's information is used through the nursery's privacy information.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All information relating to children and families will be treated confidentially and stored securely.

Information will only be shared with individuals or organisations who have a legitimate need or lawful basis to receive it.

This may include:

- parents/carers and those with appropriate parental responsibility;
- other professionals involved in the child's care;
- health professionals;
- children's social care;
- the police;
- Hertfordshire County Council;
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership;
- Ofsted;
- government departments or other statutory bodies where required; and
- other relevant agencies where necessary to safeguard or support a child.

Confidentiality must never prevent information being shared where this is necessary to protect a child from harm.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, information may be shared without parental consent where permitted or required by law or where necessary to safeguard the child.

Staff will follow the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and information-sharing procedures when deciding whether information should be shared.

Sharing Information With Other Settings

Where a child attends another early years setting, school or other relevant provision, Little Blossom Nursery School may share appropriate information to support the child's:

- safety and welfare;
- continuity of care;
- learning and development;
- transition between settings; and
- additional or safeguarding needs.

Information will only be shared where there is an appropriate lawful basis.

Where consent is the appropriate basis, the nursery will obtain the necessary consent. However, consent will not be required where information needs to be shared for safeguarding, legal or other lawful purposes.

Security of Information

Little Blossom Nursery School will take appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect personal information against:

- unauthorised access;
- accidental loss;
- destruction;
- damage;
- unauthorised disclosure;
- inappropriate alteration; and
- misuse.

Paper records will be stored securely.

Electronic records will be protected using appropriate passwords, access controls and secure systems.

Access to children's records will be restricted to staff and professionals who have a legitimate need or lawful right to access the information.

Staff must not:

- share passwords;
- leave confidential documents where unauthorised people can see them;
- discuss confidential information in public areas;
- use personal email accounts to send confidential nursery information unless specifically authorised;
- store children's information on personal devices; or
- share children's information on personal social media.

Photographs and Digital Images

Photographs and videos may be taken for authorised nursery purposes, including observations, learning records, online journals and internal displays.

The nursery will ensure that photographs and videos are:

- taken only for appropriate purposes;
- stored securely;
- accessed only by authorised individuals;
- not taken on staff members' personal devices; and
- not shared publicly unless the appropriate permission and lawful basis are in place.

Children's Records

Little Blossom Nursery School will maintain records required by legislation, the EYFS and for the safe and effective care of children.

Safeguarding and child protection records will be kept securely and separately from general records where appropriate, with access restricted to authorised individuals.

Records will be retained only for as long as necessary and in accordance with applicable statutory requirements and the nursery's record retention arrangements.

When records are no longer required, they will be securely destroyed or deleted.

Parents' and Individuals' Data Protection Rights

Individuals have rights under data protection legislation, which may include the right to:

- be informed about how their information is used;
- access personal information held about them;
- request correction of inaccurate information;
- request deletion in certain circumstances;
- request restriction of processing in certain circumstances;
- object to certain processing; and
- exercise rights relating to consent where consent is the lawful basis.

These rights are subject to certain legal exemptions and restrictions. The nursery will consider each request in accordance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

Parents/carers who wish to request access to information held about themselves or their child should contact the Nursery Manager.
Data Breaches

Any suspected loss, unauthorised disclosure, accidental sharing or inappropriate access to personal information must be reported to the Nursery Manager immediately.

The nursery will assess any suspected data breach and take appropriate action, including determining whether notification to the ICO or affected individuals is required.

Complaints

If a parent/carer or other individual has concerns about how Little Blossom Nursery School has handled their personal information, they should initially raise the concern with the Nursery Manager.

The nursery will investigate the complaint and respond appropriately.

Individuals also have the right to complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) if they believe their personal information has not been handled appropriately.

[Information Commissioner's Office \(ICO\)](#)

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

At *Little Blossom Nursery School*, we believe that parents and carers should feel able to raise any concern about the care, education, welfare or service provided to their child.

We welcome feedback and complaints as an opportunity to review our practice, identify areas for improvement and ensure that children receive safe, high-quality care.

All complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with fairly, promptly and respectfully. We will maintain confidentiality and will share information only where necessary and appropriate.

No child, parent/carer or member of staff will be disadvantaged because a genuine concern or complaint has been raised.

Raising a Concern Informally

Where possible, parents/carers are encouraged to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity with their child's Key Person or a Nursery Manager. Many concerns can be resolved quickly through an informal discussion.

Parents/carers may request a meeting with a Manager to discuss their concern. The nursery will listen carefully, consider the information provided and take appropriate action where necessary.

Making a Formal Complaint

If a concern cannot be resolved informally, or if a parent/carer wishes to make a formal complaint, the complaint should be made in writing to the Nursery Manager or Nursery Owner.

A complaint should, where possible, include:

- the nature of the complaint;
- the date(s) and circumstances involved;
- the names of any relevant people;
- any supporting information or evidence; and
- the outcome the parent/carer is seeking, where appropriate.

A parent/carer may request assistance in making a complaint where they have communication, language or accessibility needs.

Investigating Complaints

All written complaints relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage or the nursery's provision will be investigated appropriately.

The person investigating the complaint will:

- consider the information provided;
- speak to relevant staff or other individuals where appropriate;
- review relevant records and policies;
- consider whether any safeguarding, welfare or regulatory issues have been identified;
- take appropriate action where necessary; and
- provide the parent/carer with the outcome of the investigation.

Where a complaint relates to a particular member of staff, that person will not be responsible for investigating the complaint.

Where a complaint raises a potential safeguarding concern, the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures will take priority and the matter will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or appropriate safeguarding authority as required.

Timescale

Little Blossom Nursery School will aim to acknowledge and deal with complaints as quickly as reasonably possible.

The nursery will provide the parent/carer with the outcome of the investigation and details of any action taken or proposed within 28 days of receiving the complaint.

Where exceptional circumstances mean that an investigation cannot be completed within this period, the parent/carer will be informed of the reason for the delay and given an indication of when a full response can be expected.

Complaints Records

The nursery will maintain a written record of complaints, including:

- the date the complaint was received;
- the nature of the complaint;
- the person responsible for investigating it;
- the investigation undertaken;
- the findings;
- any action taken or proposed; and
- the date and method by which the outcome was communicated to the parent/carer.

Complaints records will be kept securely and confidentially for **three years**.

Records will be made available to Ofsted when required.

Complaints About Poor Practice

Where a child or parent/carer raises a concern about the behaviour or practice of a member of staff that does not initially meet the threshold for a child protection referral, the concern will still be taken seriously.

Examples may include:

- unfairly singling out a child;
- inappropriate or humiliating language;

- shouting or inappropriate behaviour management;
- bullying or belittling a child;
- inappropriate physical contact;
- discriminatory behaviour;
- failing to follow nursery policies; or
- other behaviour that does not meet the nursery's expected standards.
- The concern will be investigated and appropriate action taken.

Where information suggests that a child may be at risk of harm, the matter will be dealt with under the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, rather than solely through the complaints procedure.

Complaints About the Manager or Owner

If a complaint concerns the Nursery Manager, the complaint should be made to the Nursery Owner or another person with appropriate management responsibility.

If a complaint concerns the Nursery Owner, an alternative person will be identified to manage the complaint fairly and independently.

No person should investigate a complaint about themselves.

Complaints Made by Staff

Complaints or concerns raised by staff about employment matters will normally be managed under the nursery's relevant Grievance, Disciplinary or Whistleblowing Procedures.

Where a staff concern relates to the safety or welfare of a child, the nursery's safeguarding procedures will apply immediately.

Safeguarding Concerns

A complaint that involves an allegation that a child has been harmed, abused or neglected will not be treated simply as a standard complaint.

The concern will be reported immediately to the DSL and managed in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding procedures and the relevant Hertfordshire safeguarding arrangements.

Where appropriate, the nursery will contact children's services, the police, Ofsted, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or another relevant agency.

Confidentiality

Complaints will be handled sensitively and confidentially.

Information will only be shared with those who need it to investigate the complaint, safeguard children, comply with legal requirements or fulfil regulatory responsibilities.

Mediation

Where appropriate, the nursery may consider mediation to help resolve a complaint. Mediation will only be used where it is appropriate to the circumstances and will not be used where doing so could interfere with safeguarding, disciplinary or regulatory procedures.

Complaining to Ofsted

Parents/carers are encouraged to raise concerns with Little Blossom Nursery School first so that the nursery has an opportunity to investigate and resolve the matter.

If a parent/carer remains concerned that the nursery is not meeting the EYFS requirements, they may contact Ofsted. Ofsted regulates early years providers and can consider concerns about whether a provider is meeting its legal and regulatory requirements. Ofsted does not generally resolve individual disputes between parents and providers.

Ofsted

Telephone: 0300 123 4666

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

[Ofsted complaints procedure](#)

Immediate Safeguarding Concerns

If a parent/carer believes that a child is in immediate danger, they should contact the emergency services on 999.

Where there is a safeguarding concern that does not require an immediate emergency response, the parent/carer may contact the relevant local authority children's services or the police as appropriate.

Allegations and Concerns About Staff, Volunteers and Other Adults

If You Have Concerns About a Colleague

All staff have a responsibility to safeguard children and must report concerns about the conduct or behaviour of another member of staff, volunteer, student, agency worker, manager, contractor or any other adult who has contact with children.

Staff may sometimes feel worried about reporting a colleague or may be concerned that they have misunderstood a situation. However, the welfare and safety of the child must always come first.

Staff must not investigate concerns themselves or attempt to determine whether an allegation is true. They must report their concern promptly so that it can be assessed and managed through the appropriate safeguarding procedures.

Concerns about a colleague should normally be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Nursery Manager, unless the concern relates to either of those individuals or there is another conflict of interest. In such circumstances, the alternative reporting arrangements set out in this policy and the nursery's Whistleblowing Procedure must be followed.

If a child is in immediate danger, or a crime is being committed, staff must contact the police on 999 without delay. This must not be delayed while waiting to speak to the DSL, Nursery Manager or any other safeguarding professional. Hertfordshire County Council confirms that 999 should be used where someone is in immediate danger or a crime is being committed.

Concerns may include:

- inappropriate or unsafe behaviour towards a child;
- inappropriate physical contact;
- inappropriate language or communication;
- behaviour that breaches professional boundaries;
- bullying, humiliation or discriminatory behaviour;
- concerns about neglect or poor care;
- inappropriate use of mobile phones, cameras or technology;
- concerns about a person's suitability to work with children;
- behaviour that may constitute abuse or harm;
- behaviour that may indicate that an adult poses a risk of harm to children; or
- any behaviour that causes staff to believe a child may be at risk of harm.

Staff must report concerns even where they are uncertain whether the behaviour meets the threshold for a safeguarding referral or formal allegation. The DSL, Manager or appropriate safeguarding professional will consider the concern and determine what action is required.

Staff must never be discouraged from raising a genuine safeguarding concern.

Allegations, Safeguarding Concerns and Lower-Level Concerns

Not every concern about an adult will meet the threshold for a formal allegation requiring the allegations-management process. However, all concerns must be taken seriously and appropriately recorded and addressed.

The nursery will consider whether a concern is:

- an allegation that may require consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- a safeguarding concern requiring referral to Children's Services or the police;
- a lower-level concern about behaviour, conduct or professional boundaries;
- a concern about the quality of care or practice;
- a disciplinary or employment matter;
- a complaint; or
- another matter requiring management action.

Where a concern does not meet the threshold for the formal allegations process, it will still be managed appropriately under the nursery's safeguarding, low-level concerns, disciplinary, complaints or other relevant procedures.

The fact that a concern does not meet the LADO threshold does not mean that it should be ignored.

Whistleblowing

Little Blossom Nursery School has a Whistleblowing Procedure which enables staff to raise concerns where they believe that children are being placed at risk, safeguarding procedures are not being followed, or a safeguarding concern has not been appropriately addressed.

Where a concern relates to the DSL or Nursery Manager, staff must use the alternative reporting arrangements set out in the nursery's Whistleblowing and Safeguarding procedures.

Where there is a conflict of interest, the person with the conflict must not manage or investigate the concern.

Where appropriate, concerns may be referred directly to the relevant safeguarding professionals, Hertfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Services, Ofsted, the police or another appropriate statutory agency.

Staff will not be subject to unfair treatment, victimisation or retaliation for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

Staff who believe that their concern has not been taken seriously or appropriately addressed should use the alternative reporting arrangements in the nursery's Whistleblowing Procedure and, where appropriate, seek advice from the relevant external safeguarding authority.

Further information is contained within the **Little Blossom Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure**.

Staff Who Are the Subject of an Allegation

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that allegations against staff and other adults must be dealt with fairly, promptly, consistently and in a way that protects children while also ensuring that the person subject to the allegation is treated appropriately.

An allegation may concern a member of:

- staff;
- management;
- volunteers;
- students;
- agency workers;
- contractors; or
- any other adult who works with or has regular contact with children.

All allegations will be taken seriously.

An allegation may require consideration under the allegations-management process where an adult has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm; or
- behaved in a way that raises concerns about their suitability to work with children.

The nursery will not attempt to investigate an allegation internally before seeking appropriate safeguarding advice where the allegation may indicate that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The nursery will not conduct interviews or take other investigative action that could interfere with a police, Children's Services or other statutory safeguarding investigation unless this has been appropriately advised or agreed.

The DSL/Manager will follow the relevant Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures and seek advice from the appropriate safeguarding professionals.

Where an allegation concerns the Manager, DSL or another senior member of staff, the person who is the subject of the allegation must not be responsible for managing, assessing or investigating the concern.

Where any other person has a conflict of interest, they must not manage or investigate the concern.

Allegations About the Manager or DSL

Where an allegation is made against the Nursery Manager, DSL or another senior person, the concern must be reported through the appropriate alternative safeguarding arrangements.

The nursery will seek advice from the Hertfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or other appropriate safeguarding authority and will follow the current local allegations-management procedure.

Where appropriate, the nursery will also notify or make a referral to:

- Ofsted;
- Hertfordshire Children's Services;
- the police; or
- another relevant statutory agency.

The nursery will not delay reporting a safeguarding concern while attempting to investigate it internally.

If the concern is about the person who would normally receive or manage the allegation, an alternative person must be identified to ensure that the concern is managed independently and appropriately.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) provides advice and guidance in relation to concerns or allegations about adults who work with children. Hertfordshire's arrangements must be followed whenever an allegation about an adult working with children may meet the relevant threshold.

The nursery will follow the current Hertfordshire LADO and allegations-management procedures and timescales rather than relying on a fixed timescale stated within this policy.

Where an allegation may meet the relevant threshold, the nursery will seek advice from the LADO or appropriate safeguarding professionals without delay.

The nursery will cooperate fully with any LADO, Children's Services, police, Ofsted or other statutory safeguarding process.

The nursery will provide relevant information and records when lawfully requested and will ensure that its own actions do not compromise any statutory investigation.

Ofsted Notifications

From 1 September 2026, the updated Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework requires registered providers to notify Ofsted of allegations of harm or abuse by anyone living, working or looking after children at the premises.

This requirement applies whether the alleged harm or abuse occurred on the premises or elsewhere, for example during an outing. Little Blossom Nursery School will notify Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable and, in any event, within 14 days where the allegation falls within the statutory notification requirement.

The provider will also notify Ofsted of the action taken in response to the allegation, in accordance with the EYFS requirements.

The nursery will ensure that responsibility for making any required Ofsted notification is clearly allocated and that notifications are recorded.

Important: An Ofsted notification does not replace or delay any safeguarding referral or notification that may need to be made to Hertfordshire Children's Services, the police, the LADO or another statutory agency.

Where there is immediate danger or a crime is being committed, the police must be contacted on 999 without delay.

Suspension and Other Protective Measures

Suspension is **not automatic** following an allegation.

Where necessary, the nursery will consider appropriate temporary measures to protect children and ensure a fair process. *These may include:*

- changing duties;
- increasing supervision;
- temporarily removing access to certain duties or areas;
- restricting contact with particular children where appropriate; or
- suspension where appropriate and advised.

Any decision will be made on an individual basis, taking account of the circumstances and advice from the relevant safeguarding, employment or HR professionals.

The nursery will not assume that an allegation is proven simply because it has been made.

Equally, the nursery will not minimise or disregard an allegation because it is unsubstantiated or has not yet been established.

The nursery will take all reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure that children remain safe while the matter is being considered.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information relating to allegations will be treated as confidential and shared only with those who need the information to:

- safeguard children;
- manage the allegation;
- undertake safeguarding or employment processes; or
- fulfil legal and regulatory responsibilities.

Staff must not discuss allegations with colleagues, parents, other families or other individuals unless authorised to do so or where disclosure is otherwise required or permitted by law.

Confidentiality must not prevent information being shared where this is necessary to safeguard a child, comply with a legal requirement, or assist a police, Children's Services, LADO, Ofsted or other statutory investigation.

Records relating to allegations will be factual, accurate, objective and securely stored. Records will be maintained in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding, confidentiality, information-sharing and data protection procedures.

Support for the Child and the Adult

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that allegations can be distressing for children, families and staff.

The nursery will ensure that children are appropriately supported and safeguarded throughout the process.

The nursery will consider the child's welfare, emotional wellbeing, safety and any additional support needs throughout the process.

The nursery will communicate appropriately with parents or carers where this is consistent with safeguarding advice and will not share information where doing so could place a child at further risk or prejudice a statutory investigation.

Where appropriate, the person subject to an allegation will also be signposted to appropriate support while the matter is being dealt with.

The nursery will ensure that support for the person subject to an allegation does not compromise safeguarding arrangements or any investigation.

Records and Review

All concerns, allegations, referrals, decisions and actions will be recorded promptly, accurately and objectively.

Records will include, where appropriate:

- the nature of the concern or allegation;
- the date and time it was received;
- the person who raised the concern;
- the child or children involved;
- the adult who is the subject of the concern;
- advice sought from the DSL, Manager, LADO or other safeguarding professional;
- referrals or notifications made;
- decisions and reasons for those decisions;
- protective measures taken; and
- actions and outcomes.

Records will be stored securely and retained in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding and data-protection requirements.

This policy section will be reviewed regularly and whenever there is a relevant change to legislation, the EYFS statutory framework, Ofsted requirements or Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures.

Staff Training

All staff have a responsibility to safeguard children and must have the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to recognise signs of abuse, harm and neglect and to respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns.

All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction before, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, starting work.

Induction will include the nursery's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, the identity and role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL where applicable, procedures for reporting concerns about children or adults, whistleblowing arrangements, and relevant local safeguarding procedures.

All staff, including the Owner and Nursery Manager where they are not the DSL, will receive safeguarding and child protection training that meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This training will be renewed **at least every two years**, or sooner where necessary.

The nursery will also provide regular safeguarding updates between formal training sessions where required to ensure that staff maintain up-to-date knowledge and understanding. Updates may include changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding procedures, emerging safeguarding risks, learning from safeguarding reviews, and issues identified within the nursery.

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Training and Local Procedures

As *Little Blossom Nursery School* operates in Hertfordshire, safeguarding training and updates will reflect the local safeguarding arrangements of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and Hertfordshire County Council.

The nursery will ensure that staff are familiar with the relevant Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures, including local arrangements for:

- reporting and referring concerns about children;
- responding to safeguarding and child protection concerns;
- allegations and concerns about adults who work with children;
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) arrangements;
- information sharing and escalation of safeguarding concerns; and
- local safeguarding priorities and learning from safeguarding reviews.

The DSL and Deputy DSL will keep their knowledge of Hertfordshire safeguarding arrangements up to date and will access relevant Hertfordshire safeguarding training, briefings, learning opportunities and updates appropriate to their roles.

The nursery will make appropriate use of safeguarding training and resources provided by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and Hertfordshire County Council where these are relevant to the roles and responsibilities of staff.

The DSL will monitor relevant updates issued by Hertfordshire safeguarding partners and will ensure that any significant changes to local safeguarding procedures or referral arrangements are communicated to staff and reflected in the nursery's safeguarding practice.

Training will cover, as appropriate to the role:

- recognising signs and indicators of abuse, harm and neglect;
- understanding different forms of abuse, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect;
- recognising changes in children's behaviour, presentation or wellbeing that may indicate a safeguarding concern;
- knowing how and when to report concerns about a child;
- knowing how to respond to a disclosure or allegation;
- concerns about the behaviour or conduct of staff, volunteers and other adults;
- allegations against staff and other adults;
- low-level concerns and professional boundaries;
- whistleblowing;
- online safety and the safe use of technology;
- information sharing and confidentiality;
- preventing inappropriate or harmful practices;
- Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures and referral arrangements; and
- any other safeguarding issues relevant to the children and families attending the nursery.

The DSL and any Deputy DSL will undertake safeguarding training appropriate to their role and responsibilities and will keep their knowledge and skills up to date in accordance with the EYFS, Hertfordshire safeguarding arrangements and any advice issued by Hertfordshire safeguarding partners or the local authority.

The DSL will ensure that safeguarding training is recorded for all staff and that training certificates or other evidence of completion are retained securely.

Where staff identify a safeguarding concern between formal training sessions, they must follow the nursery's safeguarding procedures immediately and must not wait for refresher training before reporting a concern.

The nursery will monitor staff training to ensure that required training remains current and that staff understand and can apply safeguarding procedures in practice.

Touch and Physical Contact Policy

Purpose

This policy informs parents and carers about *Little Blossom Nursery School's* approach to physical contact between adults and children.

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that appropriate physical contact can form an important part of children's care, comfort, emotional wellbeing, development and safety. At all times, physical contact must be appropriate, necessary, proportionate, respectful and consistent with the child's age, stage of development, individual needs and wishes.

The safety, dignity and wellbeing of every child are paramount.

Physical Punishment

There will be no physical punishment of any child at any time while a child is attending *Little Blossom Nursery School*.

Staff must not hit, slap, smack, shake, push, pull, roughly handle, humiliate or otherwise physically punish a child.

Children's behaviour will be managed in accordance with the nursery's Behaviour Management Policy, which promotes positive behaviour, respectful relationships and appropriate, age-related approaches to managing behaviour.

Appropriate Physical Contact

Children may need appropriate physical contact as part of their everyday care and development.

Physical contact should always be:

- appropriate to the child's age and stage of development;
- respectful of the child's dignity and personal space;
- appropriate to the circumstances;
- proportionate to the need;
- as limited as reasonably necessary;
- carried out openly and transparently;
- consistent with the child's individual needs and preferences; and
- in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding procedures.

Staff must always consider the child's response to physical contact. Children should be encouraged to communicate their wishes and boundaries, and staff must respect these wherever reasonably possible.

Nurturing and Reassurance

Appropriate nurturing contact may include:

- holding a child's hand;
- offering a hug or cuddle where appropriate;
- comforting a distressed child;
- carrying a young child where this is appropriate and necessary;
- sitting alongside or close to a child to provide reassurance; and
- other appropriate forms of supportive contact.

Physical affection should be child-led wherever possible. Staff should not insist that a child gives or receives physical affection.

Staff must not kiss children on the lips. Any other physical affection must be appropriate, non-intimate and consistent with professional boundaries.

Staff must not engage in physical contact that could reasonably be interpreted as inappropriate, intrusive or overly familiar.

Children must never be encouraged or required to engage in physical contact with an adult or another child against their wishes, except where physical intervention is necessary to prevent harm or for another legitimate safeguarding reason.

Safety and Guidance

Physical contact may be necessary to protect a child or others from immediate harm.

This may include:

- preventing a child from entering a dangerous situation;
- preventing a child from injuring themselves or another person;
- separating children who are fighting;
- guiding or moving a child away from danger;
- assisting a child during an emergency; or
- providing first aid or emergency medical assistance.

Any physical intervention must be necessary, reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances.

Staff must use the minimum physical contact necessary and must stop as soon as the immediate risk has passed.

Any significant physical intervention must be recorded and reported to the DSL/Manager in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding and incident-reporting procedures.

The nursery will follow its relevant policies and procedures concerning physical intervention, safeguarding, behaviour and incident reporting.

Personal Care and Hygiene

Physical contact may also be necessary when providing personal care or supporting children's hygiene needs.

This may include:

- hand and face washing;
- nappy changing;
- toileting assistance appropriate to the child's age and stage of development;

- helping a child to change wet or soiled clothing;
- assisting with nose blowing;
- helping with hair brushing where appropriate;
- replacing hair clips or hair bands;
- providing first aid; or
- attending to a minor injury or health need.

Personal care will always be provided respectfully and with regard for the child's privacy and dignity.

Staff will explain what they are doing to the child in an age-appropriate way and encourage children to participate in their own care wherever possible.

Children will be supported to develop independence with personal hygiene and toileting as appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Observing Marks, Injuries or Changes in a Child

Where a member of staff notices an unexplained injury, mark, rash or unusual physical presentation, they must follow the nursery's safeguarding procedures.

Staff must not conduct an inappropriate or unnecessary physical examination of a child.

Where a physical check is necessary for the child's immediate welfare or as part of appropriate first aid or care, it must be undertaken sensitively, appropriately and only to the extent necessary.

Any unexplained injury, mark or concern about a child's physical wellbeing must be reported to the DSL in accordance with the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Professional Boundaries

All staff, students, volunteers, agency workers and other adults working with children must maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

Physical contact must never be:

- sexualised or intimate;
- secretive;
- unnecessary;
- excessive;
- frightening or humiliating;
- used as a form of punishment;
- used to control a child unnecessarily; or
- contrary to the child's dignity or welfare.

Adults must not engage in rough play, horseplay or other physical activities that could result in injury, distress, inappropriate contact or a misunderstanding of professional boundaries.

Any adult who is unsure whether physical contact is appropriate should seek advice from the DSL or Nursery Manager.

Children's Rights and Consent

Children have the right to have their personal space and physical boundaries respected.

Staff should encourage children to say "no", "stop" or otherwise communicate when they do not want physical contact.

Where physical contact is not necessary for safety, care or another legitimate purpose, staff should respect a child's refusal.

However, where immediate physical intervention is necessary to prevent harm, protect the child or another person, or provide essential first aid or care, staff may need to act despite a child's wishes. Any such intervention must be necessary, proportionate and appropriately recorded.

Safeguarding Concerns

Any concern about inappropriate physical contact between an adult and a child must be reported immediately in accordance with the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Staff must not investigate concerns themselves or attempt to decide whether inappropriate contact constitutes abuse.

Concerns about physical contact by a member of staff, volunteer, student, agency worker, contractor or any other adult will be taken seriously and managed in accordance with the nursery's procedures for allegations and concerns about adults working with children.

Where appropriate, advice will be sought from the relevant Hertfordshire safeguarding professionals, including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Services or the police.

Recording and Monitoring

The nursery will maintain appropriate records of significant physical interventions, accidents, injuries, first aid and safeguarding concerns in accordance with its relevant policies and procedures.

The DSL and Nursery Manager will monitor patterns or concerns relating to physical contact and will take appropriate action where practice, training or safeguarding arrangements need to be reviewed.

Reasonable Force and Physical Intervention Policy

Purpose

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to providing a safe, caring and nurturing environment in which children are protected from harm and supported to develop positive behaviour.

The nursery **does not** use physical punishment or corporal punishment.

Physical intervention is avoided wherever reasonably possible. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where a member of staff needs to use reasonable and proportionate physical intervention to prevent a child from causing immediate danger or injury to themselves or another person, or to prevent serious damage to property.

Any physical intervention must be:

- necessary in the circumstances;
- proportionate to the risk presented;
- the minimum force reasonably required;
- used for the shortest time necessary;
- carried out with regard to the child's age, development, additional needs and individual circumstances; and
- used to protect the child or others, rather than as a punishment or consequence.

The current EYFS requires providers to take reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not used. Physical intervention is not considered corporal punishment where it is absolutely necessary to avert immediate danger of personal injury or to manage a child's behaviour.

When Physical Intervention May Be Used

Physical intervention may be necessary where, for example:

- a child is at immediate risk of seriously injuring themselves;
- a child is at immediate risk of injuring another child or adult;
- children are involved in a situation where immediate intervention is necessary to prevent injury;
- a child is attempting to enter an area that presents an immediate danger;
- a child needs to be moved away from an immediate source of danger; or
- physical intervention is absolutely necessary to prevent serious damage to property where this also presents a risk of harm.

Staff must use their professional judgement and consider whether there is a safer alternative.

