

Physical Environment

At Cygnets we are committed to providing children with a stimulating and safe environment. We endeavor to make our premises welcoming and friendly to children, their parents/carers and any other visitors.

The pre-school premises are safe, secure and adequately spacious for its purpose. The environment and atmosphere aims to be welcoming to children and offers access to the necessary facilities and provides a broad and challenging range of play opportunities.

We are committed to taking every possible step to ensure that all children have equal access to facilities, activities and play opportunities; including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (for further details see the Special Needs policy).

The Cygnets Leader is responsible for ensuring that the pre-school's premises are clean, well-lit with daylight the main source of light, adequately ventilated and maintained at an appropriate temperature. Daily risk assessments are carried out, in accordance with the Risk Assessment policy, to ensure that the facilities are maintained in a suitable state of repair and decoration.

During the opening hours, the premises are used by and solely available to the pre-school, its staff and the children. We will do all we can to maintain an open room layout, allowing children to choose from a variety of play opportunities. All children will have adequate space to play and interact freely (a minimum of 2.3 square meters space per child aged 3-7 years; aged 2 - min 2.5 m² ; under 2 years - min 3.5 m²).

There is adequate space for storing equipment safely and securely.

No child will be left unsupervised and children do not have access to the kitchen and office areas.

Members of staff will have access to a telephone on the Cygnets premises at all times.

Staff are not permitted to have hot drinks in the playroom even in thermos cups, they will only have hot drinks in the kitchen or office area away from the children.

Smoking and vaping is not permitted anywhere on the premises, this includes the outside areas.

Outdoor Play

Any outdoor play will take place in safe, secure and well-supervised spaces, primarily our own playground. A thorough safety check and risk assessment will take place before any outdoor activities commence.

Outdoor play areas will be well maintained and free from holes, bumps or uneven surface areas. Ponds, drains, pools or any unnatural water will be made safe or inaccessible to children.

Any outside water features will be kept safe, and inaccessible to unsupervised children. Outdoor play and climbing equipment is regularly checked and disposed of or repaired as necessary.

In the event of snow or ice on external walkways, staff will ensure that this is regularly cleared and kept safe.

Staff will make sure there is a regular supply of drinking water available to children at all times, especially in hot conditions. In such circumstances, staff will also ensure that children are adequately protected from the sun, according to the provisions set out in the Health, Illness and Emergency policy.

Health and Safety

Our preschool takes the maintenance of health and safety extremely seriously as a matter of both legal and moral importance. All staff will be familiarised with the provisions contained within this policy as part of their induction and be expected to act in accordance with them at all times.

The preschool aims to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff, children, visitors and other individuals who may be affected by the setting's activities and actual existence. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1999 and their associated Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) and guidance will be complied with at all times. The leader and staff will always strive to go beyond the minimum statutory standards to ensure that health and safety remains the first priority.

The steps below will be actioned as a matter of course:

- Create an environment that is safe and without risk to health.
- Prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
- Use, maintain and store equipment safely.
- Ensure that all staff are competent in the work in which they are engaged.

Responsibilities of the Registered Person, the Leader and Staff

The identification, assessment and control of hazards within the preschool is vital in reducing accidents and incidents. Both the leader and one other designated member of staff are responsible for assessing risks to health and safety arising out of the preschool's activities and introducing suitable steps to eliminate or control any such risk identified.

It is vital to ensure that health and safety matters are taken seriously by all members of staff and other persons who are affected by the setting's activities. Staff who have been found to have blatantly disregarded safety instructions or recognised safe practices will be subject to the procedures laid out in the Staff Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures policy.

The **Registered Person** holds ultimate responsibility and liability for ensuring that the preschool operates in a safe and hazard free manner. The Registered Person – along with the leader – is responsible for ensuring that staff both understand and accept their responsibilities in relation to health and safety procedures. The Registered Person will ensure that a clearly defined procedure

for emergency evacuation of the premises is in place and adequate arrangements exist for the following:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of the Health and Safety policy and authorising any necessary revisions to its provisions.
- Providing adequate resources, including financial, as is necessary to meet the preschool's health and safety responsibilities.
- Providing adequate health and safety training for all staff.
- Ensuring that all accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences are adequately reported and recorded (including informing the Health and Safety Executive, and Ofsted, where appropriate).
- Reviewing all reported accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences, and the preschool's response, to enable corrective measures to be implemented.
- Ensuring that all staff, students, volunteers and any other adults who come into contact with children at the preschool have appropriate and up to date enhanced DBS checks.