Physical intervention must never be used simply because a child is refusing to comply with an instruction, being noisy, upset, having a tantrum or displaying behaviour that is inconvenient or challenging to adults.

It must never be used as a punishment, to humiliate a child, to intimidate a child or to obtain compliance.

Prohibited Physical Contact

Staff must never:

- hit, slap, smack or kick a child;
- shake a child;
- deliberately cause pain;
- use physical punishment;
- use physical intervention as a threat or punishment;
- use force unnecessarily;
- use force because they are angry or frustrated;
- use physical intervention for their own convenience; or
- use any intervention that is disproportionate to the circumstances.

Any concern that a member of staff has used inappropriate or excessive force will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in accordance with the nursery's Allegations Against Staff and Safeguarding Policy.

Use of Reasonable Force

Where physical intervention is unavoidable, staff should first consider whether there is a less restrictive and safer alternative.

Staff should, where practicable:

1. remain calm;
2. use clear verbal instructions;
3. give the child an opportunity to stop or move away where it is safe to do so;
4. seek assistance from another member of staff;
5. remove other children from the immediate area where possible;
6. use the minimum physical intervention necessary; and
7. stop the intervention as soon as the immediate risk has reduced.

The intervention must never be more restrictive or last longer than necessary.

Training

Little Blossom Nursery School will ensure that staff understand the circumstances in which physical intervention may be appropriate and the importance of using the least restrictive response.

Where specialist physical intervention training is considered necessary, appropriate training will be arranged.

Staff must not use specialist restraint techniques unless they have received appropriate training and are authorised to do so.

Training does not give staff permission to use physical intervention routinely. Every incident must still be assessed according to the circumstances at the time.

Two Members of Staff

Where reasonably practicable, another member of staff should be present or summoned when physical intervention is required.

However, the nursery recognises that an emergency may occur where immediate action is required and another member of staff cannot be present before intervention is necessary.

A staff member must never delay necessary action to protect a child simply because another member of staff is not immediately available.

Recording Physical Intervention

The nursery will keep a record of every occasion on which physical intervention is used.

The record should include:

- date and time;
- child's name;
- location;
- names of staff involved;
- what happened immediately before the intervention;
- the reason physical intervention was necessary;
- the behaviour or immediate risk presented;
- what other strategies were attempted, where appropriate;
- the type and duration of physical intervention used;
- the point at which the intervention ended;
- whether the child or anyone else was injured;
- any first aid or medical treatment provided;
- the child's response;
- any witnesses;
- action taken following the incident; and
- details of how and when parents/carers were informed.

The record must be factual and objective and must avoid judgemental language.

The EYFS specifically requires providers to keep a record of any occasion where physical intervention is used.

Informing Parents and Carers

Parents/carers will be informed about any physical intervention on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

The nursery will explain:

- what happened;
- why physical intervention was considered necessary;
- what intervention was used;
- whether anyone was injured; and
- what action will be taken to reduce the likelihood of a similar incident occurring.

The nursery will record that the parent/carer has been informed.

Where there are safeguarding reasons why information cannot immediately be shared with a parent/carer, the DSL will seek appropriate safeguarding advice and record the reason for any delay.

Injury or Medical Emergency

If a child is injured or becomes unwell during an incident, appropriate first aid will be provided immediately.

Where necessary, medical assistance will be sought.

Parents/carers will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where an injury is significant, the nursery will follow its Accident, Illness and First Aid Policy and any applicable notification requirements.

Children with SEND or Additional Needs

The nursery recognises that children with SEND, communication difficulties, sensory needs, developmental differences or other additional needs may display behaviour that communicates distress or unmet needs.

Physical intervention will not be used simply because a child has a disability or additional need.

Where there is a recurring risk of physical intervention, the nursery will work with parents/carers and relevant professionals to understand the child's needs and develop appropriate preventative strategies.

This may include:

- reviewing the child's environment;
- identifying triggers;
- adapting routines;
- using visual communication;
- providing sensory support;
- developing individual behaviour strategies;
- seeking advice from the SENCO; and
- involving relevant external professionals where appropriate.

Post-Incident Support

Following an incident, staff will consider the emotional wellbeing of the child and any other children affected.

The child will be supported to understand what happened in an age-appropriate manner.

Staff involved in the incident will also be offered appropriate support and an opportunity to reflect on the incident.

Where necessary, the DSL, Manager and SENCO will review whether additional support or changes to the child's provision are required.

Review Following Repeated Incidents

Where physical intervention is being used repeatedly with the same child, the nursery will not simply continue using physical intervention as a routine response.

The DSL/Manager will review:

- the circumstances leading to the incidents;
- possible triggers;
- whether the environment can be changed;
- whether the child's communication needs are being met;
- whether additional SEND support is required;
- whether the child's behaviour support plan needs updating; and
- whether advice should be sought from external professionals.

Parents/carers will be involved where appropriate.

Safeguarding

Any concern that physical intervention has been excessive, inappropriate, unnecessary or used as punishment will be treated seriously.

Where there is a concern about the conduct of a member of staff, volunteer, student, agency worker or other adult, the nursery will follow its Allegations and Concerns About Staff, Volunteers and Other Adults Policy.

The nursery will not attempt to dismiss or investigate a safeguarding allegation informally.

Confidentiality

Records relating to physical intervention will be treated confidentially and stored securely.

Information will only be shared with those who need it for safeguarding, the child's care, regulatory purposes or other legitimate reasons.

Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy will be implemented in accordance with:

- the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers;
- current safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance;
- the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- the nursery's Behaviour Policy;
- the nursery's SEND procedures; and
- relevant Hertfordshire safeguarding arrangements.

The DfE's current EYFS framework confirms that providers must record every occasion physical intervention is used and inform parents/carers on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Dropping Off and Collection Policy

Purpose

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that safe arrival and collection arrangements are an important part of safeguarding children.

The nursery will ensure that children are only accepted into care and released from care in accordance with agreed arrangements and that appropriate action is taken if a child is not collected or there are concerns about the safety or suitability of the person attempting to collect them.

Dropping Off

Parents and carers should bring their child to the nursery at the agreed contracted time.

Parents and carers should inform the nursery in advance if they need to bring their child at a different time from the agreed session.

Unexpected early arrival may mean that the nursery has not made the necessary staffing arrangements and may affect staffing ratios and the safe operation of the nursery. Parents and carers should therefore contact the Nursery Manager before changing their child's agreed attendance or arrival time.

If a child arrives late, the nursery will ensure that the child is safely admitted and that staffing arrangements remain appropriate.

Parents and carers who regularly require different hours should discuss this with the Nursery Manager so that appropriate arrangements can be agreed.

Authorised Collection

Children will only be released from the nursery to a parent, carer or other adult who has been authorised by the child's parent or legal guardian to collect them.

Parents and carers must provide the nursery with an up-to-date list of authorised collectors.

The nursery may request appropriate identification from an authorised person who is not known to staff.

Parents and carers should provide sufficient information to enable staff to identify authorised collectors safely. Where appropriate, this may include a photograph or other identifying information, subject to the nursery's data protection procedures as well as a password.

Parents and carers must inform the nursery promptly if an authorised person's permission to collect their child is withdrawn.

Collection by an Unfamiliar or Unauthorised Person

If a person arrives to collect a child and staff are unable to establish that they have permission to collect the child, the child will not be released until the nursery has verified the person's authority to collect.

Staff must not release a child simply because the person knows the child's name, knows information about the family or states that they have been sent by a parent.

Where appropriate, staff will contact the parent or carer using the contact details held by the nursery to verify the arrangement.

The nursery will not release a child to a person where there is a safeguarding concern about that person's suitability to collect the child.

Emergency Collection Arrangements and Passwords

In an emergency, a parent or carer may ask the nursery to release their child to a person who is not on the usual authorised collection list.

The nursery will operate a password or other agreed verification system for emergency collections. The password will be requested throughout your registration period.

Any password system must be agreed in advance wherever possible and must be kept confidential. Parents and carers should not share the password with anyone other than the person authorised to collect their child.

The nursery may require additional verification before releasing a child, particularly where the person is unknown to staff or there are safeguarding concerns.

If staff cannot satisfactorily verify the identity or authority of the person attempting to collect the child, the child will remain at the nursery while the nursery contacts the parent/carer and considers any necessary safeguarding action.

Late Collection

Parents and carers should collect their child at the agreed contracted collection time.

The nursery recognises that unexpected delays can occur. If a parent or carer expects to be late, they must contact the nursery as soon as possible and provide an estimated arrival time.

Where a parent or carer is delayed, the nursery will continue to care for the child safely while appropriate arrangements are made.

The nursery may contact another authorised person to collect the child where this has been agreed with the parent/carer and is appropriate in the circumstances.

Staff will reassure the child and provide appropriate care, comfort, activities, food and drink as necessary while waiting for collection.

Parents and carers should understand that repeated or significant late collection may affect staffing arrangements and the safe operation of the nursery.

The nursery may charge for unarranged or unexplained late collection in accordance with its current fees and terms and conditions.

Procedure for Late or Non-Collection

If a child has not been collected at the agreed collection time and the nursery has not been informed of a delay, *staff will:*

- Attempt to contact the parent or carer using the contact details held by the nursery.
- If the parent or carer cannot be contacted, contact the child's emergency contacts and/or other authorised collectors.
- Continue to care for and reassure the child while attempts are made to make safe collection arrangements.
- Keep a record of attempts to contact the parent, emergency contacts and authorised collectors.
- Seek advice from the Nursery Manager/DSL where there are concerns about the circumstances or the child's welfare.

If the child remains uncollected and reasonable attempts to establish safe collection arrangements have been unsuccessful, contact Hertfordshire Children's Services or the appropriate out-of-hours safeguarding service without unnecessary delay and follow the advice provided.

The nursery will consider the individual circumstances when deciding when to seek advice or make a referral. Staff will not wait for an arbitrary period if there is a safeguarding concern or if the circumstances indicate that Children's Services should be contacted sooner.

If there is an immediate safeguarding concern, the nursery will contact the police on 999 where appropriate.

Please note that a small late collection fee may be added to your invoice if your child is collected after the agreed collection time.

Children Subject to Court Orders or Collection Restrictions

Parents and carers must inform the nursery immediately if there are any court orders, legal restrictions or safeguarding arrangements affecting who may collect or have contact with their child.

The nursery will request appropriate documentation where necessary and will record and follow any relevant legal or safeguarding arrangements.

Staff must not make decisions about disputed parental rights without appropriate advice.

Where there is uncertainty about whether a person has the right to collect a child, the nursery will seek advice from the Nursery Manager, DSL and, where necessary, the appropriate safeguarding or legal professionals.

If a Person Arrives Under the Influence or Appears Unable to Safely Care for the Child

If a person arrives to collect a child and staff have reasonable concerns that the person is intoxicated, under the influence of drugs or otherwise unable to safely care for the child, staff must not place the child at risk.

The Nursery Manager or DSL should be informed immediately.

The nursery will seek to establish whether another authorised adult can safely collect the child and may contact Children's Services or the police where necessary.

Staff should remain professional and avoid confrontation while prioritising the child's safety.

Records

The nursery will maintain appropriate records of:

- authorised collectors;
- changes to collection arrangements;
- emergency collection arrangements;
- late collections;
- attempts to contact parents and emergency contacts;
- incidents involving unauthorised or disputed collection;
- safeguarding concerns arising during collection; and
- referrals or advice sought from Children's Services, the police or other agencies.

Records will be maintained securely in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection procedures.

Safeguarding

Any concern arising during arrival or collection that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm must be reported immediately in accordance with the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Staff must not release a child where doing so would place the child at risk.

Where appropriate, the nursery will seek advice from Hertfordshire Children's Services, the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, the police or other relevant safeguarding professionals.

Protecting Children from Child Sexual Exploitation

What is Child Sexual Exploitation?

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse.

Under current statutory safeguarding guidance, child sexual exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity:

- in exchange for something the child needs or wants; and/or
- for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

A child may have been sexually exploited even where the sexual activity appears to be consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can occur through the use of technology, including online grooming and the sharing or obtaining of sexual images. Children can be exploited by adults or by other children and exploitation may occur within families, peer groups, gangs, organised groups, relationships or through online platforms.

Children may be exploited for money, food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, gifts, affection, attention, status or other perceived benefits. A child may not recognise that they are being exploited or may believe that they are in a relationship or friendship. CSE can involve grooming, coercion, manipulation, intimidation, threats, violence or control.

Who May Be at Risk?

Any child can be vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Certain circumstances or vulnerabilities may increase a child's risk, *including*:

- previous experience of abuse or neglect;
- emotional or mental health difficulties;
- social isolation or difficulties with relationships;
- being looked after or having experience of care;
- going missing from home, education or care;
- having contact with older children or adults who may pose a risk;
- involvement with gangs or criminal exploitation;
- substance misuse;
- being vulnerable online;
- having experienced trafficking or exploitation; or
- other circumstances that may make a child vulnerable to coercion or manipulation.

The presence of one or more of these factors does not mean that a child is being sexually exploited. Staff should remain alert to changes in a child's behaviour, circumstances or presentation and report concerns appropriately.

Possible Signs and Indicators

Child sexual exploitation can be difficult to identify. Children may not disclose what is happening to them and signs may be subtle or may be mistaken for normal changes in behaviour.

Possible indicators may include:

- becoming withdrawn, anxious, fearful or unusually quiet;
- sudden changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing;
- becoming unusually secretive;
- changes in relationships or friendships;
- appearing fearful of particular people or places;
- receiving unexplained gifts, money, clothing, phones or other items;
- having possessions that cannot be explained;
- becoming unusually protective of a mobile phone or online activity;
- receiving inappropriate messages or contact online;
- displaying sexualised behaviour or language that is inappropriate for their age or development;
- knowledge of sexual matters that is inappropriate for their age;
- signs of grooming;
- unexplained injuries;
- changes in eating, sleeping or toileting;
- self-harm or other risk-taking behaviour;
- substance misuse;
- going missing or frequently being absent from home, education or care;
- being collected or visited by unknown or significantly older individuals;
- appearing frightened, controlled or intimidated by another person; or
- any other unexplained change that causes staff to be concerned about the child's safety or wellbeing.

These indicators do not, by themselves, prove that a child is being sexually exploited. Staff must not attempt to investigate or determine the cause themselves.

Online Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation can take place through the internet, social media, messaging services, gaming platforms, mobile phones and other technology.

Children may be groomed online and manipulated into:

- sending sexual images or videos;
- engaging in sexual conversations;
- participating in sexual activity through webcams or livestreams;
- meeting someone they have first encountered online; or
- providing information or access that enables further exploitation.

Staff must take concerns about online grooming, sexual exploitation or the sharing of sexual images seriously and report them in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding procedures.

Online child sexual exploitation can occur without the child immediately recognising that they are being abused.

What Staff Must Do

If a member of staff has a concern that a child may be experiencing or at risk of child sexual exploitation, they must:

1. Report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.
2. Record the concern factually and objectively in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding procedures.
3. Listen to the child if they choose to disclose information and allow them to speak in their own words.
4. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking to a trusted adult.
5. Avoid leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegation.
6. Not promise the child confidentiality.
7. Share information only with those who need it to safeguard the child.
8. Follow the nursery's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Staff must not attempt to contact, confront or investigate a suspected perpetrator.

Immediate Risk

If staff believe that a child is in immediate danger, they must contact the police on 999 without delay.

Hertfordshire County Council advises professionals to call 999 where someone is in immediate danger or a crime is being committed. For urgent out-of-hours safeguarding support, professionals can contact the relevant Hertfordshire safeguarding service.

Where a safeguarding concern does not require an emergency police response, the nursery will follow the current Hertfordshire safeguarding referral procedures and seek advice or make a referral to Children's Services as appropriate.

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Arrangements

Little Blossom Nursery School will follow the current safeguarding procedures of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and Hertfordshire County Council.

The nursery will ensure that staff understand how to report and refer concerns about children and are aware of Hertfordshire's local safeguarding arrangements.

The DSL will keep up to date with relevant Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures, local safeguarding priorities, training, learning and referral arrangements.

The HSCP provides safeguarding information, professional resources, training and local safeguarding arrangements for organisations working with children and young people in Hertfordshire.

Working With Parents and Other Professionals

Where there are concerns about child sexual exploitation, the nursery will work appropriately with parents and carers and relevant safeguarding professionals.

Information will be shared in accordance with safeguarding information-sharing requirements and the child's best interests.

The nursery will cooperate with Hertfordshire Children's Services, the police, health professionals, the Local Authority Designated Officer (where relevant), the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and other appropriate agencies.

The nursery will not delay a safeguarding referral while attempting to obtain parental consent where doing so could place a child at further risk or delay necessary safeguarding action.

Staff Training and Awareness

All staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to recognise possible signs of abuse, exploitation, grooming and neglect and understand how to respond to concerns.

Safeguarding training will include awareness of child sexual exploitation, online exploitation, grooming, child criminal exploitation and other forms of abuse and exploitation relevant to the children attending the nursery.

The nursery will provide safeguarding updates where necessary and will ensure that staff remain aware of relevant national guidance and Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures.

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside the nursery's:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;

- Online Safety Policy;
- Staff Training Policy;
- Allegations and Concerns About Staff, Volunteers and Other Adults Policy;
- Missing Child Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure;
- Behaviour Policy; and
- Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism Policy, where applicable.

Any concern about a child must be dealt with in accordance with the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Further information and guidance

Staff and parents/carers can find further information from:

[GOV.UK – Working Together to Safeguard Children](https://www.gov.uk/working-together-to-secure-children)

[GOV.UK – Child sexual exploitation](https://www.gov.uk/child-sexual-exploitation)

[NSPCC – Child sexual exploitation](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/child-sexual-exploitation/)

[Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership \(HSCP\)](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/safeguarding-children-partnership/)

[Hertfordshire County Council – Report a child protection concern](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/report-a-child-protection-concern/)

Protecting Children from Radicalisation and Terrorism

Purpose

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that safeguarding children includes protecting them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism or being exposed to extremist influences.

The nursery has regard to the Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales and will follow relevant safeguarding requirements and local arrangements. Prevent forms part of the nursery's wider safeguarding responsibilities and is intended to support early intervention where a child or another person may be vulnerable to radicalisation.

As a registered early years provider, the nursery will take a proportionate and age-appropriate approach to Prevent. The Early Years Foundation Stage supports children to develop an understanding of right and wrong, to share and mix with others, to value different views and to recognise similarities and differences between people.

Radicalisation and Extremism

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism or extremist ideologies associated with terrorism.

There is no single pathway to radicalisation and there is no single indicator that proves a person is being radicalised. Concerns should be considered in the context of the child's individual circumstances, vulnerabilities, behaviour and any other relevant safeguarding information.

Children may be exposed to extremist views or material through:

- family or household members;
- friends or other individuals;
- online content, social media, gaming or messaging platforms;
- community or social groups;
- extremist propaganda or material;
- exposure to hateful or discriminatory views; or
- other environments or influences.

Very young children may be particularly vulnerable because they may be unable to understand, question or challenge information or views presented to them by adults or others.

What Staff Should Be Alert To

As part of their wider safeguarding responsibilities, staff should be alert to concerns such as:

- a child disclosing that they have been exposed to extremist or terrorist material or views;
- a child being exposed to extremist material, including through digital devices or online content;
- significant and unexplained changes in a child's behaviour, emotional wellbeing or relationships;
- a child repeating extremist, hateful or violent language or narratives that are unusual for their age and circumstances;
- expressions of intolerance or hatred towards people because of their religion, race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation or other protected or personal characteristics;
- attempts by an individual to impose extremist or hateful views on a child or others;
- a child appearing fearful, controlled or influenced by an individual who promotes extremist views;
- concerns about an adult or other person attempting to influence a child towards extremist or terrorist activity; or
- any other behaviour or circumstance that causes staff to believe that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation or terrorism.

These indicators must not be considered in isolation. Staff should not make assumptions based solely on a child's religion, culture, ethnicity, family background, political views or the views expressed by parents or carers.

Equality, Diversity and Respect

Little Blossom Nursery School promotes an inclusive environment in which every child and family is treated with dignity and respect.

The nursery does not tolerate:

- racism;
- discrimination;
- bullying;
- hateful or derogatory language;
- harassment;
- violence;
- intolerance towards people because of their faith or lack of faith;
- intolerance based on race, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexual orientation; or
- extremist or terrorist advocacy.

Any such behaviour will be addressed in accordance with the nursery's Behaviour Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and, where appropriate, the Staff Code of Conduct.

Promoting Positive Values and Resilience

The nursery will promote an inclusive and caring environment that helps children develop positive relationships, confidence, communication skills and an understanding that people may have different beliefs, backgrounds and experiences.

Staff will provide age-appropriate opportunities for children to:

- learn right from wrong;
- develop empathy and respect for others;
- listen to different views;
- develop positive relationships;
- understand that people can be different while still being treated with respect;
- develop confidence and appropriate communication skills; and
- understand how to seek help from a trusted adult when something makes them feel worried or unsafe.

For young children, promoting resilience to extremist influence is primarily achieved through the nursery's wider personal, social and emotional development, inclusive practice and safeguarding arrangements.

Concerns About a Child

If a member of staff is concerned that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation or may have been exposed to extremist or terrorist influences, they must report the concern promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.

Staff must not investigate the concern themselves or attempt to decide whether a child is being radicalised.

The DSL will consider the concern alongside other safeguarding information and will seek appropriate advice where necessary.

Where appropriate, the nursery may seek advice from:

- Hertfordshire Children's Services;
- the Hertfordshire Prevent team;
- the police;
- the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP); or
- another appropriate safeguarding agency.

The current Prevent guidance advises education settings to have clear internal arrangements for raising concerns and for making a Prevent referral where appropriate.

Prevent Referrals and Channel

Where a child or another person is considered to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, the nursery may make a Prevent referral in accordance with the current national and Hertfordshire procedures.

A Prevent referral is intended to enable early support and intervention. It does not mean that a person has committed a criminal offence.

Where appropriate, concerns may be considered through the Channel process, which provides voluntary support to people who may be susceptible to radicalisation.

The nursery will cooperate with any appropriate safeguarding or Prevent process and will share information in accordance with safeguarding and information-sharing requirements.

Immediate Risk

If staff believe that a child or another person is in immediate danger, or that a criminal offence or terrorist activity is taking place or is about to take place, the police must be contacted on 999 without delay.

Staff must not delay emergency action while waiting to speak to the DSL or another safeguarding professional.

The current Prevent guidance states that the police should be contacted immediately where a learner is about to put themselves or others in immediate danger or appears to be planning a criminal offence.

Hertfordshire Prevent Arrangements

Little Blossom Nursery School will follow the current safeguarding and Prevent arrangements established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and Hertfordshire County Council.

The DSL will maintain awareness of Hertfordshire's local Prevent arrangements and will ensure that relevant referral pathways and procedures are kept up to date.

Hertfordshire County Council provides a Prevent service supporting people who may be susceptible to extremist views or radicalisation. Current Hertfordshire information advises that concerns can be referred to the local Prevent team and that 999 must be used where there is immediate danger.

The nursery will review relevant Hertfordshire Prevent information and local safeguarding procedures whenever they are updated.

Staff Training

All staff will receive safeguarding training that includes awareness of the Prevent duty, radicalisation and extremism appropriate to their role.

Staff will be supported to:

- understand the Prevent duty;
- recognise possible indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation;
- understand that there is no single pathway to radicalisation;
- respond appropriately to concerns;
- understand how to report concerns internally;
- know when a Prevent referral may be appropriate;
- understand the importance of proportionate and age-appropriate safeguarding practice; and
- understand Hertfordshire's local Prevent and safeguarding arrangements.

The nursery will use appropriate Home Office Prevent training and other relevant safeguarding training to ensure that staff remain suitably informed. The Home Office provides Prevent training covering the Prevent duty, extremism, radicalisation, making referrals and available interventions.

All staff will complete appropriate Prevent training before, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, commencing employment at Little Blossom Nursery School. Prevent training will be refreshed at least every two years, or sooner where necessary, including where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements, emerging risks or where additional training is identified as necessary.

The DSL and Deputy DSL will undertake Prevent training appropriate to their safeguarding responsibilities and will keep their knowledge up to date in accordance with current national guidance and Hertfordshire safeguarding and Prevent arrangements

The DSL will undertake training appropriate to their safeguarding responsibilities and will keep their knowledge up to date.

Prevent Risk Assessment

The nursery will maintain a proportionate Prevent risk assessment as part of its wider safeguarding arrangements.

The assessment will consider the nature of the nursery, the age of the children, the local context and relevant risks, including online risks.

The Department for Education provides a specific Prevent risk-assessment template for registered early years settings, which the nursery may use to support its assessment and action planning.

Whistleblowing

Where a member of staff has concerns about radicalisation, extremist influence or the way a Prevent concern is being managed, they must raise the concern with the DSL or Nursery Manager.

Where the concern relates to the DSL or Nursery Manager, or where a staff member believes their concern has not been appropriately addressed, they must use the alternative reporting arrangements in the nursery's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure.

Staff will not be subject to unfair treatment or retaliation for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

Policy Links

This policy should be read alongside the nursery's:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Staff Training Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Equality and Diversity Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure; and
- Allegations and Concerns About Staff, Volunteers and Other Adults Policy.

Little Blossom Nursery School will review this policy regularly and whenever there is a relevant change to legislation, statutory guidance, the EYFS, Prevent guidance or Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures.

Prevent Duty and Protecting Children from Radicalisation

Prevent Duty

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises its responsibility to safeguard children from the risk of being drawn into terrorism, extremist ideologies or radicalisation.

The nursery will have regard to the current Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales and will treat Prevent as part of its wider safeguarding responsibilities. The aim of Prevent is to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, including through early intervention and support for people who may be susceptible to radicalisation.

The nursery will take a proportionate, age-appropriate and child-centred approach, recognising that the children attending Little Blossom are young children and may be particularly dependent on adults to keep them safe.

Prevent concerns will be managed in accordance with the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, local Hertfordshire safeguarding arrangements and current Prevent procedures.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to remain alert to safeguarding concerns, including concerns that a child may have been exposed to extremist or terrorist influences.

Staff must report any concern promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.

Staff must not investigate concerns themselves or attempt to decide whether a child is being radicalised.

The DSL will consider the concern and, where appropriate, seek advice or make a referral through the relevant safeguarding or Prevent arrangements.

Where there is an immediate risk of harm or a crime is taking place, the police will be contacted without delay.

Definitions

Terrorism

Terrorism is defined in the Terrorism Act 2000, as amended. Broadly, terrorism involves the use or threat of serious violence or other serious harm for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause, as set out in legislation.

The nursery will rely on the current statutory definition rather than reproducing a lengthy legislative definition within this policy.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism or forms of extremism that may lead to terrorism.

There is no single pathway to radicalisation and no single indicator that proves a person is being radicalised. Concerns must be considered in the context of the child's individual circumstances, vulnerabilities, behaviour and other safeguarding information.

The Prevent duty requires education providers to help prevent the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Possible Indicators of Concern

As part of their wider safeguarding responsibilities, staff should be alert to concerns such as:

- a child being exposed to extremist or terrorist material;
- a child repeating extremist, hateful or violent language that is unusual for their age or circumstances;
- significant and unexplained changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing;
- concerns about an adult attempting to influence a child towards extremist or terrorist views;
- a child being exposed to extremist material online;
- intolerance, hatred or discrimination towards individuals or groups;
- concerns about a child's vulnerability to manipulation or coercion; or
- any other circumstances that cause a member of staff to believe that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation.

These indicators should never be considered in isolation.

The nursery will not make assumptions about a child or family based on their religion, ethnicity, culture, political views, nationality, background or beliefs.

Fundamental British Values

Little Blossom Nursery School promotes the fundamental British values of:

- democracy;
- the rule of law;
- individual liberty; and
- mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The current Prevent guidance states that the EYFS supports providers to promote these values in an age-appropriate way, including helping children learn right from wrong, mix and share with other children and value other people's views.

At Little Blossom, these values are embedded naturally within our everyday practice rather than being treated as a separate subject.

Democracy

We promote democracy by:

- listening to children's views;
- giving children appropriate choices;
- encouraging children to express their preferences;

- encouraging children to listen to others;
- allowing children to contribute to decisions that affect their play and learning;
- helping children understand that other people may have different views; and
- ensuring children are treated with dignity and respect.

Children are encouraged to express themselves, while learning that others also have the right to express their views.

The Rule of Law

We help children understand the difference between right and wrong and why rules are important.

This includes:

- establishing clear and consistent boundaries;
- helping children understand that rules help keep everyone safe;
- encouraging children to consider the consequences of their actions;
- using age-appropriate stories, activities and discussions to explore right and wrong;
- helping children understand the role of people who help and protect us; and
- modelling respectful and responsible behaviour.

Individual Liberty

We support children to develop independence, confidence and an understanding of their own rights and responsibilities.

This includes:

- providing appropriate choices;
- encouraging children to make decisions about their play and learning;
- supporting children to express their feelings and preferences;
- encouraging children to say “no” or “stop” when appropriate;
- helping children understand personal boundaries;
- encouraging children to respect the boundaries of others; and
- supporting children to become increasingly independent.

Children are supported to understand that freedom and choice come with responsibility for themselves and others.

Mutual Respect

We promote mutual respect by:

- treating every child and adult with dignity;
- modelling respectful language and behaviour;
- encouraging children to listen to one another;
- encouraging sharing and turn-taking;
- supporting children to develop empathy;
- celebrating differences between people;
- providing inclusive and diverse books, toys and resources; and
- challenging discriminatory or hateful behaviour appropriately.
- Staff act as positive role models at all times.

Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises and respects the different cultures, religions, beliefs and backgrounds of the children and families who attend the nursery.

Children are given age-appropriate opportunities to learn about the wider world through:

- books and stories;
- music and creative activities;
- celebrations and festivals;
- cultural experiences;
- diverse images and resources;
- discussions about families and communities; and
- activities that encourage children to recognise similarities and differences.

The nursery may acknowledge and explore festivals and celebrations from a range of faiths and cultures, including Eid, Ramadan, Diwali, Hanukkah, Christmas and other significant cultural or religious occasions, in an age-appropriate and inclusive manner.

The purpose is to help children understand and respect that people may have different beliefs, traditions and ways of life.

Online Safety

The nursery recognises that children may be exposed to extremist, hateful or inappropriate material through digital technology.

Staff will follow the nursery's Online Safety Policy and will report any safeguarding concern relating to online extremist or terrorist content to the DSL.

Parents and carers will be provided with appropriate information about online safety where relevant.

Hertfordshire Safeguarding and Prevent Arrangements

As *Little Blossom Nursery School* operates in Hertfordshire, the nursery will follow the current local safeguarding arrangements of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and relevant Hertfordshire Prevent procedures.

The HSCP brings together agencies and organisations working with children and young people in Hertfordshire to help keep children safe.

The DSL will keep up to date with:

- Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures;
- local Prevent arrangements;
- relevant referral pathways;

- safeguarding training and updates;
- local safeguarding priorities; and
- relevant learning from safeguarding reviews.

Where a Prevent concern requires external advice or referral, the nursery will follow the current Hertfordshire procedures.

Prevent Referrals

Where the DSL considers that a child or another person may be vulnerable to radicalisation, appropriate safeguarding advice will be sought.

A Prevent referral will only be made where appropriate and in accordance with current guidance and local arrangements.

A Prevent referral is not an allegation that a person has committed a criminal offence. Prevent is intended to support early intervention where someone may be susceptible to radicalisation.

The nursery will cooperate with Hertfordshire safeguarding professionals, the police, Prevent practitioners and other relevant agencies where appropriate.

Immediate Risk

If a child or another person is in immediate danger, or there is an immediate risk of a criminal or terrorist act, staff must contact the police on 999 without delay.

Staff must not wait for permission from the DSL where immediate emergency action is required.

Prevent training

All staff will complete appropriate Prevent training before, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, commencing employment at Little Blossom Nursery School.

Prevent training will be refreshed **at least every two years**, or sooner where necessary, including where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements, emerging risks or where additional training is identified as necessary.

The DSL and Deputy DSL will undertake Prevent training appropriate to their safeguarding responsibilities and will keep their knowledge up to date.

The nursery will use appropriate Home Office Prevent training and relevant Hertfordshire safeguarding resources. The Home Office provides Prevent training covering the Prevent duty, extremism, radicalisation, referrals and available support.

Prevent Risk Assessment

Little Blossom Nursery School will maintain a proportionate Prevent risk assessment as part of its wider safeguarding arrangements.

The Department for Education provides a specific Prevent risk-assessment template for registered early years settings. Use of the template is not mandatory, but it can help early-years providers assess local risks and identify appropriate measures to reduce those risks.

The DSL will ensure that the risk assessment is reviewed regularly and whenever there are significant changes to the nursery, local risks or relevant guidance.

Whistleblowing

Staff who have concerns about radicalisation, extremism, terrorism or the way a Prevent concern is being managed must raise the concern with the DSL or Nursery Manager.

Where the concern relates to the DSL or Nursery Manager, or where a staff member believes their concern has not been appropriately addressed, they must use the alternative reporting arrangements contained within the nursery's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure.

Staff will not be subject to unfair treatment or retaliation for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and whenever there is a relevant change to:

- legislation;
- the Prevent Duty Guidance;
- the EYFS;
- safeguarding guidance;
- Hertfordshire safeguarding arrangements; or
- local Prevent procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Protecting Children from FGM

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales and is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM can cause serious and long-lasting physical and psychological harm.

The nursery has a duty to safeguard children from the risk of FGM and will follow the current Working Together to Safeguard Children, the Multi-agency statutory guidance on FGM, and relevant Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures.

FGM includes procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs where there is no medical reason.

FGM may be carried out in the UK or overseas.

Staff Responsibilities

If a member of staff is concerned that a child may be at risk of FGM, or may have undergone FGM, they must report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.

Staff must not investigate the concern themselves, attempt to examine the child or make assumptions about the child's family, culture, religion or background.

The DSL will assess the concern and follow the appropriate safeguarding and referral procedures.

Where appropriate, the nursery will seek advice from or make a referral to Hertfordshire Children's Services, the police, health professionals or other relevant safeguarding agencies.

Possible Indicators That a Child May Be at Risk of FGM

There is no single indicator that confirms that a child is at risk of FGM. Staff should consider concerns in the context of the child's individual circumstances.

Possible indicators may include:

- a child talking about a forthcoming special ceremony, procedure or event;
- a child mentioning that they are going on a holiday or extended trip abroad where there may be a risk of FGM;
- a child expressing fear or anxiety about a forthcoming trip or event;
- a child saying that they are going to have a procedure to become a woman or for another reason;
- information that a sibling or other family member may have undergone FGM;
- information that a child may be being prepared for FGM;
- concerns raised by another professional or agency;
- a child going missing from education or care for unexplained periods;
- a child becoming unusually withdrawn, anxious or distressed; or
- any other information that causes staff to believe that a child may be at risk.

Staff must not make assumptions about risk based solely on a family's ethnicity, religion, nationality, culture or country of origin.

The presence of one or more indicators does not prove that FGM will occur. However, concerns must always be reported so that they can be properly assessed.

Possible Indicators That FGM May Have Taken Place

Possible indicators may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing;
- significant pain or discomfort;
- difficulty urinating or repeated urinary problems;
- changes in toileting;
- appearing distressed or anxious about using the toilet;
- significant changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing;
- withdrawal or increased anxiety;
- reluctance to participate in physical activities;
- unexplained physical symptoms; or
- a child disclosing that FGM has taken place.

These signs can have many possible causes and do not necessarily indicate FGM. Staff must not attempt to diagnose FGM.

Disclosure by a Child

If a child tells a member of staff that FGM has happened or that they are being taken somewhere to undergo FGM, the staff member must:

1. Listen calmly and allow the child to speak in their own words.
2. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling a trusted adult.
3. Avoid leading questions or asking the child to repeat the information unnecessarily.
4. Not promise confidentiality.
5. Record the disclosure accurately, using the child's own words where possible.
6. Report the concern immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.
7. Follow the nursery's safeguarding procedures.

The child's immediate safety must be prioritised.

Mandatory Reporting Duty

The FGM mandatory reporting duty under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 applies to specified professionals, including regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales.

The duty applies where a specified professional discovers that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18, either because:

- the girl discloses directly to the professional that FGM has been carried out; or
- the professional observes physical signs that appear to show FGM has been carried out.

The mandatory reporting duty does not apply to cases where FGM is only suspected or where a child is considered to be at risk. These cases must instead be dealt with through normal safeguarding procedures.

The mandatory reporting duty is a personal duty. It cannot simply be transferred to another person. Where a professional is subject to the duty and discovers a known case, they must make the required report to the police. The expectation is that the report is made as soon as possible and normally by the close of the next working day.

Staff who are not subject to the mandatory reporting duty must still report any known or suspected case immediately to the DSL and follow the nursery's safeguarding procedures.

The nursery will support staff in understanding whether the mandatory reporting duty applies to their individual professional role.

If a Child Is at Immediate Risk

If there is an immediate threat to the child's life or a likelihood of serious immediate harm, the police must be contacted immediately, including calling 999 where appropriate.

The nursery must not delay emergency safeguarding action while waiting for a meeting, discussion or further evidence.

FGM and Health Professionals

Where appropriate, the nursery may work with the child's GP, health visitor, school nursing service, Children's Services or other relevant professionals as part of a multi-agency safeguarding response.

The nursery will not automatically refer every FGM concern to a GP or health visitor. The appropriate action will depend on the individual circumstances and advice from the DSL and relevant safeguarding professionals.

FGM Protection Orders

Where a child is at risk of FGM, a FGM Protection Order may be considered as part of safeguarding arrangements. Such orders can be used to protect individuals from FGM and can include restrictions intended to prevent the practice from taking place.

The nursery will cooperate with Children's Services, the police and other relevant agencies where protective measures are required.
Hertfordshire Safeguarding Arrangements

As *Little Blossom Nursery School* operates in Hertfordshire, the nursery will follow the current procedures of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and Hertfordshire County Council.

The DSL will ensure that staff are aware of the current local referral arrangements and will keep this policy updated when Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures change.

Concerns about FGM will be managed as part of the nursery's wider safeguarding and child protection arrangements.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information relating to an FGM concern will be treated sensitively and shared only with those who need the information to safeguard the child or fulfil their legal responsibilities.

Staff must not discuss concerns with other colleagues, parents or members of the community unless authorised to do so or where information sharing is necessary to safeguard the child.

Information will be recorded factually, accurately and securely.

FGM Training

All staff will receive safeguarding training that includes awareness of FGM and other forms of abuse and exploitation.

Staff will be supported to understand:

- what FGM is;
- the possible indicators of risk;
- how to respond to a disclosure;
- how to report concerns;
- the difference between an at-risk/suspected case and a known case;
- the mandatory reporting duty and who it applies to;
- Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures; and
- the importance of culturally sensitive, non-discriminatory safeguarding practice.

FGM training will be refreshed **at least every two years**, or sooner where necessary, including where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements, emerging risks or where additional training is identified as necessary.

The DSL and Deputy DSL will maintain up-to-date knowledge of FGM guidance and local safeguarding arrangements.

Further information

Staff should refer to the current:

- Multi-agency statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation; and
- Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation: Procedural Information.

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Introduction

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children.

We recognise that safer recruitment is an essential part of our safeguarding arrangements. The nursery will take all reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure that people who work with, or have regular contact with, children are suitable to do so.

Our recruitment procedures are designed to:

- deter unsuitable applicants;
- identify and assess applicants who may pose a safeguarding risk;
- verify identity, qualifications and employment history;
- obtain and scrutinise appropriate references;
- complete the required Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks;
- assess an individual's suitability to work with children;
- ensure that staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities; and
- comply with the current Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework and other applicable safeguarding requirements.

The nursery will ensure that safer recruitment arrangements are applied consistently to employees and, where applicable, volunteers, students, agency workers, contractors and other adults who may have contact with children.

Little Blossom Nursery School will comply with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers applicable to the nursery. This policy has been reviewed to reflect the updated EYFS statutory framework which comes into force on 1 September 2026. The nursery will ensure that its safer recruitment, suitability, vetting, reference, induction and ongoing suitability procedures remain compliant with the current EYFS requirements and will update this policy whenever statutory requirements or relevant guidance change.

Recruitment Procedure

All applicants will normally be required to complete an application form.

The application form will obtain sufficient information to assess the applicant's suitability, *including:*

- full employment history;
- previous relevant experience;
- qualifications;
- training;
- relevant skills;
- reasons for leaving previous employment;
- details of any gaps in employment;
- relevant safeguarding information; and
- a declaration that the information provided is accurate and complete.

Applicants may also be required to provide a curriculum vitae, although the nursery will not rely on a CV alone as a substitute for a completed application form.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview.

Shortlisting and Interview

The nursery will use a structured recruitment process designed to identify the most suitable candidate for the role.

Interview questions will explore, where relevant:

- experience of working with children;
- understanding of safeguarding and child protection;
- understanding of professional boundaries;
- attitudes towards children;
- equality, inclusion and respectful practice;
- behaviour management;
- working with parents and families;
- understanding of confidentiality;
- willingness to report safeguarding concerns;
- understanding of whistleblowing;
- relevant qualifications and experience; and
- any concerns arising from the application, employment history or references.

Any unexplained gaps or inconsistencies in employment history will be explored with the applicant before an appointment is confirmed.

Where appropriate, candidates may be asked to complete a safeguarding-related scenario as part of the interview process.

Identity Checks

Before a start date is confirmed, the nursery will verify the applicant's identity using appropriate original documentation.

Where applicable, this may include:

- passport;
- driving licence;
- birth certificate;
- immigration/right-to-work documentation;
- evidence of address; and
- evidence of any change of name.

The nursery will retain an appropriate record of the identity check.

Right to Work

The nursery will complete the appropriate right-to-work checks before employment begins, in accordance with current Home Office requirements. Where an applicant has immigration restrictions, the nursery will ensure that the individual is permitted to undertake the proposed role and that any restrictions are complied with.

Qualifications

The nursery will verify relevant qualifications and professional registrations where these are required for the role.

Original certificates or appropriate verification will be obtained where necessary.

Where qualifications have been obtained outside the UK, the nursery will consider appropriate verification of the qualification and whether any additional evidence is required.

Employment History

The nursery will obtain a full employment history and will explore any gaps or inconsistencies.

Applicants will be asked to provide an explanation for significant gaps in employment and any concerns will be considered before an appointment is confirmed.

Where an applicant has previously worked with children, the nursery will seek relevant information about their previous employment and suitability to work with children.

References

The nursery will obtain appropriate references before confirming an appointment wherever reasonably practicable.

The nursery will not rely on applicants to obtain or provide their own references.

References should normally be obtained directly from the referee using a verifiable organisational email address or other legitimate source.

References should, where possible, include:

- the applicant's dates of employment;
- job title and responsibilities;
- reason for leaving;
- confirmation of the applicant's suitability to work with children;
- relevant safeguarding information;
- any substantiated safeguarding concerns or allegations that meet the relevant threshold; and
- any other information relevant to the suitability of the applicant.

References will be scrutinised and any concerns, discrepancies or vague information will be followed up with the referee and/or applicant before the appointment is confirmed.

The nursery will not accept references from family members.

Where the applicant is currently employed, a reference will normally be sought from their current employer.

Where the applicant is not currently employed, the nursery will seek an appropriate reference from their most recent relevant employer.

Where the applicant has previously worked with children, the nursery will make reasonable efforts to obtain a reference from the organisation where they most recently worked with children.

Conditional Offers

Any offer of employment will normally be conditional upon satisfactory completion of all required pre-employment checks.

These may include, as applicable:

- identity verification;
- right-to-work checks;
- references;
- qualification checks;
- enhanced DBS check;
- Children's Barred List check where legally required;
- overseas criminal record checks where appropriate;
- health/suitability declaration;
- employment history checks; and
- any other checks required by law or relevant to the particular role.

The nursery will not confirm a start date until it is satisfied that the individual is suitable to work with children.

DBS Checks

Little Blossom Nursery School will obtain the appropriate DBS check for roles that are eligible for such checks.

Where the role involves regulated activity with children, the nursery will obtain the appropriate level of DBS check and Children's Barred List information where legally permitted and required.

The nursery recognises that a DBS check is one part of safer recruitment and does not, by itself, determine whether an individual is suitable to work with children.

The nursery will consider any information disclosed on a DBS certificate fairly, proportionately and in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance.

A criminal record will not automatically prevent an individual from being employed. The nursery will undertake an individual suitability assessment where relevant information is disclosed.

DBS Update Service

Where a member of staff has subscribed to the DBS Update Service, the nursery may undertake an appropriate status check, with the individual's permission, where the relevant legal requirements are met.

The nursery will verify the original DBS certificate and record the appropriate details of any status check undertaken.

The nursery recognises that DBS certificates do not have a fixed three-year expiry period. The decision to undertake further checks will be based on the role, applicable requirements, risk and the nursery's ongoing suitability procedures.

Overseas Applicants and Overseas Employment

Where an applicant has lived or worked outside the UK, the nursery will consider whether additional overseas criminal record checks or other evidence of suitability are appropriate.

The nursery recognises that a DBS check does not provide a complete record of criminal history outside the UK. Additional checks may therefore be required depending on the individual's circumstances.

Agency Staff

Where agency staff are used, the nursery will obtain written confirmation from the agency that the appropriate identity, qualification, reference, DBS and suitability checks have been completed.

The nursery will satisfy itself that agency staff supplied to work with children are suitable and that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.

Students and Volunteers

Students and volunteers will be subject to appropriate safeguarding and suitability checks according to their role, age, duties and level of contact with children.

The nursery will ensure that students and volunteers understand:

- safeguarding procedures;
- confidentiality;
- professional boundaries;
- whistleblowing;
- behaviour expectations; and
- how to report concerns.

Persons Aged 16 and Over

The nursery will comply with the current EYFS requirements regarding individuals aged 16 or over who work in or have relevant contact with the provision.

Appropriate suitability checks will be completed where required.

The nursery will also comply with any additional notification requirements applying to persons aged 16 or over living or working on domestic premises where applicable under the EYFS from 1 September 2026.

Induction

All new staff will complete an induction programme before undertaking their role independently.

The induction will include:

- safeguarding and child protection;
- the role of the DSL and Deputy DSL;
- allegations against staff;
- whistleblowing;
- staff code of conduct;
- behaviour management;
- intimate care;
- health and safety;
- fire procedures;
- emergency procedures;
- confidentiality and data protection;
- online safety;
- Prevent;
- FGM;
- equality and inclusion;
- professional boundaries; and
- any other policies relevant to the individual's role.

New staff will confirm that they have read and understood the nursery's key safeguarding policies.

Probationary Period

New employees will normally be subject to a six-month probationary period.

During this period, their performance, conduct, suitability and safeguarding practice will be monitored.

Where additional support is required, the probationary period may be extended in accordance with the nursery's employment procedures.

A probationary period does not replace or delay the required safeguarding and suitability checks.

Ongoing Suitability

Safer recruitment does not end when an employee starts work.

All staff are expected to maintain their suitability to work with children throughout their employment.

Staff must immediately inform the Nursery Manager or appropriate senior person if there is anything that may affect their suitability to work with children.

This includes relevant:

- criminal convictions or cautions;
- police involvement;
- safeguarding investigations;
- allegations;
- disciplinary matters;
- restrictions or orders affecting their suitability;
- changes in circumstances that may affect their role; or
- other information that could reasonably affect their suitability to work with children.

The nursery will respond appropriately to any information affecting an individual's suitability.

Annual Suitability and Appraisal

Staff will participate in regular supervision, appraisal and performance review.

The nursery will use these processes to consider:

- performance;
- conduct;
- safeguarding practice;
- professional boundaries;
- training needs;
- ongoing suitability; and
- any concerns affecting the individual's ability to work safely with children.

Record Keeping

The nursery will maintain accurate records of safer recruitment checks.

Records will include, where applicable:

- identity checks;
- right-to-work checks;
- references;
- employment history;
- qualification checks;
- DBS certificate information;
- Children's Barred List checks where applicable;
- overseas checks;
- suitability assessments;
- dates checks were completed;
- who completed the checks; and
- any relevant concerns and actions taken.

The nursery will ensure that recruitment records are securely stored and accessed only by authorised persons.

DBS Information and Data Protection

DBS certificates and associated information will be handled confidentially.

The nursery will:

- restrict access to DBS information;
- store information securely;
- only retain information for as long as necessary;
- comply with data protection requirements; and
- not use DBS information for purposes unrelated to the safeguarding and suitability decision.

The nursery will maintain a record of the relevant DBS check and the outcome of the suitability decision.

Safer Recruitment Training

The nursery will ensure that those responsible for recruitment understand safer recruitment principles and the safeguarding responsibilities associated with recruitment.

The DSL, Nursery Manager and/or other staff involved in recruitment will receive appropriate safer recruitment training and keep their knowledge up to date.

Recruitment of the Nursery Manager, DSL or Senior Staff

Where the person being recruited is the Nursery Manager, DSL or another senior member of staff, the same safer recruitment principles will apply.

The nursery will ensure that the person responsible for managing the recruitment process is not placed in a position where they are responsible for checking or approving their own suitability.

Safeguarding Commitment

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that safer recruitment is an important part of preventing unsuitable adults from gaining access to children. However, recruitment checks alone cannot eliminate safeguarding risks.

The nursery will therefore combine safer recruitment with:

- effective safeguarding training;
- supervision;
- professional standards;
- whistleblowing;
- allegations procedures;
- ongoing suitability checks;
- clear safeguarding policies; and
- a strong safeguarding culture.

Children's Well-being Policy

Purpose

At Little Blossom Nursery School, we recognise that children's well-being is fundamental to their safety, development, learning and happiness.

We understand well-being as encompassing children's physical, emotional, social and psychological needs. We recognise that children develop best when they feel safe, secure, valued, listened to and supported by trusted adults.

This policy works alongside our Safeguarding and Child Protection, Health and Safety, Behaviour, Key Person, SEND, Food and Nutrition, Sleep and Rest, and Intimate Care policies.

Our approach reflects the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework and will be reviewed whenever statutory requirements or relevant safeguarding guidance changes.

Supporting Children's Physical Well-being

Little Blossom Nursery School supports children's physical well-being by providing opportunities for children to:

- develop their gross and fine motor skills;
- be physically active indoors and outdoors;
- develop coordination, balance and strength;
- develop independence in personal care;
- learn about healthy hygiene practices;
- eat a healthy and balanced diet;
- access fresh drinking water;
- have appropriate opportunities for rest and sleep;
- develop healthy routines; and
- learn about how to keep themselves safe.

Children are supported to understand the importance of hand washing, dental hygiene, toileting and other age-appropriate personal care routines.

Staff will promote healthy lifestyles through everyday routines, activities and conversations rather than making children feel anxious or negatively about their bodies, food or health.

Emotional and Mental Well-being

We recognise that young children are developing their ability to understand and manage emotions.

Staff provide a calm, nurturing environment in which children can:

- express their feelings;
- develop emotional vocabulary;
- recognise and name different emotions;
- seek comfort and reassurance from trusted adults;
- develop self-confidence and self-esteem;
- learn age-appropriate strategies for managing strong emotions;
- develop resilience;
- learn to cope with changes and transitions; and
- begin to develop self-regulation.

Adults will support children through co-regulation, recognising that young children often need the support of a trusted adult before they can independently manage their emotions.

Staff will model calm and respectful behaviour, acknowledge children's feelings and help children understand what they are experiencing. Children will never be shamed, humiliated or punished for expressing emotions.

Where a child is experiencing significant or persistent emotional difficulties, staff will discuss this with the child's key person, SENCO and/or DSL as appropriate and work in partnership with parents/carers.

Where necessary, the nursery may seek advice or support from appropriate external professionals.

Social Well-being and Relationships

Children's social well-being is supported through secure and positive relationships with adults and other children.

Our key-person approach helps children to develop secure attachments and gives them a trusted adult who understands their individual needs, interests and development.

Children are provided with opportunities to:

- play independently;
- play alongside others;
- develop friendships;
- cooperate and share;
- take turns;
- listen to others;
- express their views;
- resolve disagreements with adult support;
- develop empathy and understanding;
- respect differences; and
- feel a sense of belonging.

Adults act as positive role models and demonstrate kindness, respect, patience and consideration towards children and other adults.

Children's Voice and Participation

Children are encouraged to express their views, preferences, interests and feelings in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Staff will listen to children and take their views seriously.

Children will be offered appropriate choices throughout the day, such as choices about activities, resources, play and where appropriate aspects of their routines.

Children's wishes and feelings will also be considered when planning their learning and care.

Where a child communicates through behaviour, gestures, facial expressions, visual communication or other means, staff will take account of these forms of communication.

Sense of Security and Belonging

We recognise that children need to feel safe, secure and accepted in order to thrive.

Staff will:

- develop warm and responsive relationships with children;
- provide consistent routines;
- prepare children for changes and transitions;
- support children who are settling into nursery;
- recognise children's individual needs and circumstances;
- celebrate children's achievements and interests;
- provide inclusive resources and experiences; and
- promote positive relationships between children, families and staff.

Children will be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their background, culture, religion, language, disability, additional needs or family circumstances.

Rest, Sleep and Relaxation

The nursery recognises that children have different sleep, rest and relaxation needs.

Appropriate quiet and calming areas will be provided.

Children will have opportunities to rest and relax throughout the day according to their individual needs.

Where children sleep at nursery, staff will follow the nursery's Sleep and Rest Policy and relevant safe-sleep procedures.

Children will never be forced to sleep.

Physical Activity and Outdoor Learning

Children will have regular opportunities to be physically active and to access outdoor learning.

Our environment will provide opportunities for children to develop:

- balance;
- coordination;
- spatial awareness;
- strength;
- agility;
- fine motor control; and
- confidence in physical movement.

Staff will consider children's individual abilities and additional needs when planning physical activities.

Food, Nutrition and Hydration

The nursery promotes healthy eating and drinking habits.

Children will have access to suitable food and fresh drinking water in accordance with the nursery's food and nutrition procedures.

Mealtimes will also be viewed as opportunities for children to develop social skills, independence and positive relationships with food.

Children will not be forced to eat or made to feel ashamed about their food choices.

The nursery will take account of allergies, intolerances, dietary requirements, cultural requirements and individual medical needs.

Inclusion and Additional Needs

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that well-being needs vary from child to child.

Children with SEND, medical needs, communication difficulties, sensory needs or other additional needs may require individual approaches.

The nursery will make reasonable adjustments where appropriate and will work in partnership with parents/carers and relevant professionals.

The SENCO will support staff in identifying and responding to children's additional needs.

Safeguarding and Well-being

Children's well-being is closely connected to safeguarding.

Staff must remain alert to significant or unexplained changes in a child's:

- behaviour;
- mood;

- appearance;
- communication;
- eating;
- sleeping;
- relationships;
- emotional presentation; or
- physical condition.

A change in well-being does not necessarily mean that a child is being abused or neglected. However, staff must consider whether a change may indicate a safeguarding concern.

Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately in accordance with the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Staff must not attempt to investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

Supporting Children Experiencing Distress

When a child is distressed, staff will respond sensitively and seek to understand what the child may be communicating.

Staff may:

- offer reassurance and comfort;
- provide a quiet space;
- use familiar routines;
- use visual or other communication aids;
- name and acknowledge feelings;
- offer appropriate choices;
- redirect or distract where appropriate;
- provide a familiar trusted adult; and
- use age-appropriate calming and co-regulation strategies.

Physical contact will always be consistent with the nursery's Touch/Contact Policy and the child's wishes and needs.

Professional Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting children's well-being.

Staff must:

- treat children with kindness, dignity and respect;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- respond promptly to children's emotional and physical needs;
- listen to children;
- recognise signs that a child may need additional support;
- report safeguarding concerns promptly;
- maintain confidentiality appropriately; and
- work positively with parents/carers and other professionals.

Staff should also consider their own professional well-being and seek support from the Manager where necessary. Staff must never allow their own stress or frustration to affect the way they interact with children.

Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise parents and carers as important partners in supporting children's well-being.

Staff will share appropriate information with parents/carers about their child's:

- emotional well-being;
- physical development;
- relationships;
- routines;
- eating and drinking;
- sleep and rest;
- achievements; and
- any concerns requiring further discussion.

Where concerns arise, the nursery will work with parents/carers wherever appropriate and in accordance with safeguarding requirements.