The leader (and designated health and safety appointed person) is responsible for the day to day implementation, management and monitoring of the Health and Safety policy. The leader is required to report any matter of concern regarding the Health and Safety policy to the Registered Person.

The leader will ensure that:

- An additional designated member of staff is made jointly responsible with them for the health and safety and risk assessment provisions at the setting, as set out in this and other policies.
- Regular safety inspections are carried out and the reports accurately logged.
- Any action required as a result of a health and safety inspection is taken as rapidly as possible.
- Information received on health and safety matters is distributed to the Registered Person and all members of staff.
- An investigation is carried out on all reported accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences.
- Staff are adequately trained to fulfill their role within the Health and Safety policy.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that the provisions of the Health and Safety policy are adhered to at all times. As such, they are required to:

- Have regard for the Health and Safety policy and their responsibilities under it.

- Have regard for any health and safety guidance issued by the leader or the designated member of staff, and act upon it whenever appropriate.
- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety as well as of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Take all reasonable care to see that the equipment and premises that are used by children, including regular wear and tear checks, and the activities that are carried out at the preschool, are safe.
- Report any accidents, incidents or dangerous occurrences that have led to, or may in the future be likely to lead to, injury or damage, and assist in the investigation of any such events.
- Undergo relevant health and safety/risk assessment training when instructed to do so by the leader.

Insurance

The Children Act 2006 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, place a number of legal responsibilities on the preschool. Therefore, this setting has insurance cover appropriate to its duties under this legislation, including Employer' Liability Insurance. Responsibility will, in most cases, rest with the preschool, but staff will take reasonable care, both for themselves and other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. If the preschool is held responsible for any incident that may occur, public liability insurance will cover compensation.

Liability

Under provisions contained in the Occupiers Liability Act 1957, the preschool has a duty to ensure that both children and any visitors are kept reasonably safe. The parties named in the wording of the premises contract are responsible for this duty.

The Preschool's full responsibilities and procedures in respect of Health and Safety are contained in this policy, alongside the relevant sections of the following policies:

- Staffing
- Physical Environment
- Equipment
- Risk Assessment
- Site Security and Lockdown
- Fire Safety
- Visits and Outings
- Health, Illness and Emergency
- Hygiene
- Managing Behaviour
- Safeguarding
- Documentation and Information (GDPR)

Risk Assessment

We understand the importance of ensuring that systems are in place for checking that our preschool is a safe and secure place for children, staff and other visitors. Our risk assessment procedures are part of a continuous process to prevent any dangerous incident taking place. They are the responsibility of all staff as part of their daily duties.

In accordance with our duties under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the preschool is required to undertake regular risk assessments and take any necessary action arising from these according to provisions set out in the Health and Safety policy and elsewhere. Risk assessment will be conducted at least once a year or immediately, where the need arises. The leader is responsible for making sure that risk assessments are completed, logged and effectively monitored. Reviews are conducted when there is any change to equipment or resources, any change to the preschool's premises, or when particular needs of a child or other staff or visitors necessitates this.

The leader is further responsible for conducting any necessary reviews or making changes to the preschool's policies or procedures in the light of any potential risks that they or other members of staff discover. A visual inspection of both the equipment and the entire premises – both indoor and outdoor – will be carried out daily. This will, ordinarily, be carried out by a designated member of staff on arrival at the setting and will be completed before any children arrive.

Risk assessments are also conducted with regards to trips/events/visitors etc. (It may be that a risk assessment shows a certain trip/activity to be too unsafe to continue with.)

During the session, staff will be vigilant and continuously aware of any potential risks to health and safety arising from:

- The preschool's environment, both indoors and outdoors
- All surfaces, both indoors and outdoors
- All equipment used by children or staff

On discovering a hazard, staff will take all steps necessary to making themselves and any other people potentially affected safe. They will then notify the leader and ensure that a record is made in the Incident Record Book. The leader is then responsible for ensuring that any necessary action is taken.

Recording Accidents, Incidents and Dangerous Occurrences

All accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences will be recorded in either the Incident Record Book or the Accident Record Book on the same day as the event took place.