Monitoring and Review

The Manager and staff team will monitor children's well-being through:

- observations;
- children's behaviour and communication;
- key-person knowledge;
- discussions with parents/carers;
- children's progress and development;
- safeguarding information; and
- regular staff discussions.

Where concerns are identified, appropriate action will be taken.

LOOKED-AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

Including Private Fostering and Low-Level Concerns

Purpose

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to providing an inclusive, safe and nurturing environment for every child, including children who are looked after by a local authority or who were previously looked after.

We recognise that children who are looked after or previously looked after may have experienced separation, loss, trauma, disrupted attachments or other adverse experiences. However, we will never assume that a looked-after child has experienced abuse or neglect.

Our approach is child-centred and focuses on:

- safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare;
- secure and consistent relationships;
- attachment and resilience;
- emotional wellbeing;
- inclusion and equality;
- listening to the child's views;
- supporting learning and development;
- working effectively with carers, parents, social workers and other professionals.

Legal and statutory framework

This policy is informed by the requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective from 1 September 2026, together with relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. The DfE has confirmed that the new EYFS framework applies from 1 September 2026.

Relevant legislation and guidance includes:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Childcare Act 2006
- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- EYFS Statutory Framework
- relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures
- relevant statutory guidance concerning looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Where relevant, the nursery will also have regard to current safeguarding guidance and local authority procedures.

Definition of a looked-after child

A looked-after child is generally a child who is:

- subject to a care order; or
- accommodated by a local authority under the relevant provisions of the Children Act 1989.
- A child may live with:
 - foster carers;
 - relatives or connected persons;
 - another approved carer;
 - residential provision; or
 - in some circumstances, their birth family.

The nursery will use the term looked-after child where it is necessary to describe the child's legal status. We will not use the status to label, stigmatise or otherwise identify a child unnecessarily.

The nursery will also recognise the needs of previously looked-after children and will provide appropriate support where information about the child's previous care experience is available and relevant.

Individual approach

Every child will be treated as an individual.

Before or when a looked-after child starts at the nursery, we will, where appropriate and with consent/appropriate information-sharing arrangements, liaise with:

- the child's social worker;
- foster carer or other person with whom the child lives;
- parents or anyone with parental responsibility, where appropriate;
- the Virtual School/local authority;
- health professionals;
- previous early years settings;
- other professionals involved with the child.

Information will only be shared where there is a lawful basis and where it is appropriate to support the child's welfare, safeguarding, care or education.

Key person and settling-in arrangements

Every child will have a named key person.

For a looked-after child, particular attention will be given to:

- attachment;
- transitions;
- separation from carers;
- emotional regulation;
- routines;
- changes in carers or placement;
- communication between home and nursery;
- the child's sense of identity and belonging.

The key person will work closely with the child's carer and relevant professionals to ensure that the child's transition into nursery is sensitive and appropriately paced.

Where a child becomes distressed or unsettled, staff will use appropriate co-regulation and emotional support strategies.

Individual care and support planning

Where appropriate, the nursery will contribute to or develop an individual plan with the child's carers and relevant professionals.

The plan may include:

- emotional needs;
- attachment and relationships;
- communication needs;
- culture, language and identity;
- routines;
- behaviour and emotional regulation;
- friendships and social development;
- interests and strengths;
- learning and development;
- SEND requirements;
- health needs;
- safeguarding arrangements;
- collection arrangements;
- information-sharing arrangements;
- contact arrangements with birth family;
- transition arrangements;
- professional meetings and reviews.

The plan will be reviewed when circumstances change.

Safeguarding

Looked-after and previously looked-after children will receive the same high standard of safeguarding as all other children.

Staff will remain alert to:

- changes in behaviour;
- emotional distress;
- unexplained injuries;
- signs of neglect or abuse;
- regression;
- changes in relationships;
- disclosures;
- concerns about carers or other adults;
- changes in placement;
- unexplained absences.

Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately in accordance with the nursery's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The child's looked-after status must never prevent staff from making a safeguarding referral where there is a concern.

Professional meetings and reviews

Where appropriate, the nursery will contribute to:

- statutory reviews;
- care planning meetings;
- child protection meetings;
- strategy meetings;
- Early Help processes;
- SEND meetings;
- health meetings;
- transition meetings;
- other multi-agency meetings.

The key person and/or designated member of staff will attend where appropriate.

The nursery will provide relevant observations and information about the child's:

- learning;
- development;
- wellbeing;
- relationships;

- attendance;
- behaviour;
- strengths;
- emerging needs.

Personal Education Plan

Where a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is required, the nursery will contribute information and support the relevant local authority processes. For children approaching school age, the nursery will work with carers, the social worker, Virtual School/local authority and receiving school to support a positive transition.

Information sharing and confidentiality

Information relating to looked-after children is confidential.

Information will only be shared:

- where there is a lawful basis;
- where it is necessary and proportionate;
- with people who need the information to safeguard or support the child;
- in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding and information-sharing procedures.
- Where safeguarding requires information to be shared, staff will not delay appropriate action because parental/carers consent cannot be obtained.

Records will be stored securely and retained in accordance with the nursery's record-retention procedures.

Collection arrangements

The nursery will maintain clear information regarding who is authorised to collect the child.

For looked-after children, collection arrangements may be subject to:

- court orders;
- care plans;
- contact arrangements;
- social worker instructions;
- restrictions relating to parental responsibility.

Staff must follow the child's agreed arrangements and must not release the child to an individual who is not authorised.

Any uncertainty must be referred immediately to the Nursery Manager/DSL.

Private fostering

Private fostering occurs where a child under 16, or under 18 where the child is disabled, is cared for and accommodated for more than 28 days by someone who is not:

- the child's parent;
- someone with parental responsibility;
- a close relative; or
- a person acting under arrangements with the local authority.

If *Little Blossom Nursery School* becomes aware that a child may be privately fostered, the Nursery Manager/DSL will notify the relevant local authority children's social care service in accordance with statutory requirements.

Staff must not attempt to investigate or assess the private fostering arrangement themselves.

Previously looked-after children

The nursery recognises that children who have previously been looked after may continue to require support even after their legal looked-after status has ended.

Where relevant, we will consider:

- attachment;
- previous experiences;
- emotional wellbeing;
- transitions;
- relationships;
- identity;
- learning and development;
- SEND;
- safeguarding;
- any information provided by carers or professionals.

Support will be based on the individual child's needs rather than assumptions about their history.

Designated person

The nursery's designated person for looked-after children is:

Shonna Hayward

The DSL and management team will ensure that staff understand the appropriate procedures for supporting looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Low-Level Concerns

Little Blossom Nursery School promotes an open, transparent and safeguarding-focused culture in which staff are encouraged to raise concerns about the behaviour of any adult working with or around children.

A low-level concern is any concern, however small, that an adult may have behaved in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the nursery's policies or expected professional standards; and/or
- causes a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'; and
- does not meet the harm threshold for an allegation.

This may include concerns about:

- inappropriate language;
- inappropriate physical contact;
- unnecessary or excessive physical contact;
- inappropriate jokes;
- favouritism;
- boundary issues;
- poor professional judgement;
- failure to follow safeguarding procedures;
- conduct that could be misinterpreted;
- behaviour inconsistent with the nursery's Code of Conduct.

Low-level concerns must never be ignored simply because they do not meet the harm threshold.

The current KCSIE 2026 guidance contains specific expectations around low-level concerns for schools and colleges. Although KCSIE is not itself the EYFS framework, Little Blossom will maintain equivalent robust safeguarding arrangements appropriate to an early years setting.

Reporting a low-level concern

A low-level concern should be reported as soon as possible to the DSL.

If the DSL is unavailable, it should be reported to:

- the Deputy DSL; or
- the Nursery Manager.

A concern about the DSL must be reported directly to the Nursery Manager.

A concern about the Nursery Manager should be reported to the appropriate senior person/owner and, where necessary, the LADO or other relevant authority.

Recording low-level concerns

The nursery will maintain a confidential record of low-level concerns.

Records should include:

- the date;
- time;
- person raising the concern;
- person about whom the concern has been raised;
- factual description of the concern;
- relevant witnesses;
- actions taken;
- discussions held;
- advice obtained;
- outcome;
- rationale for decisions.

Records must be factual, objective and free from speculation.

The DSL/Manager will review records periodically and whenever a new concern is added to identify possible patterns.

Where a pattern emerges, the concern may need to be reconsidered as a safeguarding allegation and referred to the LADO and/or police/children's social care, as appropriate.

Responding to low-level concerns

The DSL/Manager will:

1. establish the facts;
2. speak to the person who raised the concern where possible;
3. speak to the person concerned where appropriate;
4. speak to witnesses where necessary;
5. consider whether the behaviour is consistent with nursery expectations;
6. determine whether further action is required;
7. consider whether the matter should be referred externally;
8. record the decision and rationale.

Where appropriate, action may include:

- clarification;
- professional discussion;
- supervision;
- additional training;
- mentoring;
- changes to practice;
- monitoring;
- disciplinary action.

If the concern may meet the harm threshold, the nursery will not treat it as merely a low-level concern and will follow its allegations/safeguarding procedure.

Self-reporting

Staff are encouraged to self-report situations where they believe their behaviour could have been misunderstood or could reasonably cause concern.

Examples include:

- accidental physical contact;
- being alone with a child in unusual circumstances;
- an incident involving reasonable physical intervention;
- a situation that could be misinterpreted;
- a breach of professional boundaries.

Self-reporting is an important part of maintaining an open safeguarding culture.

Anonymous concerns

The nursery will accept concerns raised anonymously.

However, anonymity cannot always be guaranteed if disclosure of the person's identity is necessary for:

- a safeguarding investigation;
- disciplinary proceedings;
- a LADO process;
- a police investigation;
- legal proceedings.

The nursery will handle the information sensitively and appropriately.

Retention and review of low-level concerns

Low-level concern records will be retained securely and in accordance with the nursery's data protection and record-retention procedures.

The DSL/Manager will periodically review the records to identify:

- repeated concerns;
- patterns involving an individual;
- wider organisational issues;
- training needs;
- policy or practice weaknesses.

Where necessary, the nursery will amend procedures or provide additional staff training.

Safer recruitment and suitability

All staff, volunteers and other individuals working with children must meet the nursery's safer recruitment and suitability requirements.

The nursery will also ensure that appropriate checks are undertaken in accordance with current DBS requirements.

Training

Staff will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

Training will include awareness of:

- child protection;
- safeguarding;
- allegations against adults;
- low-level concerns;
- safer recruitment/suitability where relevant;
- Prevent;
- FGM;
- child sexual exploitation;
- online safety;
- domestic abuse;
- neglect;
- physical, emotional and sexual abuse;
- whistleblowing;
- information sharing;
- responding to disclosures.

Training will be refreshed in accordance with statutory requirements, local safeguarding arrangements and identified training needs.

ABSENCE, ATTENDANCE AND CHILDREN NOT ATTENDING POLICY

Purpose

At Little Blossom Nursery School, we recognise that regular attendance supports children's learning, development, relationships, wellbeing and sense of security.

We also recognise that an unexplained or prolonged absence may sometimes indicate that a child or family requires additional support or that there may be a safeguarding concern.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- promote regular and punctual attendance;
- ensure children's absences are followed up promptly;
- maintain accurate attendance records;
- identify patterns of absence or lateness;
- identify children who may be vulnerable;
- support families where attendance is becoming a concern;
- ensure safeguarding concerns are identified and acted upon;
- work in partnership with parents and carers;
- comply with the EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers
- follow relevant local safeguarding arrangements and procedures.

The EYFS statutory framework is mandatory for registered group and school-based early years providers in England.

Where attendance or absence gives rise to a safeguarding concern, the nursery's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will take priority.

Statutory and regulatory framework

This policy is read alongside the current legislation, statutory guidance and local procedures applicable to the nursery.

These include, where relevant:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Children Act 1989 and 2004;
- Childcare Act 2006;
- relevant safeguarding partnership procedures;
- relevant local authority attendance and safeguarding procedures;
- the nursery's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Missing Child procedures;
- Early Help procedures;
- SEND Policy;
- Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children Policy;
- Information Sharing and Data Protection Policy;
- Collection and Late Collection Policy.

The DfE's 2026 EYFS framework strengthens and clarifies safeguarding and welfare requirements.

The nursery will ensure that this policy is updated when statutory requirements or local safeguarding arrangements change.

Parents and carers' responsibilities

Parents/carers are asked to notify Little Blossom as soon as possible if their child is unable to attend.

Parents/carers should provide:

- the reason for the absence;
- the expected length of absence, where known;
- any information that may affect the child's wellbeing or safety.

Notification may be made by:

- telephone;
- email;
- the nursery's online communication app;
- another communication method agreed with the nursery.

Where possible, parents/carers should notify the nursery before the child's normal arrival time and no later than 10am.

Parents/carers should continue to provide appropriate updates if the child remains absent.

First-day response to unexplained absence

Where a child is expected to attend and does not arrive, staff will check the attendance register and establish whether an explanation has been received.

If no explanation has been received by the nursery's agreed attendance-check time, reasonable attempts will be made to contact the parent/carer.

The nursery may contact:

- the child's primary parent/carer;
- another person with parental responsibility, where appropriate;
- the child's emergency contacts.
- All contact attempts will be recorded.

The nursery will not automatically wait 48 hours before taking safeguarding action.

Where the circumstances indicate a possible safeguarding concern, the DSL/Manager will consider appropriate action on the first day of absence.

The response will be proportionate to the child's circumstances and any known safeguarding information.

Safeguarding and unexplained absence

An unexplained absence does not automatically mean that a child is at risk of harm.

However, staff must consider whether the absence, together with other information known about the child or family, indicates a possible safeguarding concern.

Particular consideration will be given where:

- the child is known to Children's Social Care;
- the child is subject to a child protection plan;
- the child is looked after or previously looked after;
- the child is receiving Early Help;
- there are known safeguarding concerns;
- there are concerns about neglect;
- there are concerns about domestic abuse;
- there are concerns regarding parental/carers vulnerability;
- there has been a significant change in family circumstances;
- the child has previously gone missing;
- there are repeated unexplained absences;
- the parent/carers cannot be contacted;
- the child's whereabouts cannot be established;
- there are concerns about abuse, exploitation, radicalisation or other forms of harm.

Where there is an immediate concern about a child's safety, the DSL will follow the nursery's safeguarding procedures and contact Children's Social Care, the police or another appropriate agency where necessary.

Prolonged absence

Where a child remains absent, the nursery will maintain appropriate contact with the family and record information received.

Management will consider:

- the length of absence;
- the reason given;
- the child's age;
- the child's individual needs;
- SEND;
- known vulnerabilities;
- safeguarding information;
- previous attendance patterns;
- family circumstances;
- whether contact with the family has been maintained.

Where appropriate, the nursery may seek advice from the local authority, health professionals, Children's Social Care or other relevant agencies.

Repeated or persistent absence

The nursery will monitor attendance patterns and will not rely solely on one fixed percentage.

Where absence becomes frequent or persistent, the Manager or key person may arrange a meeting with the parent/carers.

The purpose of the meeting may include:

- understanding the reasons for absence;
- identifying barriers to attendance;
- considering whether the child or family requires additional support;
- agreeing practical steps;
- considering Early Help;
- considering whether a safeguarding referral is necessary.

The nursery may use an internal attendance percentage as a monitoring indicator, but no particular percentage will automatically determine whether a safeguarding referral is made.

Professional judgement and the individual circumstances of the child will always be considered.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

The nursery will record the reason for absence accurately.

Reasonable reasons for absence may include:

- illness;
- medical or hospital appointments;
- bereavement;
- religious observance;
- significant family circumstances;
- other circumstances agreed by the Manager.

Holiday requests will be dealt with in accordance with the nursery's terms and conditions and any applicable early education funding requirements. The nursery will consider the individual circumstances when recording an absence.

Where no explanation is provided, or where the circumstances of the absence raise safeguarding concerns, the matter will be recorded and considered appropriately.

Attendance register

The nursery will maintain an accurate attendance register for every child.

The register will record, as appropriate:

- attendance;
- absence;
- arrival;
- lateness;
- departure where relevant;
- the reason for absence where known.

Attendance records will be maintained securely and made available to Ofsted or other authorised bodies where legally required.

Arrival and lateness

Children should arrive at their agreed start time.

Regular punctuality supports children's routines, relationships, participation and learning.

Parents/carers should contact the nursery if they expect to be late.

Where lateness becomes frequent, the Manager may discuss this with the parent/carer to establish whether there are barriers requiring support. Lateness will be recorded.

Any financial charges relating to late collection or other contractual arrangements will be dealt with under the nursery's Fees and Late Collection Policy.

Children with additional vulnerabilities

The nursery will take particular care when monitoring attendance for children who may be more vulnerable.

This may include:

- children known to Children's Social Care;
- looked-after children;
- previously looked-after children;
- children subject to a child protection plan;
- children with SEND;
- children receiving Early Help;
- children experiencing significant family difficulties;
- children who have previously gone missing.

Attendance information may contribute to the wider safeguarding picture.

Looked-after children

Where a looked-after child is absent without explanation, the nursery will follow the child's agreed safeguarding and care arrangements.

Where appropriate, the nursery may contact:

- the foster carer or placement;
- the child's social worker;
- the DSL;
- other professionals identified within the child's care arrangements.

The nursery will follow any specific attendance, contact and safeguarding arrangements agreed for the child.

Children missing from expected care or education

Where the nursery has reason to believe that a child may be missing from their expected care arrangements, the matter will be treated seriously.

The DSL/Manager will consider:

- whether the child's whereabouts are known;
- whether the parent/carer can be contacted;
- whether there are existing safeguarding concerns;
- whether the child is vulnerable;
- whether Children's Social Care or the police should be contacted;
- whether local authority safeguarding procedures should be followed.

The nursery will not wait for a predetermined period where there is an immediate concern about the child's safety.

Home welfare visits

In exceptional circumstances, the nursery may consider a welfare visit where this is appropriate and proportionate.

A home welfare visit will only be considered:

- following appropriate management/DSL consideration;
- in accordance with local safeguarding arrangements;
- with appropriate consideration of staff safety;
- where there is a reasonable purpose for the visit.

A home visit will **not replace** a safeguarding referral where a referral is required.

Staff must not place themselves at risk when attempting to establish the welfare of a child or family.

Communication with parents and carers

Little Blossom aims to work positively and respectfully with parents/carers.

Where attendance becomes a concern, staff will:

- communicate openly;
- listen to parents/carers;
- seek to understand barriers;
- provide appropriate support where possible;
- agree practical actions;

- monitor progress.

Where the nursery believes a child may be at risk of harm, safeguarding procedures will be followed regardless of whether the parent/carer agrees.

Referral to Children's Social Care

The nursery may seek advice from or make a referral to Children's Social Care where:

- a child's whereabouts cannot be established;
- a child cannot be located;
- there is a safeguarding concern;
- repeated unexplained absence raises concerns about the child's welfare;
- there are concerns about neglect;
- the nursery cannot establish that the child is safe;
- other circumstances indicate that statutory intervention may be required.

The nursery will follow the relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures.

Record keeping

The nursery will maintain appropriate records of:

- attendance;
- absence;
- reasons for absence;
- contact attempts;
- communications with parents/carers;
- attendance meetings;
- advice received;
- safeguarding decisions;
- referrals;
- actions taken.

Records will be:

- factual;
- objective;
- dated;
- appropriately signed where required;
- stored securely;
- handled in accordance with data protection requirements.

Confidentiality and information sharing

Attendance information will be treated appropriately and confidentially.

Information will be shared only where there is a lawful and appropriate reason to do so.

Where information is required to safeguard a child, staff will follow the nursery's Information Sharing and Child Protection procedures.

A lack of parental consent will not prevent information being shared where safeguarding legislation or statutory guidance permits or requires information to be shared.

Role of staff

All staff are responsible for:

- accurately recording attendance;
- identifying unexplained absence;
- reporting concerns to the DSL;
- maintaining confidentiality;
- identifying concerning patterns;
- supporting children and families;
- following this policy.

The DSL/Manager is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding concerns arising from attendance or absence are appropriately assessed and acted upon.

Ofsted and attendance

Little Blossom Nursery School will maintain accurate attendance information and will be able to demonstrate how it responds to unexplained and concerning absences.

The nursery will not state that a particular absence percentage automatically determines an Ofsted judgement.

Instead, the nursery will demonstrate that it:

- knows which children are expected to attend;
- records attendance accurately;
- follows up unexplained absences;
- identifies concerning patterns;
- understands children's individual circumstances;
- responds promptly to safeguarding concerns;
- works appropriately with parents/carers and other agencies;
- keeps appropriate records.

The current Ofsted inspection arrangements from September 2026 place significant emphasis on safeguarding, children's welfare and the quality of provision.

Safer Mealtimes

Policy statement

At Little Blossom Nursery, your child's safety and wellbeing is our top priority—especially at mealtimes. We follow the latest Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance and are fully aligned with the 2025 Safer Eating reforms.

This policy outlines how we protect your child during meals and snacks while supporting a positive and inclusive food environment.

Health & Allergy Awareness

Before Your Child Starts: We'll ask you to share important information about your child's dietary needs, including allergies, intolerances, cultural or religious food preferences, and any medical conditions.

This information will be shared with all staff involved in the preparation and handling of food.

All staff members are responsible for ensuring they know the allergies of the children in the setting and where they are unsure they should seek clarification before offering the child any food.

For children with allergies, we'll create an individual Allergy Action Plan with the parents/carers' support, along with a care plan which will be stored in the child's file. A copy of the care plan will be kept with any medication that is needed. The information will also be displayed in the room, office and kitchen and in the nursery app.

Ongoing monitoring: allergies and intolerances can develop over time. Please inform us of any changes immediately so we can update records and keep your child safe.

All meal tables should be prepped with placemats provided. Coloured bowls are used to quickly identify allergies and preferences

Mealtime Safety

A paediatric first aid trained staff member is always present during meals. It is Little Blossom policy that all staff are PFA trained to ensure the safety of the children.

Children are always closely supervised while eating.

Our staff sit facing the children to monitor for choking or food-sharing.

Choking Response:

(Please also see our choking policy)

In the rare event of a choking incident, we will respond immediately, record the incident, and inform you as soon as possible.

When a child experiences a choking incident, a staff member from that table will record details of where and how the child choked on the nursery app. Parents/carers will be made aware and asked to sign the form. Where physical intervention was required, a separate incident report will be recorded and the parent will also be asked to sign.

Records will be reviewed regularly to identify if there are trends or common features of incidents that could be addressed to reduce the risk of choking, and the leadership/management team will ensure appropriate action is taken to address any identified concerns.

Safe Seating:

Children eat while seated in age-appropriate chairs in designated dining areas. We minimise distractions to support safe eating.

Weaning: If your child is still weaning, we'll work with you to plan the introduction of solid foods safely and gradually.

Meal times – Staff expectation: At each mealtime and snack time there will be a clear statement about who is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child.

A staff member must be sat at each table at all times.

Children are encouraged to sit and, if they do leave the table, are supported to return. Children are only allowed to consume food while sat at designated tables or in high chairs.

The staff member at each table is responsible for ensuring the children have food that is prepared safely. For example, grapes are cut to minimise choking.

Staff are to ensure they are aware of all allergies/preferences on the table they are supporting.

Staff members will positively encourage children to eat their meals and if a child hasn't eaten much of their meal will inform the parents.

Individual needs

To protect all children, especially those with allergies, all our settings are nut-free. **Please do not let children bring food items which contain nuts.**

Please check your child's pockets and bags before entering the nursery to remove any food items.

Any food brought from home must be clearly labelled with the child's full name and a description of the contents inside the container or bag.

We respect cultural and religious food practices.

We aim to adapt menus where needed to ensure all children feel included, safe, and respected at the table.

We aim to always manage dietary needs discreetly and professionally.

If you have any questions or updates regarding your child's dietary needs, please speak with our Nursery Manager or your child's Key Person.

Mealtime Environment

Meals are social, enjoyable, and calm.

Staff eat with the children where possible, modelling positive eating behaviours.

We encourage children to feed themselves when developmentally appropriate and give them time to explore new foods.

Food is never used as a reward or punishment

Weaning Policy

Our weaning policy is designed to support babies and young children as they progress from milk feeding to eating a varied range of solid foods. We recognise that every child develops at their own pace and that weaning is an important stage in a child's development.

We will work closely with parents and carers to ensure that each child's individual needs, routines, preferences and dietary requirements are understood and consistently supported while they are at nursery.

Supporting Weaning

Parents and carers should inform us when their child has started, or is ready to start, weaning. We will discuss the child's current stage of weaning, foods that have been introduced and any foods that should be avoided.

We will follow the parent's instructions regarding the child's diet while ensuring that all food provided is appropriate for the child's age and stage of development.

As children progress, we will support them to:

- Explore a variety of tastes, textures, colours and foods.
- Progress from smooth and mashed foods towards thicker, lumpier and more textured foods as developmentally appropriate.
- Develop chewing and swallowing skills.
- Begin to feed themselves and develop independence with eating.
- Use appropriate cups, spoons and other feeding equipment.
- Develop positive and enjoyable mealtime experiences.

Children will never be forced or pressured to eat. Staff will respond sensitively to children's individual hunger and fullness cues and will encourage children in a positive and supportive manner.

Allergies and Dietary Requirements

Parents and carers must inform the nursery of any known food allergies, intolerances, dietary restrictions or medical conditions that may affect eating and drinking.

Where a child has a diagnosed food allergy or other dietary requirement, the nursery will follow the appropriate procedures and ensure that relevant staff are aware of the child's needs.

New foods should be introduced by parents or carers at home wherever possible, particularly foods that are known to be common allergens. Parents should inform the nursery when new foods have been introduced and whether the child has experienced any reaction.

Safe Eating

The safety of children during mealtimes is a priority. Staff will ensure that food is prepared, served and supervised appropriately for the child's developmental stage.

Children will be seated safely and appropriately while eating and drinking and will always be supervised during mealtimes. Food will be prepared in a suitable form and texture for the individual child.

Staff will follow the nursery's food hygiene, allergy and choking procedures at all times.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents and carers know their children best. We will maintain open communication with families and regularly share information about the child's eating and drinking at nursery.

Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss any concerns about their child's progress with staff so that appropriate support can be provided.

The weaning policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains appropriate, effective and consistent with current EYFS requirements and relevant guidance.

Nutrition

At *Little Blossom Nursery*, we recognise that good nutrition is essential for children's healthy growth, development, learning and wellbeing. We are committed to providing children with healthy, balanced and nutritious food and drinks and to developing positive attitudes towards eating from an early age.

We work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that children's individual dietary needs, preferences, allergies and cultural requirements are understood and appropriately supported.

Healthy Eating

We aim to provide a varied and balanced selection of foods that includes:

- A variety of fruit and vegetables.
- Starchy foods such as bread, rice, pasta and potatoes.
- Protein-rich foods such as meat, fish, eggs, beans and pulses.
- Dairy products or suitable alternatives.
- Appropriate healthy snacks and drinks.

Menus will be planned to provide children with a variety of tastes, textures, colours and foods. We will avoid offering foods that are high in added sugar, salt and saturated fat wherever possible.

Fresh drinking water will be readily available to children throughout the day.

Allergies and Dietary Requirements

Parents and carers must inform the nursery of any known food allergies, intolerances or specific dietary requirements.

All dietary requirements will be recorded and communicated clearly to relevant staff. Where necessary, individual dietary arrangements will be agreed with parents and carers and, where appropriate, supported by medical advice.

We will take appropriate precautions to prevent children from being given foods that they must avoid.

Food Safety and Hygiene

All food will be stored, prepared and served in accordance with appropriate food hygiene and safety requirements.

Staff involved in preparing or serving food will follow the nursery's food hygiene procedures, including appropriate handwashing and cleaning routines.

Food will be prepared and served in a manner appropriate to each child's age and stage of development. Particular care will be taken with foods that may present a choking risk.

Infants and Weaning

We recognise that babies and young children develop at different rates. We will work closely with parents and carers when children are beginning or progressing through weaning.

Food will be offered in an age- and developmentally appropriate form, with textures gradually progressed as the child develops the necessary skills. Parents and carers will be kept informed about the foods and drinks their child has consumed while at nursery.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We encourage parents and carers to share information about their child's eating habits, dietary requirements, allergies and preferences.

We will provide information about our menus and encourage families to continue promoting healthy eating at home.

We will also take account of relevant cultural, religious and family dietary practices wherever reasonably possible.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting healthy eating and positive mealtime experiences.

Staff will:

- Follow children's individual dietary and allergy requirements.
- Ensure children are appropriately supervised while eating and drinking.
- Encourage healthy choices through positive role modelling.
- Maintain appropriate food hygiene and safety standards.
- Report any concerns regarding a child's eating, drinking or dietary needs to the appropriate person and the child's parents or carers.

Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains effective, reflects current guidance and meets the individual needs of the children attending the nursery.

Legislation and Guidance

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework – group and school-based providers: [EYFS statutory framework – GOV.UK](#)

This is the key statutory document for nutrition, food, drink, mealtimes, dietary requirements and children's health and development.

EYFS nutrition guidance: [Help for early years providers – nutrition](#)

This provides practical guidance for implementing the EYFS requirements around healthy eating and nutrition.

Food Standards Agency – safer food, better business: [Food Standards Agency – Safer Food, Better Business](#)

Useful for food hygiene, storage, preparation and serving procedures.

Food Allergy and Intolerance Policy

At *Little Blossom Nursery School*, we recognise that food allergies and intolerances can have a significant impact on children's health and wellbeing. We are committed to ensuring that children with food allergies, intolerances or other dietary requirements are kept safe and are supported to enjoy mealtimes in a positive and inclusive environment.

We will work closely with parents and carers to obtain accurate and up-to-date information about each child's dietary needs and ensure that all relevant staff understand and follow the appropriate procedures.

Information from Parents and Carers

Before a child starts at the nursery, parents and carers must provide full information about any known:

- Food allergies.
- Food intolerances.
- Coeliac disease or other medically diagnosed dietary conditions.
- Foods that must be avoided.
- Symptoms and signs of a reaction.
- Medication or emergency treatment required.
- Medical advice or action plans where applicable.

This information will be recorded and kept up to date. Parents and carers are expected to inform the nursery immediately if there is any change to their child's dietary requirements.

We will maintain ongoing communication with parents and carers to ensure that information remains accurate and relevant.

Individual Dietary Requirements

Each child with a food allergy or intolerance will have their dietary requirements clearly recorded and communicated to relevant staff.

Staff responsible for food preparation, serving meals and supervising children will be made aware of individual dietary requirements.

Information will be treated confidentially but shared with staff on a need-to-know basis where necessary to safeguard the child.

Food and Allergen Management

We will identify the ingredients and allergens present in all food and drinks provided to children.

A member of staff will be responsible for checking, at every meal and snack time, that the food being offered to each child is suitable for their individual dietary requirements.

Staff will never assume that a food is safe based on previous experience. Ingredients, packaging and labels will be checked where appropriate, particularly when new products or recipes are introduced.

We will take appropriate measures to prevent accidental exposure to allergens, including avoiding cross-contamination during food preparation, storage and serving.

The nursery will not provide food containing an allergen that a child has been identified as needing to avoid.

The 14 Regulated Allergens

Where applicable, we will identify the 14 allergens regulated under food law:

1. Celery
2. Cereals containing gluten
3. Crustaceans
4. Eggs
5. Fish
6. Lupin
7. Milk
8. Molluscs
9. Mustard
10. Peanuts
11. Sesame
12. Soya
13. Sulphur dioxide and sulphites
14. Nuts

The Food Standards Agency states that food businesses must provide information about these allergens when they are used as ingredients in food provided.

Food Preparation and Cross-Contamination

Staff will follow appropriate food hygiene procedures when preparing and serving food.

Where a child has a food allergy, reasonable precautions will be taken to prevent cross-contamination. This may include:

- Washing hands thoroughly before handling food.
- Cleaning food preparation surfaces and equipment.
- Using appropriate utensils and equipment.
- Keeping allergen-free food separate where necessary.
- Checking food labels and ingredients.
- Ensuring children receive the correct food.
- Ensuring staff understand the child's individual dietary requirements.

Where there is any doubt about whether food is suitable for a child, it will not be given to that child until the ingredients and allergen information have been checked.

Allergic Reactions

Staff will be familiar with the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and will follow the nursery's emergency procedures.

If a child is suspected of having an allergic reaction, staff will act immediately in accordance with the child's individual medical information, emergency action plan and the nursery's medication and emergency procedures.

Where prescribed emergency medication is held at the nursery, it will be stored safely but remain readily accessible to appropriately trained staff.

Emergency medication will be checked regularly to ensure that it is in date and available when required.

In the event of a serious or suspected anaphylactic reaction, emergency medical assistance will be sought immediately.

Staff Training and Responsibilities

All staff will receive appropriate information and guidance regarding food allergies and intolerances.

Staff must:

- Be aware of children with allergies and intolerances.
- Understand the symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Follow individual dietary requirements at all times.
- Check food before serving it.
- Follow food hygiene and allergen-control procedures.
- Report any concerns, errors or near misses immediately.
- Ensure that children are appropriately supervised during meals and snacks.

New staff and temporary staff will be made aware of relevant children's dietary requirements before undertaking duties involving food or mealtimes.

New Foods

Parents and carers should inform the nursery when new foods are introduced to their child, particularly foods that may cause an allergic reaction.

Where possible, parents and carers should introduce new foods at home first so that any reaction can be identified and managed appropriately.

Food Brought into the Nursery

Parents and carers should not provide food for their child to consume at nursery without first discussing it with staff where the child has a known allergy or dietary requirement.

Where food is brought into the setting, staff must be able to establish its ingredients and suitability before it is given to a child with a known allergy or intolerance.

Recording Incidents and Near Misses

Any allergic reaction, suspected reaction, incorrect food being provided or allergen-related near miss will be recorded and reported to the appropriate manager and the child's parents or carers.

Following an incident or near miss, the nursery will review its procedures and risk assessments and take appropriate action to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents and carers have an important role in helping us keep their child safe.

We will maintain open communication with families and encourage parents and carers to provide any relevant medical information, dietary advice or updates.

Parents and carers will be informed promptly of any concerns, incidents or changes relating to their child's allergy or dietary requirements.

Monitoring and Review

The nursery will regularly review its allergy and intolerance procedures to ensure that they remain effective and reflect current legislation, EYFS requirements and official guidance.

This policy will be reviewed following any significant change in legislation or guidance and following any serious allergy incident or significant near miss.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy should be read alongside the following:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers – Department for Education.
- Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance – Department for Education. This guidance supports the EYFS requirement that meals, snacks and drinks provided to children must be healthy, balanced and nutritious, and from September 2025 providers must have regard to this guidance and follow it unless there is good reason not to.
- Help for Early Years Providers – Food Allergies and Intolerances – Department for Education. This guidance specifically states that settings should obtain information about children's food allergies and intolerances before they attend and maintain an accessible protocol for staff.
- Food Standards Agency – Allergen Guidance for Food Businesses, including guidance on the 14 regulated allergens and allergen management.
- The nursery will ensure that this policy is reviewed regularly and updated in line with changes to EYFS requirements, legislation and relevant official guidance.

Safer Sleep

Policy statement

Children's safety and wellbeing is our primary concern when in our care, promoting safer sleep. These procedures are in place to ensure a safe sleeping environment and to ensure the children are safe and secure during sleep times. Promoting a safer sleep environment helps to ensure the nursery provides a safe, nurturing and developmentally supportive sleep environment.

Procedure

Sleep Position and Environment:

Children will always be placed on their backs to sleep in their own separate sleep space. Children under 1 will be placed in a cot. Children over 1 will be placed on a flat, firm and waterproof cot bed or mattress.

Children are never put to sleep with a bottle or self-feeding.

Individual named clean, light weight bedding should be provided. Bedsheets and blankets should be well fitted and never loose.

Children are dressed appropriately for sleep.

No loose items such as toys, pillows, bumpers or wedges should be present.

Children's head should never be covered.

The room temperature should be between 16 and 20 degrees Celsius. This is checked and documented on our daily risk assessment.

Children will never be put to sleep in a pram. If a child falls asleep on a walk, the child will be transferred on return.

Children's chairs, beanbags, buggies and car seats are not suitable for sleep.

The sleep environment should be regularly inspected, cleaned and in line with British standards.

The nursery follows a strict no smoking policy.

Individual routines

We recognise and respect that all children have individual sleep routines.

Parents/carers are asked to complete a sleep routine form with the child's key person when their child starts at the nursery.

Sleep routines are reviewed and updated regularly in partnership with parents. Individual routines are followed rather than enforcing a set sleep time for all children.

Staff will never force a child to sleep or keep a child awake against their will.

Children are not routinely woken from sleep unless there is a safeguarding or wellbeing reason to do so

Monitoring and supervision

Children will always be in sight and sound of an adult.

Children are frequently checked every 10 minutes and this is logged on our Blossom App.

Children are checked for visual and physical signs of breathing, colour and position.

Training

All staff are trained to work in line with the EYFS and are aware of the NHS SIDS guidance and the Lullaby Trust information.

Staff are made aware of the importance of following safer sleep procedures and are encouraged to challenge and report any practice that falls outside of this .

Policies are reviewed annually and work in line with the EYFS Statutory Framework

Under no circumstances will a child be placed to sleep in their front of bed or be restrained to sleep.

All staff must ensure they have read NHS SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)

Little Blossom will ensure the children's safety and that standards for ensuring safe sleep procedures are followed.

Children's sleep and rest are a safeguarding matter.

Staff remain vigilant to:

- Unusual sleep patterns
- Changes in behavior
- Signs of distress or illness

Any concerns are acted upon in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO, IMAGES, MOBILE PHONES, ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND ONLINE SAFETY POLICY

Purpose

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that photographs, videos and digital technology can support children's learning, development, communication and experiences.

However, the taking, storage and sharing of photographs, videos and other recordings can create safeguarding, privacy and data-protection risks. The nursery will therefore ensure that photography, video recording, mobile phones, cameras, electronic devices and online technology are used safely, appropriately and proportionately.

This policy forms part of the nursery's safeguarding arrangements and is consistent with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective from 1 September 2026. The revised EYFS specifically strengthens safeguarding requirements and includes requirements relating to electronic devices and screen use.

The policy also reflects Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, which applies to early years and childcare providers and requires safeguarding policies to cover the use of mobile phones and cameras within the setting.

Statutory and guidance framework

This policy should be read alongside the following current legislation, statutory guidance and nursery policies:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers – effective from 1 September 2026;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures and arrangements;
- DfE Screen use guidance for early years settings;
- relevant data protection and UK GDPR requirements;
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Staff Code of Ethical Practice;
- Staff Mobile Phone Policy;
- Information Sharing and Data Protection Policy;
- Online Safety Policy/procedures;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Low-Level Concerns Policy;
- Allegations Against Staff Policy;
- Complaints Policy.

The nursery will review this policy whenever statutory requirements or relevant safeguarding guidance changes.

Taking photographs and videos

Photographs and videos may be taken by authorised staff for legitimate nursery purposes.

These may include:

- recording children's learning and development;
- recording observations;
- documenting children's experiences and activities;
- maintaining children's learning records;
- sharing appropriate information with parents/carers;
- recording nursery events and celebrations;
- producing approved nursery displays;
- approved promotional material where appropriate consent has been obtained.

Photographs and videos must only be taken where there is a legitimate nursery purpose.

Staff must never take photographs or videos of children for personal purposes.

Nursery-approved equipment

Only equipment authorised by Little Blossom may be used to photograph, video or otherwise record children.

Staff must not use personal:

- mobile phones;
- tablets;
- cameras;
- smart watches;
- wearable devices;
- laptops;
- or any other personal electronic device capable of recording images, video or audio to record children.

Nursery devices must be used responsibly and securely.

Where nursery equipment has internet access, cloud storage, sharing functions or other connectivity, appropriate security arrangements must be maintained.

Personal mobile phones

Personal mobile phones must not be used to photograph, video or otherwise record children.

Staff personal mobile phones must be stored in the designated area, such as the lock box kept in the office, otherwise kept securely during working hours, except where management has authorised use for an appropriate reason.

Staff must never use personal devices to:

- photograph children;
- video children;
- audio-record children for personal purposes;

- store images or recordings of children;
- send images of children to personal email accounts;
- upload images of children to personal social media;
- communicate privately with children;
- communicate with children through personal messaging applications.

Any exceptional use of a personal device must be authorised by management and must not compromise children's safeguarding or privacy.

Smart watches and wearable technology

Staff must not use smart watches or wearable devices to photograph, video, audio-record or otherwise capture images or recordings of children.

Where a device has recording, communication or sharing capabilities, staff must ensure that its use complies with this policy and the nursery's safeguarding procedures.

Children's privacy and dignity

Children must always be treated with dignity and respect when photographs or videos are taken.

Staff must:

- ensure children are appropriately dressed;
- avoid unnecessary photographs;
- avoid photographs that could compromise a child's dignity;
- never photograph children while they are using toilets or changing facilities;
- avoid unnecessary photographs during intimate care;
- follow the nursery's intimate care procedures;
- consider the individual needs and circumstances of each child.

Images must never be taken or used in a manner that could:

- embarrass a child;
- humiliate a child;
- stigmatise a child;
- cause distress;
- expose private information;
- place a child at increased safeguarding risk.

Consent

The nursery will obtain appropriate parental/carers consent before using photographs or videos for purposes where consent is required.

Consent will be recorded and managed in accordance with the nursery's data-protection procedures.

Where appropriate, children will be involved in decisions about photographs and videos, taking account of their age, understanding and individual circumstances.

Children will not be forced or pressured to participate in photographs or videos.

Where a child indicates that they do not wish to be photographed, staff will respect this wherever reasonably possible.

Parental/carers consent does not remove the nursery's responsibility to ensure that photographs and videos are taken, stored and shared safely.

Children who cannot or should not be photographed

Before photographs or videos are taken, staff must consider whether there are any safeguarding, legal, court, looked-after-child, foster-care or other restrictions relating to the child.

The nursery will maintain appropriate records of photography permissions and restrictions.

Where a child is subject to specific safeguarding or legal arrangements, staff must follow the instructions of the DSL/Manager.

Staff must not assume that because parental consent has been given, an image is automatically safe to publish or share.

Minimising photographs and videos

The nursery will keep photographs and videos of children to the minimum necessary for the intended purpose.

Staff should consider whether a photograph or video is genuinely necessary before taking it.

The nursery will avoid unnecessary duplication of images.

Images will be deleted when they are no longer required in accordance with the nursery's retention arrangements.

Use of children's names

Where photographs are shared outside the nursery, identifying information will be minimised.

Where appropriate:

- only the child's first name will be used;
- full names will not normally be published alongside photographs;
- unnecessary personal information will not be included;
- children's addresses will never be published;
- dates of birth will not be published;
- confidential information will never be published.

The nursery will consider the safeguarding circumstances of individual children before publishing or sharing any image.

Parents and carers taking photographs

Parents/carers may sometimes wish to take photographs or videos at nursery events.

The nursery may permit photography where it considers this appropriate and safe.

Parents/carers will be reminded that images containing other children must be treated respectfully and must not be shared publicly where this would compromise another child's privacy or safeguarding.

The nursery may restrict or prohibit photography at particular events where this is necessary to protect children.

The nursery may ask parents/carers not to use cameras, phones or recording equipment during particular activities.

Parents/carers must follow any instructions given by the nursery regarding photography and recording.

Visitors, students, volunteers and contractors

Visitors, students, volunteers and contractors must not photograph or record children unless this has been specifically authorised by the nursery.

Where photography or filming forms part of an approved activity:

- appropriate authorisation must be obtained;
- safeguarding arrangements must be in place;
- any required consent must be obtained;
- images must only be used for the agreed purpose;
- equipment must be approved by the nursery.

Visitors must comply with all nursery safeguarding and electronic-device requirements.

Storage of photographs and videos

Photographs and videos will be stored securely.

The nursery will:

- restrict access to authorised staff;
- use password-protected systems where appropriate;
- use secure nursery-approved systems;
- avoid storing images on personal devices;
- prevent transfer to personal email accounts;
- prevent storage on personal cloud accounts;
- protect images against unauthorised access;
- delete images when they are no longer required.

Where an online learning or communication platform is used, access will be restricted to authorised users.

Sharing photographs and videos

Images will only be shared for an appropriate and authorised purpose.

Before sharing an image, the nursery will consider:

- why the image is being shared;
- who will receive it;
- whether consent is required;
- whether the child can be identified;
- whether sharing presents a safeguarding risk;
- whether sharing is necessary and proportionate;
- whether the method of sharing is secure.

Photographs and videos will only be shared with parents/carers through nursery-approved and appropriately secure systems.

Staff must never send photographs or videos of children through personal messaging applications or personal social-media accounts.

Social media

Staff must never upload photographs, videos or identifying information about children to personal social-media accounts.

Staff must not:

- tag children;
- identify children by name;
- discuss individual children online;
- publish information about children's circumstances;
- share nursery photographs through personal accounts;
- communicate privately with children;
- use personal social-media accounts to communicate with parents/carers about children where this creates a professional boundary concern.

Any official nursery social-media activity must be authorised by management.

Official nursery social-media activity must comply with safeguarding, privacy and data-protection requirements.

Online safety

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that young children may encounter digital technology from an early age.

- Technology can support:
- communication;
- creativity;

- learning;
- exploration;
- accessibility;
- children's interests.

However, digital technology can also expose children to inappropriate content, harmful communication, exploitation and other safeguarding risks.

The nursery will therefore promote age-appropriate online safety.

Any online safety concern involving a child must be reported to the DSL.

Children's use of digital technology

Where digital devices are used, their use must be:

- age appropriate;
- developmentally appropriate;
- purposeful;
- supervised;
- balanced with physical activity;
- balanced with social interaction;
- balanced with communication;
- consistent with the nursery's curriculum;
- consistent with safeguarding requirements.

The nursery will consider children's individual needs, including SEND, when using digital technology.

For further information, please see within the **Little Blossom Screen Time and Technology Policy**.

Screen use

Little Blossom will ensure that screen use is not used as a substitute for:

- physical play;
- outdoor learning;
- social interaction;
- communication;
- hands-on experiences;
- adult interaction;
- child-led play.

Staff will consider whether screen use adds genuine value to the child's learning or experience.

Screen use will be kept appropriate to children's age, developmental stage and individual needs.

Staff will supervise children's use of digital devices.

The nursery will review screen use as part of curriculum planning and safeguarding monitoring.

For further information, please see within the **Little Blossom Screen Time and Technology Policy**.

Online safeguarding concerns

Staff must remain alert to concerns involving:

- inappropriate online content;
- harmful or abusive communications;
- online grooming;
- sexual exploitation;
- inappropriate images;
- cyberbullying;
- radicalisation or extremist content;
- contact with unknown individuals;
- inappropriate use of digital devices;
- inappropriate recording or sharing of images;
- online exploitation;
- other forms of online harm.

Any concern must be reported immediately to the DSL in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Audio recording

Staff must not audio-record children for personal purposes.

Audio recording as part of an approved nursery activity must be authorised by management and undertaken using approved equipment.

The purpose of the recording must be clear and appropriate.

Recordings must be stored and deleted securely in accordance with the nursery's information-management arrangements.

Electronic devices used by children

Where children are permitted to use electronic devices, staff will ensure:

- devices are appropriate for the child's age;

- use is supervised;
- content is appropriate;
- privacy settings are appropriately configured;
- children are not permitted to access inappropriate material;
- devices are used for an identified educational, developmental or accessibility purpose;
- devices are checked and maintained appropriately.

Children will not be permitted to use devices to photograph, video or record other children unless this forms part of an authorised activity with appropriate safeguards.

Safeguarding concerns involving images

If a member of staff becomes aware that an image or recording of a child has been:

- taken inappropriately;
- stored inappropriately;
- shared inappropriately;
- uploaded without authorisation;
- obtained using a personal device;
- shared on social media;
- or otherwise misused,

the concern must be reported immediately to the DSL/Manager.

Staff must not investigate the matter themselves.

The DSL/Manager will follow the appropriate safeguarding, allegations, disciplinary and information-security procedures.

Concerns involving staff or other adults

Where the concern involves a member of staff, volunteer, student, contractor or other person working with children, the nursery's safeguarding allegations and low-level concerns procedures will be followed.

A concern may be treated as:

- a low-level concern;
- a safeguarding concern;
- an allegation meeting the harm threshold;
- depending on the circumstances.

The nursery will follow the appropriate local authority/LADO procedures where required.

Lost, stolen or compromised devices

Any nursery device containing children's photographs, videos, recordings or personal information that is:

- lost;
- stolen;
- damaged;
- accessed without authorisation;
- suspected to have been compromised;

must be reported immediately to the Manager/DSL.

The nursery will assess the incident and take appropriate safeguarding, data-protection and information-security action.

Professional boundaries

Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries when using technology.

Staff must not:

- communicate privately with children;
- add children to personal social-media accounts;
- send personal messages to children;
- share personal photographs with children;
- request photographs from children;
- use technology to circumvent nursery safeguarding procedures.

Communication with parents/carers must use nursery-approved systems wherever possible.

Information sharing

The nursery recognises that information may need to be shared to protect a child.

Information will be shared lawfully, appropriately and proportionately.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, staff must follow the nursery's safeguarding and information-sharing procedures.

A lack of parental consent will not prevent information being shared where safeguarding legislation or guidance permits or requires information to be shared.

The nursery will follow current information-sharing requirements and local safeguarding arrangements.

The 2026 Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance reinforces the importance of effective information sharing in safeguarding practice.

Staff responsibilities

All staff are responsible for:

- following this policy;
- protecting children's privacy;

- using nursery-approved equipment;
- maintaining professional boundaries;
- following safeguarding procedures;
- reporting safeguarding concerns immediately;
- reporting inappropriate use of devices;
- reporting lost or compromised devices;
- following the Staff Code of Ethical Practice;
- following information-sharing procedures;
- completing required safeguarding training.

Staff must understand that inappropriate use of photography, video or electronic devices may constitute a safeguarding or disciplinary matter.

Management and DSL responsibilities

The Manager and DSL are responsible for ensuring that:

- this policy is implemented;
- staff understand the requirements;
- staff receive appropriate safeguarding training;
- photography permissions are appropriately managed;
- nursery devices are appropriately controlled;
- concerns are recorded and acted upon;
- safeguarding concerns are referred where necessary;
- information is stored securely;
- breaches are investigated appropriately;
- the policy is reviewed when guidance changes.

The DSL must ensure that safeguarding concerns involving images or electronic devices are managed in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding procedures and local safeguarding arrangements.

Training

Staff will receive appropriate safeguarding training and guidance regarding:

- mobile-phone use;
- cameras;
- electronic devices;
- photography;
- video recording;
- online safety;
- screen use;
- data protection;
- professional boundaries;
- recognising safeguarding concerns.
- Safeguarding training will be kept up to date.

The 2026 Working Together guidance confirms that early years providers must ensure staff have safeguarding training enabling them to understand safeguarding policies and procedures and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect.

Breaches of this policy

Any breach of this policy will be taken seriously.

Depending on the circumstances, action may include:

- management discussion;
- additional training;
- supervision;
- a low-level concern process;
- disciplinary action;
- referral to the LADO;
- referral to children's social care;
- referral to the police;
- other safeguarding action.

The appropriate response will depend upon the circumstances and the level of risk to the child.

Monitoring and review

The Manager will monitor compliance with this policy.

The nursery will review:

- use of nursery devices;
- staff compliance;
- photography permissions;
- image storage;
- image-sharing arrangements;
- online safety;
- screen use;
- safeguarding incidents;
- reported concerns;
- emerging technological risks.

Screen Time and Digital Technology Policy

Policy Statement:

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that digital technology is part of children's everyday lives and can provide opportunities for learning, communication, creativity and inclusion when used appropriately.

However, young children learn best through responsive relationships, active play, real-world experiences, physical activity, conversation, exploration and interaction with adults and other children.

This policy sets out how we will manage children's screen use in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework and Department for Education guidance on screen use in early years settings.

Our approach is to use screens purposefully, proportionately and safely, ensuring that screen use never replaces high-quality interactions, play, physical activity, outdoor experiences, stories, songs or hands-on learning.

Policy Principles

We will:

- Prioritise children's physical, emotional, social and cognitive development;
- Keep children's screen use to a minimum and avoid unnecessary screen exposure;
- Use digital technology only where there is a clear educational, developmental, communication or accessibility purpose;
- Favour screen-free activities wherever they can achieve the same or better learning outcome;
- Ensure that adults actively engage with children whenever screens are used;
- Select content that is age-appropriate, safe, slow-paced, predictable and free from advertising;
- Prevent children from independently accessing online content;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to promote healthy screen habits;
- Consider each child's individual needs, including SEND and communication needs;
- Regularly review our use of digital technology to ensure it remains appropriate and evidence-informed.

Screen time expectations

Children under 2 years:

- Screen use will be avoided wherever possible.
- Exceptional circumstances may include activities such as a video call with a parent or carer, particularly where this supports a child's relationships and emotional wellbeing.
- Screens will not be routinely used to entertain, occupy, distract or settle children under 2.

Children aged 2 to 5 years:

- Screen use will be limited to up to one hour per day, and less if possible, taking into account the child's overall screen exposure and individual circumstances.
- This is not a target or entitlement. The setting will not seek to use one hour of screen time simply because it is available.
- Screen use will normally be for short, purposeful periods and will form only a small part of the child's overall experience.
- Where children may already have significant screen exposure outside the setting, practitioners will take this into account when planning screen use.

Children with SEND:

- The recommended screen-time limits do not apply to screen-based assistive technology where this technology is necessary to support a child's communication, participation, wellbeing or quality of life.
- Any assistive technology will be considered as part of the child's individual needs and, where appropriate, in consultation with parents, carers and relevant professionals.

When screens may be used

Screens may be used where they clearly support children's learning, development or wellbeing.

Examples may include:

- Researching or exploring something arising from children's interests
- Looking at photographs, images or short videos that extend children's understanding
- Supporting music, movement, stories or creative experiences
- Documenting children's experiences where this is proportionate and necessary
- Supporting communication or accessibility for children with SEND
- Using appropriate digital technology to explore concepts that cannot easily be experienced in another way
- Making or viewing something together as part of a planned learning experience.

Practitioners will ask:

- Is the screen necessary?
- What is the clear purpose?
- Could the same learning be achieved more effectively without a screen?
- Will the child be actively engaged with an adult rather than passively watching?

How screens will be used

When screens are used with children:

- An adult will be present and actively engaged
- Children will not be left alone to access or watch screen content
- Practitioners will talk with children about what they see
- Adults will use commenting, narration, questioning and discussion to promote language and thinking
- Children will be encouraged to predict, respond, make choices and communicate
- Screen sessions will be kept short
- Screens will not be used as background entertainment
- Screens will not be used to occupy children during transitions
- Screens will not be used routinely as a behaviour-management or calming strategy
- Screens will not replace adult-led storytelling, singing, conversation or interaction

- Children will be encouraged to move and participate rather than remain sedentary.
- There will never be passive engagement with screen time.

Content and online safety

Before content is shown to children, practitioners must check that it is suitable.

Content should be:

- Age-appropriate;
- Slow-paced and predictable;
- Free from frightening, violent or inappropriate material;
- Free from advertising wherever possible;
- Free from unnecessary scrolling and autoplay;
- Appropriate for the individual children accessing it;
- Consistent with our safeguarding and online-safety procedures.

Children will not independently browse the internet or access video platforms.

Algorithm-driven content, social-media-style videos and fast-paced or overstimulating content will not be used with children.

The use of AI tools or AI-enabled toys with children will be avoided unless and until there is sufficient evidence that their use is safe and appropriate for young children.

Screen-free periods and environments

The setting will maintain screen-free periods and areas to protect opportunities for:

- Conversation
- Imaginative and pretend play
- Physical development
- Outdoor learning
- Social interaction
- Books and storytelling
- Creative activities
- Mealtimes
- Rest and sleep.

Screens will not be used during mealtimes.

Screens will not normally be used within one hour of a child's sleep or rest period.

Screens will not be left switched on when they are not actively being used.

Digital devices used by staff

Staff may use digital devices for legitimate professional purposes, including:

- Recording observations and assessments
- Communicating with parents and carers
- Accessing professional information
- Safeguarding and record keeping
- Administrative tasks.

Staff use of devices must never interfere with supervision or responsive interaction with children.