Records must contain:

- The time, date and nature of the incident, accident or dangerous occurrence.
- Details of the people involved.
- The type, nature and location of any injury sustained.
- The action taken, first aid given and by whom.
- The signature of the member of staff who dealt with the event, any witnesses and, if deemed necessary, a countersignature by the parents/carers of the child or children involved.

Staff should inform the parents/carers of the child or children concerned at the end of the session in which the incident, accident or dangerous occurrence took place. Where this is not possible, the information will be passed on at the earliest possible opportunity.

Adopted by the Cygnets Committee on _____ and is subject to review on an annual basis or earlier if the need arises.

Site Security

At Cygnets, we are committed to providing care and learning for children in a safe and secure environment. All staff have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure that they have continuous regard for the safety and security of all children at the pre-school.

Parents/carers are encouraged to talk to their children about the importance of remaining safe and these messages will be reinforced by both the pre-school and its staff. Safety and security procedures will be regularly reviewed by the Cygnets Leader in consultation with staff, the management committee and parents/carers.

Staff and any other authorised persons who are regular visitors to the pre-school will be issued with either an identity badge or clearly identifiable clothing, which they are expected to wear them at all times while on the Cygnets premises.

Supervision

Children will not be left unsupervised at any time during activity sessions. In the event of staff shortages, available space will be restricted to ensure that children are adequately supervised, in accordance with the staff ratio provisions set out in the Staffing policy.

The Leader will ensure that no one enters the premises without the knowledge of a member of staff. Individual members of staff will be given the responsibility for observing and supervising the main entrance and exit points at the beginning and end of the session.

Sleeping Children

The majority of children who attend cygnets do not sleep during the session, but for those who do the safety of children sleeping is paramount.

- Children are never put down to sleep with a bottle or cup to self-feed.
- Children are positioned to sleep in a safe, comfortable environment away from any potential hazards.
- Children are monitored visually when sleeping.
- Checks are made every 10 minutes and children are never left in a separate room without staff supervision at all times.
- The room is well ventilated and kept at a moderate temperature.
- Generally, children are put to sleep on a sleeping mat. Where a child prefers to sleep in a pram/pushchair the written permission of the parent is sought. Any straps are safely fastened to prevent hazard. At times sick/poorly children may fall asleep and all of the above safety procedures apply whilst we are waiting for the parent/carer to collect them.
- We will speak with parents/carers regarding the time and length of sleep which is appropriate for their child.

Visitors

The pre-school has a Visitors Book which is kept close to the main entrance in which visitors must sign on arrival, alongside giving the following information:

- Their name.
- The date and time of their arrival.
- The reason for their visit.
- The time at which they leave the pre-school.

Visitors to Cygnets will not be left unsupervised with children at any time.

Staff have a duty to approach any visitor on the premises who has not signed in. They must introduce themselves and establish immediately who the visitor is and the reason for them being on the pre-school's premises. If the visitor has no suitable reason, then they will be asked to leave immediately and escorted from the premises. If the visitor repeatedly refuses to leave, the police will be telephoned immediately.

A record will be made of any such incidents in the Incident Record Book, and the Cygnets Leader will be immediately notified.

Missing Children

Our preschool has the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care. Staff will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions.

Even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise. Therefore members of staff will undertake periodic head counts, especially at the transition points between sessions. If for any reason a member of staff cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session at the preschool, the following procedure will be activated:

- The member of staff in question will inform both the Leader and the rest of the staff team that the child is missing and a thorough search of the entire premises will commence. The staff team will be careful not to create an atmosphere of panic and to ensure that the other children remain safe and adequately supervised.
- The Leader will nominate two members of staff to search the area surrounding the premises. All staff will be extra vigilant to any potentially suspicious behaviour or persons in and around the preschool.
- If after 15 minutes of thorough searching the child is still missing, the Leader will inform the police and then the child's parent/carer.
- While waiting for the police and the parent/carer to arrive, searches for the child will continue. During this period, other members of staff will maintain as normal a routine as is possible for the rest of the children at the preschool.
- The Leader will be responsible for meeting the police and the missing child's parent/carer. The Leader will coordinate any actions instructed by the police, and do all they can to comfort and reassure the parents/carers.
- Once the incident is resolved, the Leader and the staff team will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes (paying particular note to the relevant provisions of the pre-school's Site Security and Risk Assessment policies).
- All incidents of children going missing from the preschool will be recorded in the Incident Record Book, and in cases where either the police or children's services have been informed, Ofsted will also be informed, as soon as is practicable.

Signed:  Chairperson