Personal mobile phones and other personal devices must be managed in accordance with the setting's safeguarding, mobile-phone and acceptable-use procedures.

Personal devices must not be used to photograph or record children unless this is specifically authorised under the setting's procedures.

Photographs, videos and children's data

The setting will keep photographs and videos of children to the minimum necessary.

Where photographs or videos are taken:

- Appropriate parental consent and permissions will be obtained where required
- Images will be stored securely
- Images will only be accessed by authorised individuals
- Images will only be shared through approved and secure systems
- Images will not be shared through personal social-media accounts or personal messaging services;
- Unnecessary images will be deleted in accordance with our retention procedures.

All use of digital devices and children's information will comply with applicable data-protection and safeguarding requirements.

Assessment

- Digital technology will not be used as a substitute for professional observation and assessment.
- Pre-Reception assessments will not require children to complete activities on a screen simply to establish their developmental level.
- Practitioners will use their professional knowledge, observations, interactions and understanding of the child when assessing learning and development.
- Digital recording should remain proportionate and must not create excessive administrative demands or reduce the time practitioners spend interacting with children.

Partnership with parents and carers

We recognise that families have different circumstances, routines and approaches to technology.

We will communicate our screen-use approach with parents and carers when children join the setting and provide further information through conversations, newsletters, meetings or other appropriate communication.

Staff will provide advice in a supportive and non-judgemental manner.

We will encourage families to consider:

- The amount of screen time their child has
- The type and quality of content
- Whether an adult is present and engaging with the child
- Whether screens are replacing sleep, physical activity, outdoor play or family interaction
- Avoiding screens during meals
- Avoiding screens in the hour before sleep.

The setting will not make assumptions or judgements about individual families' circumstances.

Equality, inclusion and individual needs

We recognise that some children may benefit significantly from digital technology.

We will make reasonable adjustments where digital technology supports a child's disability, communication, sensory needs, learning or participation.

Any such use will be considered individually and will not be restricted simply because it involves a screen.

Parents, carers and relevant professionals will be involved where appropriate.

Staff responsibilities

All staff are responsible for following this policy.

The Manager/Early Years Lead will:

- Ensure staff understand the EYFS screen-use requirements;
- Provide appropriate training and guidance;
- Monitor the use of screens within the setting;
- Ensure content is appropriately checked
- Review the policy annually or sooner if government guidance changes
- Address inappropriate or excessive use.

Practitioners are responsible for exercising professional judgement and ensuring that children's experiences remain centred on relationships, play, communication and real-world learning.

Monitoring and review

The setting will regularly evaluate:

How often screens are being used

Why screens are being used

Whether their use is improving or extending children's learning

Whether screen use is displacing valuable play or interaction

Whether content remains appropriate

Whether children are receiving sufficient opportunities for physical activity, outdoor learning, social interaction and rest

Whether individual children, including children with SEND, are receiving appropriate support.

Where screen use is found to be unnecessary or excessive, alternative screen-free approaches will be prioritised.

This policy will be reviewed annually and whenever there is a significant change to EYFS requirements or Department for Education guidance.

Related policies

This policy should be read alongside:

1. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
2. Online Safety Policy
3. Mobile Phone and Personal Device Policy
4. Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy
5. SEND and Inclusion Policy
6. Behaviour and Co-regulation Policy
7. Health and Safety Policy
8. Assessment Policy
9. Safer Sleep Policy

Reportable to Ofsted

You must tell Ofsted about any of the following:

- Anything that requires resuscitation admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours .
- A broken bone or fracture, dislocation of any major joint, such as the shoulder, knee, hip or elbow
- Any loss of consciousness
- Severe breathing difficulties, including asphyxia
- Anything leading to hypothermia or heat-induced illness

Minor injuries

You **do not** need to tell Ofsted about minor injuries, even if treated at a hospital (for less than 24 hours). These include:

- Animal and insect bites, such as a bee sting that doesn't cause an allergic reaction
- Sprains, strains and bruising, for example if a child sprains their wrist tripping over their shoelaces
- Cuts and grazes
- Minor burns and scalds
- Dislocation of minor joints, such as a finger or toe
- Wound infections

Eyes

You **must** report to Ofsted if a child suffers any loss of sight, whether it is temporary or permanent. You must also tell us about any:

- Penetrating injury to the child's eye
- Chemical or hot metal burn to the child's eye

Substances and electricity

If a child in your care suffers any injury from, or requires medical treatment for, any of the following situations you **must** tell Ofsted:

From absorption of any substance:

- By inhalation
- By ingestion
- Through the skin
- From an electric shock or electrical burn

Where there is reason to believe it resulted from exposure to:

- Harmful substance
- A biological agent .
- A toxin
- An infected material

Ofsted need to be informed within 24 Hours.

Childcare: significant events to notify Ofsted about - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Low-Level Concerns Policy

Purpose

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and professional environment in which children are protected from harm and all adults working with children maintain the highest standards of behaviour.

This policy sets out how the setting will recognise, report, record, review and respond to low-level concerns about the behaviour of adults working in or on behalf of the setting.

The purpose of this policy is not to create a culture of suspicion. Rather, it is to promote an open and transparent safeguarding culture in which staff feel confident to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity.

A low-level concern may appear minor in isolation but may become significant if it forms part of a pattern of behaviour. All concerns will therefore be taken seriously and appropriately considered.

This policy should be read alongside the setting's:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Disciplinary and Capability Procedures
- Complaints Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Mobile Phone and Camera Policy
- Staff Supervision Policy

Legislative and Guidance Framework

This policy is informed by relevant statutory requirements and safeguarding guidance, *including:*

- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), where applicable to the setting
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures
- Hertfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) procedures

What is a Low-Level Concern?

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, or even a concern that does not meet the threshold of an allegation, about an adult's behaviour towards children that:

- is inconsistent with the setting's professional expectations or Code of Conduct; or
- could be viewed as inappropriate or unprofessional; or
- causes a member of staff to feel uncomfortable about an adult's behaviour towards a child.

A low-level concern does not mean that the person is necessarily unsuitable to work with children.

It may be that the behaviour was accidental, poorly judged, thoughtless or a one-off incident. However, it is important that concerns are reported so that the setting can consider the circumstances and identify whether any further action is required.

Examples of Low-Level Concerns

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Being unnecessarily over-familiar with a child.
- Using language towards a child that is overly personal, sarcastic, humiliating or inappropriate.
- Having inappropriate conversations with children.
- Showing favouritism towards a particular child.
- Giving a child inappropriate gifts or rewards.
- Spending unnecessary one-to-one time with a child away from the sight or hearing of others.
- Seeking unnecessary physical contact with a child.
- Using physical contact that is not appropriate to the child's needs or the circumstances.
- Failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Using personal mobile phones or devices around children contrary to the setting's policy.
- Taking photographs or videos of children outside the setting's agreed procedures.
- Communicating with children through personal social media or messaging accounts.
- Sharing personal information with a child that is inappropriate for their age or role.
- Making inappropriate jokes or comments in front of children.
- Using inappropriate language in the presence of children.
- Failing to follow agreed safeguarding or intimate-care procedures.
- Frequently ignoring or dismissing a child's requests, feelings or needs.
- Behaviour that could reasonably be perceived as intimidating, overly controlling or inappropriate.
- Repeatedly breaching professional boundaries, even where each individual incident appears minor.
- Any other behaviour that causes a member of staff to question whether professional boundaries are being maintained.

This list is not exhaustive.

Low-Level Concerns Are Not the Same as Allegations

A low-level concern must be distinguished from an allegation that an adult has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Where the concern meets, or may meet, the harm threshold, it must not be dealt with as an ordinary low-level concern.

The DSL/Manager will seek advice from the Hertfordshire LADO where there is any doubt about whether the threshold has been met.

Staff must never attempt to decide themselves that a concern is "only low level" if there is any possibility that it may constitute an allegation.

Reporting a Low-Level Concern

All adults working in or on behalf of the setting have a responsibility to report concerns.

A concern should be reported as soon as reasonably possible to:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Shonna Hayward**

Deputy DSL: **Katrina Roberts**

Concerns should normally be reported on the setting's Low-Level Concern Form.

A member of staff should provide factual information, including:

- what happened;
- when it happened;
- where it happened;
- who was involved;
- who was present;
- what was said or done;
- whether there were any witnesses;
- any relevant context;
- what action, if any, was taken at the time.

Staff should distinguish between fact, observation and opinion.

They should not investigate the matter themselves or confront the person about whom the concern has been raised.

Anonymous Concerns

The setting will accept concerns raised anonymously.

Where possible, staff are encouraged to identify themselves so that the DSL/Manager can clarify information if necessary.

Where an individual wishes to remain anonymous, the setting will respect this as far as reasonably possible, while recognising that anonymity may sometimes limit the setting's ability to investigate or respond fully.

Self-Reporting

Staff are encouraged to report situations in which they believe their own behaviour may have fallen below the expected professional standard.

For example, a member of staff may recognise that:

- they became frustrated and spoke to a child in an inappropriate tone;
- they accidentally breached a professional boundary;
- they found themselves in a situation that could be misunderstood;
- they accidentally failed to follow a safeguarding procedure;
- they behaved in a way that, on reflection, they believe was inappropriate.

Self-reporting will be treated as an important part of an open safeguarding culture.

A member of staff who recognises and reports their own mistake will not automatically face disciplinary action. The response will depend on the circumstances, seriousness and context.

Initial Response

When a low-level concern is received, the DSL or Manager will:

1. Record the concern.
2. Consider whether the concern is genuinely low level.
3. Consider whether it may meet the harm threshold.
4. Consider whether the concern indicates a possible safeguarding risk.
5. Consider whether the Hertfordshire LADO should be consulted.
6. Consider whether the matter should be dealt with through supervision, training, management action or disciplinary procedures.
7. Consider whether any immediate action is necessary to protect children.
8. Consider whether there are previous concerns about the individual.
9. Record the decision and rationale.

Where there is uncertainty about the appropriate threshold, advice will be sought rather than assuming that the matter is low level.

Concerns About the DSL or Manager

If a concern relates to the DSL, it must be reported to the Manager/Registered Provider or another appropriate senior person.

If a concern relates to the Manager or Registered Provider, it must be reported to the DSL and, where appropriate, directly to the Hertfordshire LADO or another appropriate safeguarding authority.

Staff must not be prevented from reporting a concern because it relates to a senior member of staff.
The setting's Whistleblowing Policy should be followed where appropriate.

Concerns About Agency Staff, Contractors or Volunteers

Low-level concerns may relate to:

- agency workers;
- temporary staff;
- students;
- volunteers;
- contractors;
- visitors;
- supply staff;
- apprentices;
- work experience students;
- other adults working in or on behalf of the setting.

The same safeguarding expectations apply.

Where an individual is employed by another organisation, the setting will consider whether the concern should also be shared with their employer so that appropriate action can be taken and patterns can be identified.

Recording Low-Level Concerns

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing.

Records should include:

- the date of the concern;
- the date of the incident, if known;
- the name and role of the person concerned;
- the name of the person reporting the concern, unless anonymous;
- a factual description of the concern;
- relevant context;
- witnesses;
- any action taken;
- advice sought;
- whether the concern was referred to the LADO or another agency;
- the outcome;
- the rationale for decisions made.

Records will be factual, objective and proportionate.

Low-level concern records will be kept confidential and securely, with access restricted to those who need the information for safeguarding, management or legal purposes.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Information relating to low-level concerns will be handled sensitively and confidentially.

Information will only be shared with those who have a legitimate safeguarding, management or legal reason to receive it.

Records will be managed in accordance with UK data protection legislation and the setting's data protection procedures.

Staff must not discuss concerns with colleagues who do not need to know, parents, other families or people outside the setting.

Reviewing Low-Level Concerns

The DSL/Manager will review low-level concern records periodically.

The purpose of reviewing records is to identify:

- repeated concerns about the same individual;
- similar concerns involving several members of staff;
- patterns of behaviour;
- weaknesses in staff practice;
- training needs;
- supervision issues;
- weaknesses in policies or procedures;
- concerns that may have escalated over time.

A number of apparently minor concerns may, when considered together, indicate a more serious concern.

Where a pattern is identified, the Manager/DSL will reconsider whether the matter remains low level and whether further safeguarding, disciplinary or LADO action is required.

Management and Supportive Action

Depending on the nature of the concern, action may include:

- informal discussion;
- reflective practice;
- additional supervision;
- mentoring;
- additional safeguarding training;
- professional boundaries training;

- clarification of policies and expectations;
- a change in working arrangements;
- increased supervision;
- formal management action;
- disciplinary procedures;
- referral to the LADO;
- referral to another safeguarding agency.

Any action will be proportionate to the concern and will take account of the circumstances.

When to Contact the Hertfordshire LADO

The setting will seek advice from the Hertfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where:

- there is uncertainty about whether the harm threshold has been met;
- the behaviour may constitute an allegation against an adult working with children;
- there is a repeated or concerning pattern of behaviour;
- the concern involves serious professional misconduct;
- the concern may indicate that an individual poses a risk to children;
- the setting is unsure how to proceed.

Hertfordshire County Council provides childcare providers with information regarding its child protection and LADO procedures.

Hertfordshire LADO contact details:

0300 123 4043

The setting will ensure that contact details are checked regularly rather than relying on outdated copies of this policy.

Immediate Safeguarding Concerns

If there is an immediate concern that a child is at risk of harm, the matter must be treated as a safeguarding concern and not simply recorded as a low-level concern.

The DSL will follow the setting's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures.

Hertfordshire County Council states that professionals can report concerns about a child or young person through its safeguarding arrangements, and urgent out-of-hours safeguarding concerns can be reported via the council's emergency arrangements. If someone is in immediate danger or a crime is being committed, the appropriate emergency response is required.

Hertfordshire Children's Services:

0300 123 4043

Emergency: **999** where someone is in immediate danger or a crime is being committed.

Staff Training

All staff will receive information about low-level concerns as part of induction.

Training and staff discussions will include:

- professional boundaries;
- appropriate physical contact;
- respectful communication;
- safeguarding responsibilities;
- recognising inappropriate behaviour;
- reporting concerns;
- self-reporting;
- whistleblowing;
- use of mobile phones and cameras;
- appropriate use of social media;
- confidentiality;
- the difference between a low-level concern and an allegation.

The setting will promote an environment in which staff understand that reporting a concern is a safeguarding responsibility rather than an act of disloyalty.

Professional Boundaries

Adults working with children are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.

Staff should:

- treat every child with dignity and respect;
- use age-appropriate language;
- avoid favouritism;
- maintain appropriate physical boundaries;
- follow intimate-care procedures;
- avoid unnecessary one-to-one situations;
- follow mobile phone and photography procedures;
- use professional communication methods;
- avoid private social media contact with children and families where prohibited;
- follow the setting's safeguarding procedures;
- seek advice if they are unsure whether a particular interaction is appropriate.

Staff should consider how their actions could be perceived by a child, parent, colleague or external professional.

Creating an Open Safeguarding Culture

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that effective safeguarding depends on an environment in which staff feel able to speak openly.

The setting will:

- encourage staff to raise concerns early;
- avoid dismissing concerns because they appear minor;
- support staff who report concerns in good faith;
- ensure managers respond appropriately;
- provide regular safeguarding reminders;
- encourage self-reflection and self-reporting;
- challenge poor professional practice;
- monitor patterns of concerns;
- learn from incidents and near misses.

The setting will not tolerate victimisation or retaliation against a person who raises a genuine safeguarding concern.

Parents and Carers

Where appropriate and where doing so would not compromise safeguarding, an incident involving an adult's behaviour may be discussed with the child's parent/carer.

The setting will consider confidentiality, safeguarding requirements and any advice from the LADO or other relevant agencies before sharing information.

Parents and carers may raise concerns about the behaviour of staff or other adults within the setting.

Any such concern will be taken seriously and referred to the Manager/DSL for consideration.

Allegations Made by Children

Children in the Early Years may communicate concerns through:

- verbal disclosure;
- play;
- behaviour;
- changes in behaviour;
- drawings;
- comments made during everyday activities;
- physical or emotional indicators.

Staff must listen carefully and take what children say seriously.

Staff must not:

- ask leading questions;
- promise secrecy;
- investigate;
- suggest answers;
- express disbelief;
- confront the alleged person.

The setting's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy must be followed.

Fairness to Staff

The setting recognises that a low-level concern may arise from a misunderstanding, an accidental action or a difference in perception.

The existence of a low-level concern does not mean that misconduct has occurred.

The setting will:

- avoid prejudging staff;
- establish the facts where appropriate;
- maintain confidentiality;
- provide an opportunity for the individual to respond where appropriate;
- take proportionate action;
- follow employment and disciplinary procedures where necessary.

Where a concern is unfounded, this will be recorded appropriately.

Monitoring and Review of This Policy

The Manager/DSL will review this policy at least annually and sooner where:

- legislation or statutory guidance changes;
- Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures change;
- an incident identifies a weakness in the policy;
- an inspection identifies an area for improvement;
- safeguarding learning indicates that changes are necessary.

The policy will be communicated to all staff and made available to relevant volunteers and other adults working in the setting.

Premises and Security Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the nursery premises are safe, secure, well maintained and suitable for the care, learning and development of children.

The nursery recognises its responsibility to protect children from hazards, unauthorised access, safeguarding risks, accidents, intruders and other foreseeable threats while they are on the premises.

This policy should be read alongside the nursery's safeguarding, health and safety, fire safety, emergency procedures, risk assessment, missing child and collection procedures.

Policy Statement

The nursery will take all reasonable and proportionate steps to:

- provide a safe and secure environment for children, staff and visitors;
- prevent unauthorised access to the premises;
- prevent children from leaving the premises without appropriate supervision and authorisation;
- maintain secure entrances, exits, outdoor areas and equipment;
- identify and manage hazards through regular inspections and risk assessments;
- ensure that visitors and contractors are appropriately managed;
- protect confidential information, records, keys, access codes and security systems;
- respond promptly and appropriately to security incidents and emergencies;
- ensure that staff understand their individual responsibilities for premises security.

The safety and welfare of children will always be the nursery's highest priority.

Responsibilities

Nursery Manager

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that:

- the premises are maintained in a safe and secure condition;
- appropriate security arrangements are in place;
- regular premises and security checks are completed;
- identified defects and hazards are addressed promptly;
- staff receive appropriate information and training;
- contractors and visitors are appropriately controlled;
- incidents involving premises or security are recorded and reviewed;
- emergency arrangements are maintained and tested.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will oversee safeguarding concerns relating to premises security, including suspected unauthorised access, concerns about individuals attempting to gain access to children, or circumstances in which a child may have been placed at risk.

All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- remaining vigilant about premises security;
- following entry, exit, visitor and collection procedures;
- never allowing unauthorised persons to enter the nursery;
- reporting damaged locks, gates, doors, windows or security equipment immediately;
- supervising children appropriately;
- challenging unfamiliar persons in accordance with nursery procedures;
- reporting security concerns or incidents to the Nursery Manager or DSL.

Access to the Nursery

The nursery will maintain controlled access to the building.

- Main entrances will remain secured when not being actively used.
- Staff must not prop open security doors or gates.
- Access codes, keys, fobs and other security devices must not be shared with unauthorised persons.
- Staff must ensure that doors and gates are securely closed after entering or leaving.
- Children must never be given independent access to external doors or gates.
- Staff must remain alert to people attempting to enter the premises by following another person through a secure entrance.
- Any person who appears suspicious or who cannot establish a legitimate reason for being on the premises should be referred to the Nursery Manager or another designated member of staff.

Collection and Release of Children

Children will only be released to parents, carers or other individuals authorised in accordance with the nursery's collection procedures.

Staff must:

- check the identity of unfamiliar individuals collecting a child;
- follow the nursery's authorised collection arrangements;
- seek management advice where there is any uncertainty;
- never release a child to an unauthorised person;
- record and report any attempted unauthorised collection or related safeguarding concern.

Parents and carers should inform the nursery promptly of changes to authorised collectors.

Visitors and Contractors

All visitors and contractors must follow the nursery's visitor procedures.

Where appropriate:

- visitors will sign in on arrival;
- visitors will wear appropriate identification;
- visitors will be accompanied or supervised where necessary;
- visitors will not have unrestricted access to children;
- contractors will be informed of relevant health, safety and safeguarding requirements;
- visitors will sign out when leaving.

Staff should not permit unknown individuals to enter the premises simply because they state that they have an appointment or are carrying out work.

Staff and Student Security

Staff, students and volunteers must comply with nursery security procedures.

- Keys and security codes must be kept secure.
- Lost keys, fobs or access devices must be reported immediately.
- Security codes must be changed where there is a reasonable concern that they have been compromised.
- Staff must not disclose security information unnecessarily.
- Staff must ensure that confidential documents and records are not left accessible to unauthorised persons.
- Students and volunteers must not be given access beyond what is necessary for their role.

Premises Checks and Maintenance

The nursery will conduct regular checks of the premises.

Checks should include, as appropriate:

- doors, locks and hinges;
- windows and restrictors;
- gates and fences;
- outdoor play areas;
- lighting;
- alarms and other security systems;
- fire exits and escape routes;
- electrical equipment and visible cables;
- flooring, steps and trip hazards;
- toilets and changing areas;
- storage areas;
- heating and ventilation;
- furniture and equipment;
- boundary areas.

Defects presenting an immediate risk will be addressed without delay. Where immediate repair is not possible, appropriate temporary measures will be implemented to protect children and staff.

Outdoor Areas

Outdoor areas must be securely enclosed and checked before children use them.

Staff should ensure that:

- gates are securely closed;
- children cannot climb or pass through boundary fencing;
- hazardous items are removed;
- equipment is safe and appropriately maintained;
- sheds, storage areas and other potentially hazardous areas are secured;
- staff maintain appropriate supervision at all times.

A risk assessment will be undertaken where there are changes to the outdoor environment or equipment.

Security Equipment

Where the nursery uses security equipment such as alarms, intercoms, access-control systems or CCTV, such systems will be operated in accordance with relevant legislation, guidance, manufacturer instructions and the nursery's data protection requirements.

Security equipment must not be relied upon as a substitute for appropriate supervision and safeguarding procedures.

Any failure or suspected malfunction of security equipment must be reported immediately.

CCTV

Where CCTV is installed, it will be used only for legitimate purposes such as safeguarding, security and the prevention or investigation of incidents.

The nursery will ensure that:

- CCTV use is proportionate and justified;
- access to recordings is restricted to authorised individuals;
- recordings are stored securely;
- retention periods are appropriate;
- individuals' privacy is respected;
- relevant data protection requirements are followed.

Further information should be contained within the nursery's CCTV and Privacy Policy.

Fire and Emergency Security

Fire exits and emergency routes must remain clear and accessible at all times.

Staff must be familiar with the nursery's:

- fire evacuation procedures;
- emergency contact arrangements;
- lockdown or invacuation procedures, where applicable;
- emergency assembly arrangements;

- procedures for accounting for children, staff and visitors.

Emergency procedures will be practised at appropriate intervals and reviewed following drills, incidents or significant changes to the premises.

Lockdown and Intruder Procedures

If there is a suspected intruder or serious security threat, staff must follow the nursery's emergency lockdown/invacuation procedure.

Depending on the circumstances, staff may be required to:

- bring children indoors or move them to a designated safe area;
- secure doors and windows where safe to do so;
- keep children calm and quiet;
- prevent access to unsafe areas;
- contact the emergency services where appropriate;
- follow instructions from the Nursery Manager or emergency services;
- account for all children, staff and visitors when it is safe to do so.

Staff should not place themselves or children at unnecessary risk by confronting an intruder.

Missing Child or Unauthorised Departure

If a child is believed to be missing or has left the premises without authorisation, staff must immediately implement the nursery's Missing Child Procedure.

The nursery will:

- raise the alarm internally;
- ensure other children remain appropriately supervised;
- search the premises and relevant outdoor areas promptly;
- establish when and where the child was last seen;
- contact the police/emergency services where appropriate;
- contact the child's parent/carer in accordance with the nursery's procedures;
- record and report the incident;
- review the circumstances and take appropriate preventative action.

Deliveries and Mail

Deliveries should be managed so that they do not compromise children's safety or premises security.

Delivery personnel should not be permitted unrestricted access to areas where children are present.

Packages, equipment and other deliveries should be stored safely and away from children until they can be checked and appropriately dealt with.

Hazardous and Restricted Areas

Areas containing potentially hazardous materials, equipment, tools, cleaning products, medicines or confidential information must be appropriately secured.

Children must not have unsupervised access to:

- cleaning chemicals;
- maintenance equipment;
- medicines;
- kitchen equipment;
- staff-only areas;
- confidential records;
- storage rooms containing hazardous materials;
- other areas identified through risk assessment.

Incident Reporting

All significant security incidents, attempted unauthorised access, damaged security equipment, missing keys, unauthorised collection attempts, missing-child incidents and other relevant concerns must be reported to the Nursery Manager.

An incident record should include:

- date and time;
- location;
- people involved;
- description of what happened;
- immediate action taken;
- whether parents/carers or emergency services were contacted;
- follow-up action required.

Safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding procedures.

Training and Awareness

Staff will receive appropriate induction and ongoing information regarding:

- premises security;
- safeguarding responsibilities;
- emergency procedures;
- visitor management;
- collection arrangements;
- missing-child procedures;
- fire safety;
- reporting security concerns.

Staff are expected to remain vigilant and raise concerns promptly.

Risk Assessment

The nursery will undertake and regularly review risk assessments relating to premises and security.

Risk assessments will be reviewed:

- regularly;
- following an incident or near miss;
- following significant changes to the premises;
- when new equipment or procedures are introduced;
- when concerns are identified by staff, parents/carers or external professionals.
- Monitoring and Review
- The Nursery Manager will monitor compliance with this policy through:
 - premises inspections;
 - security checks;
 - incident and accident records;
 - staff feedback;
 - emergency drills;
 - maintenance records;
 - safeguarding reviews.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner where there are changes in legislation, guidance, premises, security arrangements or identified risks.

Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation Procedure
- Missing Child Procedure
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Collection of Children Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy
- CCTV Policy, where applicable
- Emergency Lockdown/Invacuation Procedure, where applicable

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Purpose and commitment

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child.

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that children must be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation, harm and unsafe situations.

We will maintain a child-centred approach, ensuring that the child's safety, welfare, views, wishes and individual circumstances are considered when making safeguarding decisions.

Our safeguarding practice is based on the principle that it could happen here. Staff must remain professionally curious and must not assume that abuse or neglect cannot happen within a family, community or setting.

The nursery will:

- protect children from harm;
- promote children's welfare and wellbeing;
- provide a safe environment;
- identify concerns at the earliest opportunity;
- respond promptly to concerns;
- listen to children and take their views seriously;
- work appropriately with parents and carers;
- work effectively with children's social care, health, police and other agencies;
- share information appropriately where necessary to safeguard children;
- maintain accurate and secure safeguarding records;
- ensure staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities;
- provide appropriate safeguarding training and support;
- follow local safeguarding partnership procedures.

Statutory and regulatory framework

This policy is written to reflect the requirements applicable from 1 September 2026, including the:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, applicable from 1 September 2026;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Children Act 1989;
- Children Act 2004;
- Education Act 2002, where applicable;
- Childcare Act 2006;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- Children and Social Work Act 2017;
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);
- relevant local safeguarding partnership arrangements and procedures;
- other current statutory guidance relevant to safeguarding children.

The EYFS is mandatory for early years providers and the 2026 framework contains strengthened safeguarding and welfare requirements.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 provides the statutory framework for multi-agency safeguarding and applies to childcare settings.

Where another statutory or local safeguarding requirement provides a higher level of protection for children, the nursery will follow the appropriate requirement.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Every member of staff, volunteer, student, contractor and other person working at Little Blossom has a responsibility to safeguard children.

Staff must:

- know how to recognise safeguarding concerns;
- know how to report concerns;
- know who the DSL and deputy DSL are;
- report concerns without delay;
- record concerns accurately;
- maintain confidentiality;
- share information appropriately;
- never investigate allegations themselves;
- never promise a child confidentiality;
- follow the nursery's safeguarding procedures.

Staff should never assume that someone else will report a concern.

If a concern is passed to a member of staff, they must ensure that it reaches the DSL or appropriate safeguarding person.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The nursery will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has appropriate authority, knowledge, skills and training.

The DSL will be responsible for coordinating safeguarding arrangements within the nursery.

The DSL will:

- receive and assess safeguarding concerns;
- maintain safeguarding records;
- make or support referrals to children's social care;
- liaise with children's social care, police and other agencies;
- support staff who raise concerns;

- ensure safeguarding information is shared appropriately;
- participate in multi-agency meetings where required;
- ensure relevant safeguarding plans are followed;
- support safer recruitment and allegations procedures;
- ensure safeguarding training is maintained;
- monitor safeguarding patterns and emerging risks;
- ensure the nursery follows local safeguarding partnership procedures.

A deputy DSL will be appointed to provide safeguarding leadership when the DSL is unavailable.

The nursery will ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain effective during periods of absence.

Types of abuse and neglect

The nursery recognises the four main categories of abuse:

1. physical abuse;
2. emotional abuse;
3. sexual abuse;
4. neglect.

These categories should not be considered in isolation. Children may experience more than one form of abuse and safeguarding concerns may arise from a combination of circumstances.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve:

- hitting;
- shaking;
- throwing;
- kicking;
- biting;
- burning or scalding;
- poisoning;
- suffocation;
- drowning;
- inappropriate physical restraint;
- causing fractures or other injuries;
- deliberately inducing or fabricating illness.

Staff should report concerns about unexplained injuries, repeated injuries or explanations that do not appear consistent with the injury.

Staff must not attempt to determine whether an injury is deliberately inflicted.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse may involve persistent behaviour that adversely affects a child's emotional development.

This may include:

- humiliation;
- rejection;
- intimidation;
- threats;
- persistent criticism;
- frightening a child;
- unrealistic expectations;
- preventing appropriate social interaction;
- controlling behaviour;
- serious bullying;
- exposing a child to domestic abuse;
- exploitation or corruption.

Emotional harm may be present alongside other forms of abuse.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activity.

This may involve:

- physical contact;
- penetrative or non-penetrative acts;
- sexual touching;
- exposure to sexual activity;
- exposure to pornography;
- producing or viewing sexual images;
- grooming;
- encouraging sexually inappropriate behaviour;
- online sexual exploitation or communication.

A child does not need to understand that an activity is sexual for it to constitute abuse.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs where this is likely to result in serious impairment of health or development.

This may include failure to provide:

- adequate food;
- clothing;
- shelter;
- appropriate supervision;
- medical care;
- emotional care;
- protection from danger;
- appropriate support for the child's developmental needs.

The nursery will consider neglect in the context of the child's age, developmental needs and family circumstances.

Indicators of abuse and what you might see

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised.

The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

Remember, it is your responsibility to report your concerns. It is not your responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused and/or neglected may:

- Have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- Show signs of pain or discomfort
- Keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- Be concerned about changing for Sport activities
- Look unkempt and uncared for
- Change their eating habits
- Have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- Appear fearful
- Be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- Self-harm
- Frequently arrive late
- Show signs of not wanting to go home
- Display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- Challenge authority
- Become disinterested in their activities
- Be constantly tired or preoccupied
- Be wary of physical contact
- Be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- Display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed. It is very important that you immediately report your concerns – you do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk.

The impact of abuse

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

Taking action

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
- Report your concern to the DSL by the end of the day
- If the DSL is not around, ensure this confidential information is shared with the most senior person at the nursery that day and ensure action is taken to report the concern to children's social care
- Do not start your own investigation
- Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- Complete a record of concern
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

Recognising safeguarding concerns

Safeguarding indicators can be physical, behavioural, emotional or developmental.

Possible indicators may include:

- unexplained injuries;
- repeated injuries;
- changes in behaviour;
- withdrawal;
- fearfulness;

- unusual aggression;
- anxiety;
- significant changes in eating or sleeping;
- developmental regression;
- inappropriate sexualised behaviour;
- sexual knowledge inappropriate for age or development;
- poor hygiene or persistent lack of appropriate care;
- frequent unexplained absence;
- repeated lateness;
- a child appearing frightened about going home;
- a child becoming unusually distressed around a particular person;
- changes in relationships;
- signs of neglect;
- disclosure of abuse;
- concerns about online activity;
- concerns about exploitation;
- signs associated with domestic abuse;
- concerns about radicalisation or extremist influence.

These indicators do not prove abuse.

Staff must report concerns rather than attempt to diagnose, investigate or establish proof.

The DSL will consider the information alongside the child's circumstances and any other known information.

Professional curiosity

Staff must remain professionally curious.

A single incident may not appear significant in isolation but may form part of a wider pattern.

Staff should therefore consider:

- What has changed?
- Why might this be happening?
- Is there a pattern?
- Does the child's explanation make sense?
- Are there other concerns?
- Is the child particularly vulnerable?
- Does information from another professional alter the picture?
- Is further support required?

Where staff remain concerned after reporting an issue, they should continue to raise the concern with the DSL.

If a child makes a disclosure

If a child tells a member of staff that they have been harmed or are worried about their safety, *staff must:*

- remain calm;
- listen carefully;
- allow the child to speak;
- take the child seriously;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling;
- explain that the information cannot be kept secret;
- use the child's own words where possible;
- avoid leading questions;
- avoid investigating;
- report the concern to the DSL immediately;
- make a factual written record as soon as possible.

Staff should not:

- promise confidentiality;
- ask the child to repeat the disclosure unnecessarily;
- investigate;
- confront an alleged perpetrator;
- suggest answers;
- express disbelief;
- make promises about what will happen;
- ask detailed investigative questions.

The child's immediate safety takes priority.

Recording a safeguarding concern

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded promptly.

The record should include:

- child's name;
- date and time;
- date and time of the concern/disclosure;
- factual description;
- exact words used by the child where relevant;
- observations;
- action taken;

- who the concern was reported to;
- date and time reported;
- any advice received;
- further action required.

Records must distinguish clearly between:

fact, observation, information received and professional opinion.

Staff must not include speculation presented as fact.

Taking immediate action

Where a child is in immediate danger, staff must take immediate action.

This may include:

- obtaining emergency medical assistance;
- calling 999;
- moving the child to a place of safety;
- contacting children's social care;
- informing the DSL/Manager.

Staff must not delay action because the DSL is unavailable.

Referral to children's social care

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care where the information indicates that statutory safeguarding intervention may be required.

The nursery will follow the procedures of the relevant local safeguarding partnership.

A referral may be necessary where there are concerns that:

- a child is suffering significant harm;
- a child is at risk of significant harm;
- a child cannot be located;
- neglect is suspected;
- abuse is suspected;
- exploitation is suspected;
- the child's safety cannot be established;
- existing support is not adequately protecting the child.

The threshold for referral will be considered in accordance with local safeguarding arrangements and professional judgement.

If the DSL is unavailable

If the DSL is unavailable, staff must report the concern to:

- the Deputy DSL;
- the Area Manager;
- the most senior person available.

If appropriate action is not taken, staff must escalate the concern.

A member of staff can contact children's social care or the police directly where necessary to protect a child.

Reporting concerns about the DSL or Manager

Where the concern relates to the DSL, staff must report the concern to the Manager/appropriate senior person.

Where the concern relates to the Manager or nursery owner, the concern should be reported through the nursery's allegations, escalation or whistleblowing procedure and, where appropriate, to the LADO, children's social care or police.

Staff must not report an allegation to the person who is the subject of the concern.

Allegations against staff, volunteers or other adults

Any allegation that a person working with children:

- has harmed a child;
- may have harmed a child;
- may pose a risk of harm to children;
- has behaved in a way that may indicate they are unsuitable to work with children;

must be taken seriously and managed under the nursery's allegations procedures.

The nursery will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where the allegation meets the relevant threshold.

The nursery will not conduct an investigation that could interfere with a police or children's social care investigation.

The person concerned will be treated fairly and confidentially while safeguarding remains the priority.

Low-level concerns

Little Blossom maintains a culture in which staff are encouraged to report concerns about the behaviour of adults working with children, including concerns that may not meet the threshold for an allegation.

Low-level concerns may include behaviour that is:

- inconsistent with the Staff Code of Ethical Practice;
- inconsistent with safeguarding expectations;
- inappropriate but not necessarily harmful;

- potentially concerning when considered alongside other information.

Low-level concerns will be:

- reported to the DSL/Manager;
- recorded factually;
- reviewed;
- monitored for patterns;
- escalated where appropriate.

A pattern of low-level concerns may indicate a more serious safeguarding issue and may require referral to the LADO.

Information sharing

Little Blossom recognises that appropriate information sharing is an important part of safeguarding.

Information will be shared lawfully, securely and proportionately.

Staff should not assume that consent is always required before safeguarding information can be shared.

Where sharing information is necessary to protect a child, staff should follow safeguarding procedures and seek advice from the DSL.

The DfE's information-sharing guidance emphasises that information should be shared where it supports safeguarding and that practitioners should understand the lawful basis for sharing.

Confidentiality and data protection

Safeguarding information is highly confidential.

However, confidentiality must never prevent information being shared where this is necessary to protect a child.

Safeguarding records will be handled in accordance with:

- UK GDPR;
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- the nursery's Data Protection and Information Sharing Policy;
- safeguarding legislation and guidance.

The nursery will:

- keep records secure;
- restrict access appropriately;
- avoid unnecessary duplication;
- keep information accurate;
- retain information for appropriate periods;
- securely dispose of information when retention is no longer required.

Domestic abuse

The nursery recognises that children can be harmed by experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse.

Concerns may include:

- witnessing violence;
- hearing threats;
- controlling behaviour within the household;
- emotional harm;
- physical injury;
- fear or anxiety;
- changes in behaviour.

Domestic abuse concerns must be reported to the DSL.

The nursery will consider whether the child or non-abusive parent/carer requires additional support.

Online safety

Safeguarding includes risks arising from digital technology.

Staff must remain alert to:

- online grooming;
- inappropriate content;
- sexual exploitation;
- inappropriate images;
- harmful communication;
- cyberbullying;
- exploitation;
- radicalisation;
- inappropriate use of devices;
- sharing of children's images.

Concerns must be reported to the DSL.

The nursery's Photography, Video, Images and Electronic Devices Policy and Online Safety Policy should be read alongside this policy.

Prevent, radicalisation and extremism

The nursery recognises that children and families may be vulnerable to radicalisation or extremist influence.

Staff must report concerns to the DSL.

The DSL will consider the concern within the wider safeguarding context and seek appropriate advice where required.

The nursery will not make assumptions based on a person's religion, ethnicity, background, nationality or political views.

Child-on-child abuse

The nursery recognises that children can cause harm to other children.

This may include:

- bullying;
- physical aggression;
- sexualised behaviour;
- inappropriate touching;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- intimidation;
- coercion;
- discriminatory behaviour.

The fact that children are young does not mean concerns should be ignored.

The nursery will respond in an age-appropriate manner, considering the needs and safety of all children involved.

Where behaviour raises safeguarding concerns, the DSL will consider whether a child protection referral or specialist advice is required.

Bullying

Bullying is not itself a separate category of abuse but can cause significant emotional harm.

Little Blossom will not tolerate bullying.

Staff will report concerns about:

- repeated physical aggression;
- intimidation;
- exclusion;
- verbal abuse;
- discriminatory behaviour;
- online bullying;
- persistent harmful behaviour.

The DSL will consider whether repeated or serious bullying forms part of a wider safeguarding concern.

Children with additional vulnerabilities

The nursery recognises that some children may face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities.

This may include:

- children with SEND;
- children receiving Early Help;
- looked-after children;
- previously looked-after children;
- children known to children's social care;
- children subject to a child protection plan;
- children experiencing domestic abuse;
- children experiencing family difficulties;
- children with communication difficulties;
- children who have previously gone missing.

Additional support and communication arrangements will be put in place where required.

Missing children and unexplained absence

Unexplained absence may be a safeguarding indicator.

The nursery will follow its Absence, Attendance and Children Not Attending Policy.

Where a child's whereabouts cannot be established, or the circumstances create a safeguarding concern, the nursery will act without waiting for an arbitrary period.

The DSL will consider contacting:

- parents/carers;
- emergency contacts;
- children's social care;
- police;
- other professionals involved with the child.

Looked-after and previously looked-after children

Little Blossom recognises that looked-after and previously looked-after children may have additional safeguarding and emotional needs.

Staff will follow the nursery's Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children Policy.

Where an absence, disclosure or other concern relates to a looked-after child, relevant professionals will be contacted in accordance with the child's care and safeguarding arrangements.

Early Help

Not every concern requires a child protection referral.

Where appropriate, the nursery may consider whether Early Help would benefit the child or family.

Early Help may be appropriate where:

- difficulties are emerging;
- family circumstances are affecting the child;
- parenting support may be helpful;
- attendance is becoming problematic;
- the child has additional needs;
- the family would benefit from coordinated support.

Where safeguarding concerns meet a child protection threshold, Early Help will not replace a safeguarding referral.

Parents and carers

Little Blossom aims to work openly and positively with parents and carers. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

Normally, parents/carers will be informed when a safeguarding concern is being referred or discussed.

However, parents/carers will not be informed where doing so could:

- place the child at greater risk;
- place another person at risk;
- compromise an investigation;
- interfere with police enquiries;
- prejudice safeguarding action.

if Little Blossom believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from children's social care.

The DSL will seek appropriate professional advice where necessary.

Listening to children

Children will be encouraged to express their views and feelings in ways appropriate to their age, stage of development and communication needs.

Staff will:

- listen carefully;
- take children seriously;
- provide safe opportunities to communicate;
- recognise non-verbal communication;
- make reasonable adjustments for children with SEND;
- avoid dismissing concerns because a child is young.

A child's wishes and feelings will be considered alongside safeguarding information and professional judgement.

Safeguarding training

All staff will receive safeguarding induction and ongoing training appropriate to their role.

Training will include:

- recognising abuse and neglect;
- reporting concerns;
- responding to disclosures;
- recording;
- information sharing;
- online safety;
- allegations against adults;
- safer working practices;
- recognising additional vulnerabilities;
- local safeguarding procedures.
- The DSL and deputy DSL will receive appropriate safeguarding training and update their knowledge regularly.

Safer working practice

Staff must maintain professional boundaries.

Staff must never:

- use inappropriate physical contact;
- communicate privately with children through personal accounts;
- photograph children using personal devices;
- share confidential information unnecessarily;
- transport children without appropriate authorisation;
- behave in a way that could place themselves or a child at risk.
- Staff must follow the Staff Code of Ethical Practice.

Whistleblowing

Staff are encouraged to raise concerns where they believe safeguarding practice is unsafe, ineffective or not being followed.

A staff member who raises a genuine safeguarding concern will be supported.

Concerns may be escalated where:

- the DSL does not act;
- management does not respond appropriately;
- the concern relates to management;
- there is a serious safeguarding failure.

Staff may contact appropriate external safeguarding agencies where necessary.

Direct reporting

A staff member may report directly to children's social care or the police where:

- there is immediate danger;
- the DSL/Manager is unavailable;
- the staff member believes the concern has not been acted upon;
- waiting would place the child at further risk.

Staff must inform the DSL/Manager where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Record keeping

Safeguarding records will be:

- factual;
- objective;
- dated;
- timed;
- signed or attributable to the person making the record;
- securely stored;
- accessible only to appropriate authorised persons.
- Records will include decisions, actions and the rationale for significant safeguarding decisions.
- Where a concern is referred externally, the nursery will record:
 - the date of referral;
 - agency contacted;
 - information provided;
 - advice received;
 - action agreed;
 - follow-up required.

Safeguarding culture

Little Blossom is committed to creating a culture in which:

- children feel safe;
- children are listened to;
- staff feel confident reporting concerns;
- safeguarding concerns are taken seriously;
- professional curiosity is encouraged;
- concerns are not ignored because they appear minor;
- staff are able to challenge decisions respectfully;
- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

The nursery will learn from safeguarding incidents, complaints, allegations and professional advice to improve practice.

Related policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Staff Code of Ethical Practice;
- Low-Level Concerns Policy;
- Allegations Against Staff Procedure;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Absence, Attendance and Children Not Attending Policy;
- Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Photography, Video, Images and Electronic Devices Policy;
- Mobile Phone Policy;
- Intimate Care Policy;
- Safer Recruitment Policy;
- Information Sharing and Data Protection Policy;
- Prevent Policy;
- Complaints Policy;
- Missing Child Procedure;
- Collection and Late Collection Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy.

Hertfordshire Child Protection and Safeguarding Contact Sheet

If you are concerned about a child

- If you have a concern about the safety or welfare of a child or young person:
- Report your concern immediately to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or manager, in accordance with your organisation's safeguarding procedures.
- Do not assume that someone else will make the referral.
- If a child is at immediate risk of harm or there is an emergency, contact the Police on 999.
- For a child protection concern in Hertfordshire, contact Hertfordshire Children's Services on 0300 123 4043. This number can also be used outside normal office hours.

Record the concern, the action taken and any advice received in accordance with your organisation's safeguarding procedures.

A concern should be reported even when the person suspected of causing harm is known to you, is a colleague, or is someone in a position of trust.

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP)

The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) coordinates local multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding children and young people.

Website: [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

HSCP Team: 01992 588757

For an immediate child protection concern, use **Children's Services – 0300 123 4043**, rather than relying on the HSCP administrative contact.

Children's Services

To report a concern about a child:

0300 123 4043

This is the key number for child protection concerns and includes the out-of-hours service.

Emergency:

If a child is in immediate danger, call **999**.

Allegations against staff, volunteers or other people working with children

Where an allegation or concern relates to an adult who works or volunteers with children and meets the relevant safeguarding threshold, the organisation should follow the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) procedure.

Hertfordshire LADO

Email: LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 123 4043

If you are unsure whether a concern meets the LADO threshold, professional advice can be requested through the LADO referral process.

Where an allegation indicates that a child may be at risk of significant harm or that a criminal offence may have occurred, Children's Services and/or the Police should also be contacted without delay.

Important: Staff should follow their organisation's current allegations-management procedure and should not investigate the allegation themselves before taking appropriate safeguarding advice.

Ofsted

Ofsted notification requirements depend on the type of setting and the nature of the incident.

For early years and childcare providers, allegations of harm or abuse involving a person living, working or looking after children at the premises must be notified to Ofsted as soon as reasonably possible and, in any event, within 14 days.

Providers should therefore check the current Ofsted notification requirements applicable to their registration.

Ofsted: [Ofsted – report a serious childcare incident or notify Ofsted](#)

NSPCC

NSPCC Helpline – worried about a child:

0800 800 5000

Current helpline hours are 10am–4pm, Monday to Friday. The NSPCC advises contacting the Police or local Children's Services directly if a child's safety concern becomes more urgent.

[NSPCC Helpline](#)

Childline

0800 1111

Childline provides free, confidential support for children and young people.

[Childline](#)

Police

999 – emergency or immediate danger

101 – non-emergency police contact

If a child is in immediate danger, do not wait for a referral to Children's Services before contacting the Police.

Current statutory safeguarding guidance

The principal statutory guidance is now:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026: [Working Together to Safeguard Children – GOV.UK](#)
- For education settings, staff should also use the current Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance applicable to their setting and year. GOV.UK lists the current safeguarding guidance within its schools statutory guidance collection: [Keeping Children Safe in Education – GOV.UK](#)

Child Sexual Exploitation and other forms of exploitation

Concerns about child sexual exploitation should be treated as safeguarding concerns and reported through the same child protection routes.

Hertfordshire Children's Services: 0300 123 4043

Police: 999 in an emergency / 101 for non-emergency matters

NSPCC: 0800 800 5000

Appendix 1

CODE OF ETHICAL PRACTICE FOR LITTLE BLOSSOM NURSERY SCHOOL STAFF

Purpose

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, respectful and professional environment in which every child is protected from harm and supported to develop and learn.

All staff, students, volunteers, agency workers, contractors and other adults working on behalf of Little Blossom are expected to maintain high standards of professional behaviour and conduct.

This Code of Ethical Practice should be read alongside the nursery's:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Allegations Against Adults Policy
- Staff Disciplinary and Capability Procedures
- Photography, Video, Images and Electronic Devices Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Staff Handbook
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Information Sharing and Data Protection Policy.

All staff must understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Our professional standards

All Little Blossom staff must:

- place the safety, welfare and best interests of children above all other considerations;
- treat every child as an individual;
- promote children's dignity, privacy and rights;
- treat children, parents/carers, colleagues and visitors with courtesy, consideration and respect;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- follow all nursery policies and procedures;
- comply with safeguarding procedures at all times;
- promote equality, inclusion and non-discriminatory practice;
- recognise and respect children's individual needs, cultures, identities, languages and backgrounds;
- make appropriate adjustments to support children, including children with SEND;
- encourage children to develop confidence, independence and resilience;
- support children's right to be listened to;
- use appropriate and respectful language;
- act as positive role models for children;
- maintain professional honesty and integrity;
- protect confidential information;
- report concerns promptly;
- seek support where personal circumstances may affect professional practice;
- maintain appropriate standards of personal and professional conduct inside and outside the workplace where this may affect their suitability to work with children.

Professional behaviour towards children

Staff must always behave in a way that maintains children's dignity and emotional and physical safety.

Staff should:

- speak calmly and respectfully to children;
- use positive and age-appropriate language;
- listen to children;
- take children's views seriously;
- encourage children rather than shame or humiliate them;
- provide appropriate reassurance and comfort;
- use positive behaviour-support strategies;
- respect children's personal space and boundaries;
- support children's independence appropriately;
- follow agreed intimate-care arrangements;
- ensure children are appropriately supervised;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

Staff must never:

- shout aggressively at a child;
- threaten, intimidate, humiliate or ridicule a child;
- use degrading or discriminatory language;
- deliberately frighten a child;
- use physical punishment;
- use unnecessary or excessive physical force;
- behave in a sexually inappropriate manner;
- engage in inappropriate physical contact;
- isolate a child inappropriately;
- communicate secretly with a child;
- encourage a child to keep secrets;
- favour one child inappropriately;

- deliberately withhold food, drink, comfort or appropriate care as a punishment;
- use a child for personal benefit;
- engage in conduct that could reasonably be interpreted as grooming.

Physical contact with children

Appropriate physical contact may be necessary in early years practice, including providing comfort, assistance, intimate care, first aid, safety intervention or support with activities.

Any physical contact must be:

- appropriate to the child's age and development;
- necessary and proportionate;
- respectful;
- consistent with the child's individual needs;
- in accordance with nursery policies.

Staff must never use physical contact for their own gratification or in a way that could reasonably be considered inappropriate.

Where physical intervention is necessary to prevent immediate harm, staff must follow the nursery's safeguarding and behaviour procedures and report and record the incident appropriately.

Professional boundaries

Staff must maintain clear professional boundaries with children and families.

Staff must not:

- form inappropriate personal relationships with children;
- communicate privately with children outside authorised nursery systems;
- exchange personal gifts with children unless authorised by management;
- invite children to their homes without prior management authorisation and a legitimate professional reason;
- arrange private childcare or babysitting for nursery children without management approval;
- transport children in private vehicles unless specifically authorised and appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place;
- ask children to keep secrets;
- engage in inappropriate physical contact;
- use personal social media to communicate with children;
- use children for personal, financial or social benefit.

Staff must report any situation that could reasonably be misunderstood or that may create a safeguarding or professional-boundary concern.

Contact with children and families outside the nursery

Little Blossom Nursery School recognises that staff and families may sometimes meet socially or have existing connections within their local community.

Where accidental or unavoidable contact occurs, staff should maintain professional boundaries.

Staff should inform the Manager where:

- they have regular social contact with a child or family;
- they have an existing personal relationship with a family;
- a family asks them to provide private childcare;
- a child or parent/carer attempts to establish inappropriate personal contact;
- there is any circumstance that could create a potential conflict of interest or professional-boundary concern.

Staff must not use their position at *Little Blossom* to develop inappropriate personal relationships with children or families.

Communication with parents and carers

Staff should maintain positive and professional relationships with parents and carers.

Communication should:

- be respectful;
- be professional;
- be factual;
- be appropriate to the staff member's role;
- protect confidentiality;
- support partnership working.

Staff must use nursery-approved communication systems when communicating with parents/carers about nursery matters.

Staff must not:

- use personal social-media accounts to communicate with parents about children;
- discuss confidential information in public places;
- discuss another child or family with a parent/carer;
- make inappropriate comments about colleagues, children or families;
- give professional advice outside their role or competence;
- make promises on behalf of the nursery without authority.

Mobile phones and personal electronic devices

Little Blossom Nursery School operates a personal-device restriction within childcare areas.

Personal mobile phones and other personal electronic devices must not be used to photograph, video or record children.

This includes:

- mobile phones;
- tablets;
- personal cameras;
- smart watches capable of recording images or video;
- wearable recording devices;

- other personal devices with imaging or recording capability.

Personal devices must be stored in the designated staff area during working time unless their use has been specifically authorised.

Staff must never:

- photograph children using personal devices;
- record children using personal devices;
- store children's images on personal devices;
- upload children's images to personal cloud storage;
- communicate privately with children using personal devices;
- use personal social media to communicate with children or families about nursery matters.

Any emergency use of a personal phone must be reported to management where appropriate.

Photography, video and images

Only nursery-approved equipment may be used to photograph or record children.

Staff must follow the nursery's Photography, Video, Images and Electronic Devices Policy.

Images must:

- have a legitimate nursery purpose;
- be taken using authorised equipment;
- be stored securely;
- only be accessed by authorised persons;
- be shared appropriately;
- be deleted when no longer required in accordance with the nursery's retention arrangements.

Staff must never retain copies of children's images for personal use.

Social media

Staff must maintain professional boundaries on social media.

Staff must not:

- post photographs or videos of children from Little Blossom on personal accounts;
- identify children or families;
- discuss individual children online;
- post confidential information;
- make inappropriate or derogatory comments about the nursery, children, families or colleagues;
- communicate privately with children;
- accept inappropriate personal contact with children through social-media platforms;
- use social media to circumvent nursery communication procedures.

Staff should remember that information posted privately may be copied, shared or accessed by a wider audience.

Confidentiality

Staff must protect confidential information concerning children, families and colleagues.

Information must only be shared where there is a legitimate professional, safeguarding or legal reason.

Staff must:

- follow the nursery's information-sharing procedures;
- keep records secure;
- use nursery-approved systems;
- avoid discussing confidential matters where they can be overheard;
- report accidental disclosure of confidential information to management.

Confidentiality must never prevent staff from reporting a safeguarding concern.

Where information needs to be shared to protect a child, staff must follow the nursery's safeguarding and information-sharing procedures.

Safeguarding responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns.

Staff must report concerns about:

- abuse or neglect;
- exploitation;
- domestic abuse;
- sexual abuse;
- physical abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- online harm;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- child-on-child abuse;
- radicalisation;
- extremism;
- fabricated or induced illness;
- neglect;
- unexplained injuries;
- concerning changes in behaviour;
- unsafe care arrangements;
- children going missing;
- concerns about adults working with children.

Staff must report concerns to the DSL or appropriate safeguarding lead without delay.
Staff must not investigate concerns themselves.

Responding to a child's disclosure

If a child makes a disclosure, staff must:

- remain calm;
- listen carefully;
- allow the child to speak;
- take the child seriously;
- avoid judgement;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking;
- explain that the information cannot be kept secret;
- avoid leading or investigative questions;
- record the child's words as accurately as possible;
- report the concern immediately to the DSL.
- Staff must never promise a child confidentiality.

Low-level concerns

Little Blossom promotes an open and transparent safeguarding culture.

A low-level concern is any concern, however small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the nursery may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the nursery's professional standards or policies; and/or
- does not meet the threshold for an allegation requiring referral to the LADO.

Examples may include:

- inappropriate language;
- excessive familiarity with children;
- unnecessary physical contact;
- failure to follow professional boundaries;
- minor breaches of nursery procedures;
- inappropriate use of electronic devices;
- behaviour that causes a safeguarding concern but does not meet the harm threshold.

Staff are expected to report low-level concerns.

The purpose is not to punish staff unnecessarily, but to maintain a culture in which concerns are identified early, addressed appropriately and patterns of behaviour can be recognised.

KCSIE 2026 continues to emphasise the importance of having arrangements for managing and recording low-level concerns.

Little Blossom's separate Low-Level Concerns Policy must be followed.

Allegations against staff and other adults

Where an allegation is made that an adult working with children:

- has harmed a child;
- may have harmed a child;
- may have committed a criminal offence against or relating to a child;
- has behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm;

may otherwise be unsuitable to work with children, the matter must be reported immediately to the Manager/appropriate safeguarding lead.

The nursery will follow its Allegations Against Adults / Managing Allegations Policy and relevant local authority procedures.

Where applicable, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted in accordance with local safeguarding arrangements.

Working Together 2026 reinforces the requirement for organisations working with children to have clear procedures for allegations against people working with children and for the LADO to be notified appropriately.

Staff must not investigate allegations themselves.

Whistleblowing

Staff must feel able to raise concerns where they believe that:

- safeguarding procedures are not being followed;
- a child may be at risk;
- another member of staff is behaving inappropriately;
- management is failing to respond appropriately to a safeguarding concern;
- there has been a serious breach of professional standards.

Staff should normally report concerns to the Manager/DSL.

Where this is not appropriate, staff may use the nursery's Whistleblowing Policy and relevant external safeguarding routes.

No member of staff will be penalised for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

Equality, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice

Staff must promote an inclusive environment.

Discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the basis of protected characteristics or other personal circumstances will not be tolerated.

Staff must challenge inappropriate discriminatory behaviour in accordance with nursery procedures.

Staff must recognise that discrimination, racism, prejudice and exclusion can affect children's wellbeing and safeguarding.

Working Together 2026 reinforces expectations on leaders to create inclusive and anti-discriminatory cultures and for practitioners to challenge racism and discrimination.

Online safety and digital conduct

Staff must understand that safeguarding responsibilities extend to digital environments.

Staff must follow the nursery's Online Safety Policy and:

- use technology appropriately;
- supervise children's use of digital devices;
- report online safeguarding concerns;
- protect passwords and access information;
- use secure nursery systems;
- avoid inappropriate online communication;
- report lost or compromised devices immediately;
- never access or share inappropriate material using nursery equipment.

The September 2026 EYFS changes include strengthened safeguarding requirements and require providers to have regard to the new guidance on children's screen use in early years settings.

Professional use of nursery equipment

Nursery equipment, computers, tablets, cameras, telephones and other resources must be used appropriately.

Staff must:

- keep equipment secure;
- protect passwords;
- report loss or damage;
- report suspected unauthorised access;
- avoid storing nursery information on personal devices;
- follow data protection requirements;
- use equipment only for legitimate purposes.

Personal conduct outside work

Staff are expected to maintain professional standards of behaviour outside work where their conduct may affect:

- their suitability to work with children;
- the safety or wellbeing of children;
- the reputation or safeguarding culture of Little Blossom.

This does not prevent staff from having a private life.

However, conduct that raises legitimate safeguarding or suitability concerns will be considered in accordance with relevant employment, safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

Gifts, money and favours

Staff must not accept inappropriate gifts, money or favours from children or families.

Small, customary gifts may be accepted where this is consistent with nursery policy.

Staff must declare any significant or unusual gift to management.

Staff must not:

- borrow money from parents/carers;
- lend money to families;
- enter financial arrangements with families;
- use children or families for personal financial benefit.

Professional competence and support

Staff must recognise the limits of their knowledge and competence.

Staff should:

- ask for guidance when unsure;
- attend required safeguarding training;
- participate in professional development;
- keep knowledge up to date;
- seek management support where personal circumstances may affect their work;
- report mistakes honestly and promptly.

Staff will not be expected to manage safeguarding concerns beyond their role or competence.

Recording and reporting concerns

Records relating to safeguarding or professional conduct must be:

- factual;
- objective;
- accurate;
- dated;
- timed where appropriate;
- signed or attributable to the person making the record;
- stored securely.

Staff must not alter or destroy safeguarding records unless authorised under the nursery's records-management procedures.

Failure to comply

Failure to comply with this Code of Ethical Practice may result in:

- management guidance;
- additional training;
- supervision;
- a low-level concern being recorded;

- formal investigation;
- disciplinary action;
- referral to the LADO;
- referral to children's social care;
- referral to the police;
- other action where appropriate.

The response will depend upon the nature and seriousness of the concern.

Staff declaration

All staff are expected to read, understand and comply with this Code of Ethical Practice.

By signing the Staff Declaration, staff confirm that they understand:

- their safeguarding responsibilities;
- the importance of professional boundaries;
- the nursery's expectations regarding mobile phones and electronic devices;
- the requirements relating to photography and images;
- their responsibility to report concerns;
- the requirement to report low-level concerns;
- the procedures for allegations against adults;
- their responsibility to maintain confidentiality;
- their duty to act in the best interests of children.

Statutory and guidance framework

This Code should be implemented alongside the current requirements and guidance applicable to Little Blossom.

These include, where applicable:

- EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Childcare Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- relevant safeguarding partnership procedures
- relevant local authority procedures
- current Ofsted requirements and guidance.
- The 2026 EYFS framework for group and school-based providers is now published by the Department for Education

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Policy Statement

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to creating an open, transparent and supportive safeguarding culture in which everyone feels confident to raise concerns about unsafe, poor or inappropriate practice.

As a registered early years provider, Little Blossom must take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well and to promote their welfare. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework requires providers to have appropriate safeguarding and welfare arrangements, including a clear whistleblowing procedure.

Whistleblowing provides a way for staff and other individuals to raise concerns about wrongdoing, unsafe practice or safeguarding failures within the setting, particularly where they believe that concerns are not being appropriately addressed.

Little Blossom will take concerns seriously, respond appropriately and, where necessary, refer concerns to the relevant external authority.

What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is when a person raises a concern about wrongdoing, unsafe practice or poor practice within an organisation.

In an early years setting, this may include concerns that:

- Children are being placed at risk of harm.
- Safeguarding concerns are not being reported or acted upon.
- Allegations about staff or other adults are not being dealt with appropriately.
- Staff are behaving inappropriately towards children.
- The setting is failing to follow safeguarding procedures.
- The setting is failing to comply with the EYFS statutory requirements.
- Serious health and safety concerns are being ignored.
- Information relating to safeguarding is being concealed or deliberately withheld.
- A criminal offence may have been committed.
- Records are being falsified or deliberately concealed.
- A person is acting unlawfully.
- Unregistered childcare is being provided where this should be reported.
- Staff are being discouraged or prevented from raising legitimate safeguarding concerns.

Whistleblowing may relate to something that has already happened, something happening currently, or something that a person reasonably believes may happen in the future.

Difference Between Whistleblowing and a Complaint

Whistleblowing is different from making a complaint.

A complaint generally concerns an individual's experience of the service, such as dissatisfaction with a decision, service or treatment.

Whistleblowing concerns wrongdoing, unsafe practice, safeguarding failures or other matters affecting the wider public interest.

Where appropriate, a concern may need to be dealt with under both the complaints and safeguarding procedures.

Staff should speak to the Nursery Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are unsure which procedure applies.

Our Commitment

Little Blossom Nursery School will:

- Maintain an open and transparent culture.
- Encourage staff, volunteers, students, agency workers, parents and others to raise concerns.
- Take concerns seriously.
- Respond to concerns promptly and appropriately.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns are acted upon without unnecessary delay.
- Keep appropriate records of concerns and actions taken.
- Protect confidentiality wherever possible.
- Protect individuals who raise genuine concerns in good faith from unfair treatment or retaliation.
- Take appropriate action where wrongdoing or unsafe practice is identified.
- Refer matters to external agencies where necessary.

Who Can Raise a Whistleblowing Concern?

A concern may be raised by:

- Employees.
- Volunteers.
- Students and apprentices.
- Agency or temporary workers.
- Contractors.
- Parents or carers.
- Visitors or other professionals.
- Any person who has a genuine concern about safeguarding practice at Little Blossom.
- Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing.

Where possible, concerns should be recorded using the Little Blossom Whistleblowing Report Form.

If the Concern Involves the Nursery Manager

If the concern relates to the Nursery Manager, the person raising the concern should not report it to the Nursery Manager.

The concern should instead be reported to:

Alternative senior manager/owner: **Kellie Middleton**

Where the concern relates to the DSL, the concern should be reported to the Nursery Manager or another appropriate senior person.

Where the concern involves the setting's leadership and the person does not feel able to raise it internally, they may seek advice or raise the matter externally.

Safeguarding Concerns

Whistleblowing does not replace the normal safeguarding procedure.

If a member of staff has a concern that a child may be suffering or at risk of suffering harm, the safeguarding procedure must be followed immediately.

Staff must not wait for a whistleblowing investigation before taking action to protect a child.

The current EYFS safeguarding requirements state that providers must act immediately on safeguarding concerns, follow local safeguarding procedures and make referrals to children's social care where necessary.

Allegations Against Staff or Other Adults

Where a concern relates to an allegation that an adult working with children may have:

- harmed a child;
- behaved in a way that may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm,

the nursery's Allegations Against Staff / Managing Allegations Procedure must be followed.

The matter may need to be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Services, the Police, Ofsted or another relevant authority depending on the circumstances.

Staff must not attempt to conduct their own investigation.

External Escalation

If a person has raised a concern internally and believes that:

- it has not been taken seriously;
- appropriate action has not been taken;
- the concern has been ignored or concealed;
- the person responsible for dealing with it is involved in the concern; or
- children remain at risk,
- they should escalate the matter.
- The appropriate external organisation will depend on the nature of the concern.

This may include:

- Hertfordshire Children's Services.
- Hertfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- The Police.
- Ofsted.
- The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.
- Another relevant statutory or regulatory body.

Ofsted

Where appropriate, concerns about compliance with early years registration requirements or the EYFS may be raised with Ofsted.

Ofsted telephone: 0300 123 1231

The current Ofsted contact number is confirmed in recent Ofsted correspondence.

Ofsted website: [Ofsted – GOV.UK](https://gov.uk)

Staff should use the current Ofsted guidance and reporting route applicable to their concern.

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Contacts

Where a child is at risk of harm, staff should follow the nursery's safeguarding procedure and contact the appropriate safeguarding authority without delay.

Hertfordshire Children's Services: 0300 123 4043

Emergency: 999

Hertfordshire LADO: LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk 0300 123 4043

The LADO should be contacted in accordance with the local procedures where an allegation or concern about an adult working with children meets the relevant threshold.

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line

The NSPCC provides a dedicated Whistleblowing Advice Line for people concerned that an organisation may be putting children at risk or that child protection concerns are not being handled appropriately.

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Current opening hours are:

- Monday–Friday: 8am–8pm
- Saturday–Sunday: 9am–6pm

The NSPCC states that concerns can be raised anonymously and that callers can request that their details are not shared with other agencies.

[NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/whistleblowing)

Confidentiality

All concerns will be handled sensitively.

Little Blossom Nursery School will make every reasonable effort to protect the identity of a person who raises a whistleblowing concern.

However, confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed.

Information may need to be shared where:

- A child is at risk.
- A criminal offence may have occurred.
- A statutory agency requires the information.
- Disclosure is necessary to investigate or respond appropriately to the concern.
- There is a legal requirement to disclose the information.

Anyone raising a concern should be told at the outset that their identity will be protected as far as reasonably possible but cannot be guaranteed in every circumstance.

Protection from Detriment

Little Blossom Nursery School will not tolerate bullying, harassment, victimisation or unfair treatment of anyone who raises a genuine concern in good faith.

Workers may have legal protection when making qualifying whistleblowing disclosures in accordance with employment law.

The DfE's current guidance confirms that employees, including agency and temporary workers, have legal protections when making qualifying whistleblowing disclosures to their employer or an appropriate prescribed person.

A person should not be treated unfairly simply because they have raised a genuine safeguarding concern.

However, deliberately making a malicious or knowingly false allegation may be dealt with under the nursery's disciplinary procedures.

Investigation and Record Keeping

All whistleblowing concerns will be:

- Recorded appropriately.
- Acknowledged where possible.
- Assessed promptly.
- Investigated or referred to the appropriate person or authority where necessary.
- Managed in accordance with safeguarding, employment and regulatory requirements.

Records will be kept securely and confidentially.

The person who raised the concern may be informed that appropriate action has been taken, where it is lawful and appropriate to do so.

However, confidentiality may prevent the nursery from providing detailed information about another person's employment or disciplinary circumstances.

What Staff Should Not Do

A person raising a whistleblowing concern should not:

- Conduct their own investigation.
- Interview children about the concern.
- Confront the person who is the subject of the concern.
- Discuss the concern unnecessarily with colleagues.
- Post details about the concern on social media.
- Remove or alter nursery records.
- Promise confidentiality to another person.
- Delay reporting because they are uncertain whether the concern is serious enough.

If in doubt, staff should raise the concern and seek advice.

Unregistered Childcare

Little Blossom Nursery School will report concerns about potentially unlawful or unregistered childcare to the appropriate authority where required.

Staff who become aware of childcare being provided in circumstances that may require registration should report their concerns to the Nursery Manager or DSL.

Where appropriate, the matter may be referred to Ofsted or another relevant authority.

WHISTLEBLOWING CODE FOR CONCERNS RELATING TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Purpose of this Code

Little Blossom Nursery School is committed to providing a safe, transparent and open environment in which children are protected and staff feel confident to speak up about concerns.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requires early years providers to have clear whistleblowing procedures so that staff can raise concerns about unsafe, poor or unaddressed safeguarding practice.

Whistleblowing is an important part of our safeguarding culture. It enables workers to raise concerns when they believe that poor practice, wrongdoing or unsafe conduct is occurring and that the matter needs to be brought to the attention of someone who can take appropriate action.

This Code supplements Little Blossom's:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Ethical Practice
- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Allegations Against Staff Procedure
- Complaints Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Staff Supervision Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Whistleblowing should not replace the normal safeguarding procedure. Where a child may be at immediate risk of harm, safeguarding action must be taken without delay.

What Whistleblowing Means

Whistleblowing occurs when a worker raises a concern about wrongdoing within an organisation in the public interest.

Examples of wrongdoing may include:

- A criminal offence.
- Breach of the law.
- A serious health and safety risk.
- Abuse or neglect.
- Unsafe or poor safeguarding practice.
- Serious professional misconduct.
- Serious breaches of Little Blossom policies or procedures.
- Abuse of authority.
- Fraud or financial misconduct.
- Serious misuse of nursery resources.
- Conduct that places children at risk.
- Failure to act on safeguarding concerns.
- Concealing or attempting to conceal wrongdoing.
- Conduct that is seriously inconsistent with the EYFS requirements.

Whistleblowing may concern something that has happened, is happening now, or is reasonably believed may happen in the future. Workers may have legal protection where the disclosure meets the requirements for a protected disclosure under whistleblowing law.

When to Use This Code

This Code may be used by anyone working at Little Blossom in a paid or voluntary capacity who has a genuine concern about unsafe, inappropriate or unacceptable practice.

Concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying, humiliation or degrading treatment of children.
- Inappropriate physical contact.
- Excessive or inappropriate physical intervention.
- Shouting, threatening or intimidating children.
- Excessive favouritism or inappropriate familiarity.
- Serious breaches of professional boundaries.
- Contravening health and safety requirements.
- Serious breaches of the Little Blossom Code of Ethical Practice.
- Practice falling seriously below expected professional standards.
- Failure to report or act upon safeguarding concerns.
- Behaviour that compromises children's welfare but does not appear to meet the threshold for a child protection referral.
- Failure to follow agreed safeguarding procedures.
- Attempts to prevent another member of staff from reporting a safeguarding concern.
- Concealing or falsifying information relating to a safeguarding matter.

A concern does not need to have been proved before it is raised.

Staff should report a genuine concern based on what they have seen, heard, been told or reasonably believe.

Why Staff Should Speak Up

Staff may naturally feel reluctant to raise a concern about a colleague.

They may worry about:

- Damaging a working relationship.
- Being considered disloyal.
- Being mistaken.
- Not having enough evidence.
- Causing unnecessary distress.
- Possible repercussions at work.
- These concerns are understandable.

However, allowing poor practice to continue unchecked may place children at risk and may allow inappropriate behaviour to become normalised or escalate.

Speaking up:

- Helps protect children.
- Promotes high professional standards.
- Helps Little Blossom identify training and support needs.

- Helps prevent poor practice becoming established.
- Protects staff as well as children.
- Demonstrates that safeguarding concerns will be taken seriously.

A person raising a concern does not need to decide whether misconduct or abuse has actually occurred. That is the responsibility of the appropriate manager or safeguarding authority.

You Do Not Need to Have Proof

Staff should not delay reporting a concern because they do not have conclusive evidence.

You should report what you:

- Saw.
- Heard.
- Were told.
- Observed.
- Reasonably suspect.

Staff should distinguish between facts, observations and opinions when recording a concern.

Do not attempt to investigate the matter yourself.

Do not interview children or colleagues to establish whether your concern is correct.

The appropriate person or authority will decide what further action is required.

Whistleblowing and Safeguarding

Whistleblowing is not a substitute for reporting an immediate safeguarding concern.

If you believe that a child is:

- In immediate danger;
- Being abused or neglected;
- At immediate risk of harm; or
- In need of urgent protection,

you must follow the nursery's safeguarding procedure immediately.

Where appropriate:

Emergency: 999

Hertfordshire Children's Services: 0300 123 4043

Hertfordshire County Council confirms that 0300 123 4043 can be used for urgent out-of-hours safeguarding support and advises calling 999 where someone is in immediate danger or a crime is being committed.

Allegations About Adults Working With Children

Where the concern is about an adult working with children and indicates that the person may have:

- Harmed a child.
- Behaved in a way that may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm.

the nursery's Managing Allegations Against Staff Procedure must be followed.

The matter may require referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The nursery must not carry out enquiries that could interfere with the safeguarding or LADO process.

A recent Ofsted regulatory action demonstrates the importance of settings understanding when to report concerns to the LADO and obtaining appropriate advice before conducting their own enquiries.

Hertfordshire LADO

Where an allegation meets the relevant threshold, the matter should be referred through Hertfordshire's LADO arrangements.

Hertfordshire LADO

Telephone: 0300 123 4043

Email: LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk

LADO procedures should be followed alongside the nursery's safeguarding and allegations procedures.

Confidentiality

Little Blossom will treat whistleblowing concerns sensitively and will make reasonable efforts to protect the identity of the person raising the concern.

However, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Information may need to be shared where necessary to:

- Safeguard a child.
- Investigate the concern.
- Comply with a legal requirement.
- Allow an appropriate authority to investigate.
- Prevent or detect crime.
- Protect another person.

If you want your identity protected, you should state this when raising your concern.

You should understand that circumstances may arise in which your identity has to be disclosed, for example if you are required to provide evidence or a witness statement.

Anonymous Concerns

A concern may be raised anonymously.

However, anonymous concerns can be more difficult to investigate because the setting may be unable to:

- Ask follow-up questions.
- Clarify information.
- Obtain additional evidence.
- Provide feedback to the person raising the concern.

Little Blossom will nevertheless consider anonymous concerns seriously and will decide what action is appropriate based on the information available.

Protection From Victimisation

Little Blossom will not tolerate bullying, harassment, intimidation or victimisation of a person who raises a genuine concern in good faith. Workers may have legal protection under whistleblowing legislation where they make a qualifying protected disclosure through the appropriate channels. The current legal framework is primarily contained within the Employment Rights Act 1996, as amended. No disciplinary action will be taken against a member of staff simply because they have raised a genuine concern that is subsequently found to be unfounded. However, deliberately fabricated or malicious allegations may be dealt with under the nursery's disciplinary procedures.

Support for the Person Raising the Concern

A staff member may request that a trusted colleague, union representative or other appropriate person supports them when raising a concern, subject to confidentiality and safeguarding considerations.

Staff can also seek independent advice from:

- A solicitor.
- The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.
- An appropriate safeguarding authority.
- Other relevant prescribed persons.

Little Blossom will seek to ensure that staff are not disadvantaged for raising genuine safeguarding concerns.

Management Response

The Manager or other appropriate person receiving a whistleblowing concern will:

- Listen carefully to the concern.
- Record the concern accurately.
- Assess whether there is an immediate safeguarding risk.
- Take immediate safeguarding action where necessary.
- Consider whether the matter requires referral to the DSL, LADO, Children's Services, Police, Ofsted or another authority.
- Seek specialist advice where appropriate.
- Determine what investigation or management action is appropriate.
- Keep appropriate confidential records.
- Provide appropriate feedback to the person raising the concern, subject to confidentiality and legal restrictions.

The person raising the concern should receive an acknowledgement and, where appropriate, an indication of the next steps.

Timescales will depend upon the seriousness and complexity of the concern. Safeguarding matters must never be delayed simply to meet an internal administrative timescale.

Possible Outcomes

Depending on the circumstances, an enquiry may establish that:

No wrongdoing is established

The concern is not substantiated and no further action is required.

Poor practice is identified

The member of staff may receive appropriate:

- Advice.
- Supervision.
- Training.
- Support.
- Monitoring.
- Misconduct is established

Appropriate management or disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with Little Blossom's procedures.

Serious safeguarding concerns are identified

The matter may be referred to:

- Hertfordshire Children's Services.
- The LADO.
- Police.
- Ofsted.
- Another relevant statutory or regulatory body.

Little Blossom cannot guarantee the outcome of an external investigation or give the whistleblower confidential information about another employee's disciplinary action.

Feedback to the Whistleblower

Little Blossom will provide appropriate feedback about the progress of the concern where it is lawful and appropriate to do so.

However, confidentiality may mean that detailed information cannot be provided about:

- Another employee.
- Disciplinary action.
- Safeguarding investigations.
- Information provided by other witnesses.
- Information shared by external agencies.

The person raising the concern should not expect to be able to determine the outcome or investigation process.

Current DfE guidance confirms that a person who whistleblows may be kept informed about action taken but cannot expect detailed information where confidentiality prevents this.

If You Remain Concerned

If you believe that your concern has not been properly addressed, you should escalate it.

Depending on the circumstances, you may contact:

Hertfordshire Children's Services: 0300 123 4043

For immediate danger: 999

For urgent out-of-hours safeguarding support: 0300 123 4043

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

The NSPCC is currently a prescribed person for matters concerning child welfare and protection.

Ofsted will become a prescribed person for whistleblowing in 2027. Until then, concerns that an early-years setting is not meeting regulatory requirements can be raised with Ofsted through its complaints process.

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

Staff should use the current Ofsted reporting route applicable to their concern.

Current Prescribed-Person Arrangements

Staff should understand that legal whistleblowing protection depends on the circumstances and the route used to disclose the concern.

The GOV.UK list of prescribed persons was updated on 2 June 2026. Staff should check the current list when considering making an external protected disclosure.

For concerns specifically relating to child welfare and protection, the current prescribed-person route includes the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.

Record Keeping

A confidential record will be maintained of:

- The concern raised.
- The date it was received.
- The person receiving the concern.
- Immediate safeguarding action taken.
- Advice sought.
- Referrals made.
- Investigation or management action.
- Outcome.
- Feedback provided.

Records will be stored securely and retained in accordance with Little Blossom's data protection, safeguarding and record-retention requirements.

Staff Should Never

Staff must not:

- Ignore a genuine safeguarding concern.
- Assume someone else will report it.
- Conduct their own investigation.
- Question a child repeatedly about an allegation.
- Confront the person who is the subject of an allegation.
- Discuss confidential concerns unnecessarily with colleagues.
- Post allegations or confidential information on social media.
- Alter or destroy records.
- Promise another person absolute confidentiality.
- Delay reporting because they are worried about the consequences.

If you are unsure whether something should be reported, seek advice and raise the concern.

Little Blossom Child Protection Record of Concern form

This form is to record any concern about a child's welfare. Use this form if you suspect the child may be suffering abuse or neglect/or you have received a disclosure of abuse from a child/or you have heard about an allegation of abuse. Complete the form and hand it to the Manager immediately.

Child's full name:

Date of this record: / /

Why are you concerned about this child?

What have you observed, where and when?

What have you told/heard, where and when?

Your name and role:

Signature

Date/time you handed this form to the designated person: / /

Have you spoken to the child? Yes ☐ No ☐

What did they say? Use the child's own words:

Have you spoken to anyone else about your concern?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Who?

Is this the first time you have been concerned about this child?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Further details:

Little Blossom Child Protection Record of Concern form:

Additional Information – to be completed by the designated person

Child's details

Full name:

Address:

Telephone:

DOB:

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Is the child looked-after by the local authority or are there any other legal family arrangements (for example, a residence order)?

When did the child start at Little Blossom?

Ethnicity and culture:

Religion:

Does the child have any disability or special educational needs? Yes ☐ No ☐

Please specify:

Preferred language of child:

Is any type of language support required to converse with the child? Yes ☐ No ☐

Please specify:

Details of those with parental responsibility

Name(s):

Address:

Telephone:

Relationship to child:

Ethnicity, culture and religion of those with parental responsibility if known:

Preferred language of those with parental responsibility:

Is any type of language support required?

Do those with parental responsibility have any disability or special need?

How does this disability or special need affect the child?

Details of any siblings:

Does the child regularly spend time with other carers, for example, child-minders, nannies, holiday clubs?

Has a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) been completed for this child?

Please give date and reason for the CAF:

Why are you concerned about this child?

(Please provide a description of any incidents/conversations and the dates they occurred. You must make clear what is fact and what is opinion or hearsay. You must not ask the child leading questions or try to investigate the concern yourself)

What have you observed and when?

(This relates to anything you have personally witnessed)

What have you been told and when?

Write here anything you have been told by the child or any other person. Be clear about who has said what, What have you heard and when? (This may be third-party information that is relevant but as yet unsubstantiated)

If an allegation has been made, give any details you have about the alleged abuser:

Date and time of this record:

Your details - Full name:

Role:

Do those with parental responsibility know this form has been completed?

NOTE: Those with parental responsibility should not be contacted by anyone at Little Blossom if this could place the child at risk.

Yes ☐ No ☐

If not, why not?

Does the child have any visible injury, or have they told you they have been injured?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, has medical advice been sought?

Has any action already been taken in relation to this concern? (for example, child taken out of session, first aid)

Name and position of the person this record was handed to:

Date and time the above person received this record:

If this record has been handed to anyone other than the designated person please explain why:

If you have used additional sheets to complete this record of concern please staple them to this form and write the number of additional sheets here

Hand this form to the Manager before you go home.

NB: If you do not have certain information, such as the child or family's ethnicity, do not delay handing in the form to social services.

Further information please consult Little Blossom's 'Information Sharing Policy' in Administration and Documentation policies.



Bumped Head Information for Parents and Carers

A First Aider assessed your child following their bumped head accident today. Please see the completed accident report on the Online Journal.

As with all head injuries, it is best to keep a close eye on your child, over the next 24 hours , as they may have a concussion. If you have any concerns or they exhibit any symptoms listed below, we would recommend that you seek medical help.

- Vomiting more than once after a head injury.
- Confusion
- Extreme drowsiness
- Weakness or inability to walk
- Severe headache
- Loss of memory of the event (amnesia)



Individual Care Plan

Child's name:

Group:

Date of birth:

Child's address:

Medical diagnosis or condition:

Date:

Review date:

Family Contact Information

Name:

Relationship to child:

Phone no. (work):

(Home):

(Mobile):

Name:

Relationship to child:

Phone no. (Work):

(Home):

(Mobile):

Clinic/Hospital Contact

Name:

Phone no:

G.P.

Name:

Phone no:

Notification of Allergy

What is your child allergic to?

Who is responsible for providing support in school

Is your child an EpiPen Carrier

If yes, When does the current EpiPen expire

Where is the EpiPen Located?

Does your child require any Medication for their Allergy?

What action should be taken if you child is exposed to the allergen

Is there any other information about your child's allergies that we should know?

Describe medical needs and give details of child's symptoms, triggers, signs, treatments, facilities, equipment or devices, environmental issues etc

Name of medication, dose, method of administration, when to be taken, side effects, contra-indications, administered by/self-administered with/without supervision

Daily care requirements

Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs

Arrangements for school visits/trips etc

Other information

Describe what constitutes an emergency, and the action to take if this occurs

Who is responsible in an emergency (state if different for off-site activities)

Plan developed with

Staff training needed/undertaken – who, what, when

Form copied to

I understand that I must inform the nursery, in writing, if there are any changes to the information provided in this form. I agree that the medical information contained in this form may shared with individuals involved in the care of my child

Form Completed by:

Relation to Child:

Date Completed:

If the form was completed by the nursery please ask parents signature to check and sign below.

Parents Name:

Relation to Child:

Date Completed: