



Court Moor Centre Community Playgroup

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POLICIES

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Document History

Date	Reason for Issue	Issue No.
May 2005	Initial Issue – previous documentation re-written and all policies reviewed and updated where appropriate.	1.0
June 2005	Lost Child on Group Outing Policy adopted.	1.1
January 2006	Physical Handling Policy adopted and Child Protection Policy reviewed and updated.	1.2
April 2006	Fees Policy adopted	1.3
May 2006	Complaints procedure updated after Ofsted inspection	1.4
February 2007	Addition of Fire Safety & Evacuation Policy and Handling and Safekeeping of Disclosure Information Policy	1.5
April 2008	Change of staff in the roles of Supervisor, Senco and Child Protection Officer.	1.6
June 2008	Changes in line with Welfare Requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage	1.7
July 2009	Annual Review	1.8

ADMISSIONS POLICY

It is our intention to make our playgroup genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. In order to do this we will:

- Ensure that the existence of the playgroup is widely known in all local communities.
- Describe the playgroup and its practice in terms which make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including child-minders, and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups, with and without disabilities.
- Make our equal opportunities policy widely known.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The playgroup's work with children and families will sometimes bring us into contact with confidential information.

To ensure that all those using and working in the playgroup can do so with confidence, we will respect confidentiality in the following ways:

- Parents will have ready access to the files and records of their own children but will not have access to information about any other child.
- Staff will not discuss individual children, other than for purposes of curriculum planning/group management, with people other than parents/carers of that child.
- Information given by parents/carers to the playgroup leader or keyworker will not be passed on to other adults without permission.
- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, will remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- Any anxieties/evidence relating to child's personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will not be shared within the group except with the child's keyworker/playgroup leader and the chair.
- Students on Pre-school Learning Alliance or other recognised courses observing in the playgroup will be advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the playgroup, which is to the safety, and well being of the child. (Please also see our policy on safeguarding children)

FEES POLICY & PROCEDURE

Policy

The Playgroup aims to have a reasonable and structured approach to Fees and will be structured in line with the Early Years Education funding scheme. At all times the Playgroups policy on fee payment will remain fair and reasonable.

In general, fee payment will be either on a term by term basis or by monthly standing order. However, other payment terms can be discussed and subsequently agreed with the Fees Collector. It should be noted that fees are payable when a child is absent, either through illness or holiday. This rule is applied as a place within the Playgroup has been reserved for each child.

Please note that it is the **parents/carers responsibility** to initiate any such discussions upon receipt of an invoice or follow-up letter.

Late Collection fee

Playgroup will charge £1 a minute for a late collection of a child. Late will constitute more than 10 minutes after all other children have been collected at the end of session. Parents will be asked to sign the register with an explanation as to why the child was collected late and fees will be added to next invoice.

The Playgroup will take the necessary steps to recover all monies outstanding, if non-payment of fees occurs.

Procedure

An invoice for the fees owed will be issued to the parent/carer of each child at the beginning of each term. Each terms fees will be payable in advance and within 14 days of the date of this invoice.

If payment of fees is not forthcoming within 14 days, a follow up letter will be issued asking the parents/carers to contact the Supervisor or Fees Collector, within 7 days (of the date of this letter), to discuss the situation.

If no reply is forthcoming within those 7 days, a final letter will be sent informing the parent/carer that they have 7 days to pay the outstanding fees.

If, after the final letter being sent and at the end of the allotted 7 days, full payment has not been made, then the Chairperson has the decision as to whether or not the non-payment is submitted to the County Court to recover the monies owed.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

The Pre-school Learning Alliance is committed to helping pre-schools provide equality of opportunity for all children and families. As a member of the Alliance, Court Moor Centre Community Playgroup works in accordance with all relevant legislation, including:

- Disabled Persons Act 1958, 1986
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986
- Children Act 1989

We believe that the group's activities should be open to all children and families, and to all adults committed to their welfare. We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with, our playgroup have an equal chance to do so.

Admissions

The playgroup is open to every family in the community. Our system for accepting children can be found in the Admissions Policy section of this document.

Families joining the pre-school are made aware of its equal opportunities policy.

Employment

The playgroup will appoint the best person for each job and will treat fairly all applicants for jobs and all those appointed. Commitment to implementing the group's Equal Opportunities Policy will form part of the job description for all workers.

Festivals

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all the major events in the lives of the children and their families in the pre-school, and in our society as a whole, and to welcome the diversity of backgrounds from which they come. In order to achieve this, we aim to acknowledge all the festivals, which are celebrated in our area and/or by the families involved in the pre-school:

- Without indoctrination in any specific faith, children will be made aware of the festivals which are being celebrated by their own families or others, and will be introduced where appropriate to the stories behind the festivals.
- Before introducing a festival with which the adults in the pre-school are not themselves familiar, appropriate advice will be sought from people to whom that festival is a familiar one.
- Children and families who celebrate at home festivals with which the rest of the playgroup is not familiar will be invited to share their festival with the rest of the group, if they themselves wish to do so.
- Children will be encouraged to welcome a range of different festivals, together with the stories, celebrations and special food and clothing they involve, as part of the diversity of life.

Families

The playgroup recognises that many different types of family successfully love and care for children. The pre-school offers a flexible payment system for families with differing means.

The Curriculum

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Resources

These will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multicultural society.

Materials will be selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and derogatory pictures or messages about any group of people.

Special Needs

The playgroup recognises the wide range of special needs of children and families in the community and will consider what part it can play in meeting those needs.

Planning for playgroup meetings and events will take into account the needs of people with disabilities.

Discriminatory Behaviour/Remarks

These are unacceptable in the playgroup. The response will aim to be sensitive to the feelings of the victim(s) and to help those responsible to challenge their understanding of what was said and to help them overcome their prejudices.

Language

Bilingual/multilingual children and adults are an asset. They will be valued and their languages recognised and respected in the playgroup.

Food

Medical, cultural and dietary needs will be met.

Meetings

The time, place and conduct of meetings will ensure that families have an equal opportunity to be involved in the running of the pre-school.

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

Our playgroup aims to have regard to the DFEE Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of Special Needs, and to provide welcome and appropriate learning opportunities for all children.

- Children with special needs, like all other children, are admitted to the pre-school after consultations between parents, playgroup leader and keyworker.
- Our system of observation and record-keeping, which operates in conjunction with parents, enables us to monitor children's needs and progress on an individual basis.
- Our keyworker system ensures that each adult is specially responsible for, and close to, the least amount of children possible, so each child receives plenty of adult time and attention.
- If it is felt a child's needs cannot be met in the playgroup without the support of a one-to-one worker, funding will be sought to employ one.
- We work in liaison with staff outside the group, including therapists, health visitors, psychologists, social workers, paediatricians and Portage workers, to meet children's specific needs.

SPECIAL NEEDS PROCEDURE

Our playgroup aims to work 'with due regard' to the Department of Education's Special Needs Code of Practice and provide welcome and appropriate learning opportunities for **all** children. Our Pre-school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is **Margaret Wales**.

Admission

Children with special needs and their families, like all others, will be considered for a playgroup place (see admission policy) after consultation between their family, the playgroup leader and any relevant outside agencies, to ensure we are able to provide an appropriate and balanced Curriculum.

Objectives

By enabling all children to participate in the life and activities of mainstream settings, to the best of their abilities whatever their needs, ensures children with Special Educational Needs are integrated within the playgroup as a whole.

To evaluate the success of the Special Educational Needs Policy the SENCO will gather information over the academic year through feedback from parents, outside agencies, keyworkers and children's developmental progress and make amendments if necessary.

All children should have access to a balanced and broadly based Curriculum, Individual Educational Play plans are written in conjunction with parents/carers to ensure children with Special Educational Needs are working towards appropriate targets and goals to meet their individual stage of development.

Resources

Access to the building and most of its facilities are suitable for **all** children and their families. If necessary, appropriate arrangements can be discussed on individual basis at the admission stage.

We endeavour to provide appropriate resources to meet every child's needs. We will also contact appropriate agencies, lending libraries and charities to access a wider range of resources.

Key Worker

Each child is allocated a keyworker who liaises closely with the SENCO and child's family to ensure that the individual needs of the child is met and reviewed regularly. We pride ourselves on a good partnership. Under no circumstances will any information about any child or their family be passed onto any outside bodies without parent/carer's consent.

Identified Special Needs are monitored frequently by the keyworker, are reviewed regularly in conjunction with parents/carers, family keyworker SENCO and any other agencies. Once a need has been identified, the assessment process will be initiated.

SENCO

SENCO will co-ordinate appropriate in-service training to staff and parent/carers to increase their knowledge of Special Educational Needs. We will use a variety of other professionals as well as training from SENCO.

The group will liaise regularly with outside agencies (i.e. speech therapists, portage, etc...). We have an information folder, which is always available and will support liaisons with outside agencies.

Complaints

If a complaint is raised with regards the provision for Special Educational Needs, we will act accordingly. (Refer to the Complaints Policy, within this document.)

STAFFING AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE

A high adult to child ratio is essential in providing good quality playgroup care. In our playgroup:

- We have at least one member of staff to every four children under the age of three and one member of staff to every six children over the age of three.
- Our keyworker system ensures each child and family has one particular staff member who takes a special interest in them.
- Regular staff meetings provide opportunities for staff to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss the children's progress and any difficulties.
- We work towards an equal opportunities employment policy, seeking to offer job opportunities equally to both men and women, with or without disabilities from all religious, social, ethnic and cultural groups.
- All our Staff hold or are working towards appropriate qualifications as follows:

Leader and Deputy	NVQIII or Diploma in Pre-school Practice
SENC ^o	NVQIII or Diploma in Pre-school Practice
Assistants	NVQII or Certificate in Pre-school Practice
- We support the work of our staff by means of regular monitoring.
- We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation.

STUDENT PLACEMENT POLICY

We recognise that the quality and variety of work which goes on in a playgroup makes it an ideal place for students on placement from school and college childcare courses as well as those on the Diploma in Pre-school Practice or Tutor Fieldworker courses. A maximum of 2 students at a time are welcome into the pre-school on the following conditions:

- The needs of the children are paramount. Students will not be admitted in numbers, which hinder the essential work of the pre-school.
- Students must be confirmed by their tutors as being engaged in a bona fide childcare course, which provides necessary background understanding of children's development and activities.
- Unless registered as fit persons, students will not have unrestricted access to children.
- Students required conducting child studies would obtain written permission from the parents of the child to be studied.
- Any information gained by the students about the children, families or other adults in the playgroup must remain confidential.

SETTLING IN PRE-SCHOOL POLICY & PROCEDURE

We want children to feel safe and happy in the absence of parents, to recognise other adults as a source of authority, help and friendship and to be able to share with their parents afterwards the new learning experiences enjoyed in the playgroup.

In order to accomplish this we will:

- Encourage parents to stay with their child on their settling in sessions.
- Make clear to families from the outset that they will be supported in the playgroup for as long as it takes to settle their child there.
- Reassure parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling into the pre-school.
- Encourage parents, where appropriate, to separate from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY

Parents are the first educators of their young children. The aim of the group is to support their essential work, not to supplant them. We will:

- Make all new parents aware of the group's systems and policies.
- Encourage parents on an individual basis to play an active part in the management of the group.
- Ensure that parents are informed on a regular basis about their child's progress.
- Ensure that all parents have opportunities to contribute from their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the group.
- Involve parents in shared record keeping about their own child, either formally or informally.
- Consult with families about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone.
- Hold meetings in venues, which are accessible and appropriate, to all.
- Welcome the contributions of parents, whatever forms these may take.
- Make known to all parents the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions.
- Provide opportunities for parents to learn about the pre-school curriculum and about young children's learning, in pre-school and at home.

Playgroup is proud of our ability to work in partnership with parents and have compiled a '**Partnership with Parents Policy**' which you should have received when you first joined Court Moor Playgroup. Please ask the Supervisor if you wish to receive another copy.

DIET POLICY & PROCEDURE

The sharing of refreshments can play an important part in the social life of the playgroup as well as reinforcing children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating. The playgroup will ensure that:

- Children's medical and personal dietary requirements are respected.
- Milk provided for children is whole and pasteurised.
- Parents are supported in providing healthy and nutritious snacks and lunches, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, additives, preservatives and colourings.

HEALTH, HYGIENE AND SAFETY POLICY & PROCEDURE

Our pre-school promotes a healthy lifestyle and a high standard of hygiene in its day-to-day work with children and adults. This is achieved in the following ways:

HEALTH

Food

- All meals and snacks provided will be nutritious and pay due attention to children's particular dietary requirements.
- When cooking with children as an activity, the adults will provide healthy, wholesome food, promoting and extending the children's understanding of a healthy diet.

Outdoor Play

- Children will have the opportunity to play in the fresh air throughout the year (either in the playgroup's own outside play area or on an outing to parks or other community play spaces).

Accidents and Illnesses

- Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they have any infection, and to inform the playgroup as to the nature of the infection so the playgroup can alert other parents and make careful observations of any child who seems unwell.
- Parents are asked not to bring into the pre-school any child who has been vomiting or had diarrhoea until at least 24 hours has elapsed since the last attack.
- If the children of playgroup staff are unwell, the children will not accompany their parents/carers to work in the playgroup.
- Cuts or open sores, whether on adults or children, will be covered with sticking plaster or other dressing. Parents are requested to complete a form for records, stating if their child is or is not allergic to plasters or any dressings.
- The pre-school will ensure that the first aid equipment is kept clean, replenished and replaced as necessary. Sterile items will be kept sealed in their packages until needed.
- Accidents will be recorded on a First Aid form, with details of: time, date, place of accident, details of injury and treatments provided and who provided them. The form will be signed by First Aider and by parent/guardian at end of the session.

Administration of medicines

With regard to the administration of lifesaving medication such as insulin/adrenaline injections or the use of inhalers, the position will be clarified by reference to the playgroup's insurance company. (In the case of playgroups insured with Sun Alliance, this will be through the Insurance Officer at Pre-school Learning Alliance National Centre). If such medicines need to be administered, accurate records will be kept in medicine record book, such as time, date and dosage, details of who administered it and witnessed it, and parent/guardian written consent. Medicines will be stored out of children's reach and according to instructions, in original container.

Information Sources

- Parents will have the opportunity to discuss health issues with pre-school staff and will have access to information available to the playgroup.
- The playgroup will maintain links with health visitors and gather information and advice from the local health authority information services and/or other health agencies.
- Any case of food poisoning affecting 2 or more children, Playgroup must notify Ofsted.

HYGIENE

To prevent the spread of infection, adults in the group will ensure that the following good practices are observed:

Personal Hygiene

- Hands washed after using the toilet.
- Children with pierced ears are not allowed to share or try each other's earrings.
- A large box of tissues is available and children will be encouraged to blow and wipe their noses when necessary. Soiled tissues will be disposed of hygienically.
- Children encouraged shielding their mouths when coughing.
- Not be involved with the preparation of food if suffering from any infectious/contagious illness or skin problem.
- Hygiene rules related to bodily fluids followed with particular care and all staff and volunteers aware of how infections such as HIV infection can be transmitted.
- Never smoke in the kitchen or any room storing food.
- Individual towels available or paper towels used and disposed of appropriately.
- Never cough or sneeze over food.

Cleaning and Clearing

- Any spills of blood, vomit or excrement wiped up and flushed away down the toilet. Rubber gloves always used when cleaning up spills of bodily fluids. Floors and other affected surfaces disinfected. Nappies are double wrapped and put in separate bin.
- Keep food covered, and away from normal play areas. Parents encouraged to use lunch coolers.
- Spare laundered pants and other clothing available in case of accidents and polythene bags available in which to wrap soiled garments.
- All surfaces cleaned daily with an appropriate cleaner.
- Use different cleaning cloths: sponges for washing up, blue cloths for wiping tables and separate mops for soiling and spillages.
- Ensure waste is disposed of properly and out of reach of children. Keep a lid on the dustbin and wash hands after using it.
- Wash fresh fruits and vegetables thoroughly before use.

Food

The playgroup will observe current legislation regarding food and hygiene registration and training. In particular, each adult will:

- Always wash hands under running water before handling food and after using the toilet.
- Tea towels will be kept scrupulously clean and washed between each session.
- All utensils will be kept clean and stored in a dust-free place, e.g. closed cupboard or drawer
- All new staff will be made aware of food hygiene guidelines, issues and procedures during their induction process.

SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The safety of young children is of paramount importance. In order to ensure the safety of children and adults, the playgroup will ensure that:

- All children are supervised by adults at all times and will always be within sight of an adult.
- A book is available at each session for the reporting of any accident/incident.
- Regular safety checks and risk assessments will include checking of the accident/incident record.
- All adults are aware of the system in operation for children's arrivals and departures.
- Children will leave the group only with authorised adults.
- Safety checks on premises, both outdoors and indoors, are made every day.
- Outdoor space is securely fenced.
- Equipment is checked regularly and any dangerous items repaired/discarded.
- The layout and space ratios allow children and adults to move safely and freely between activities.
- If a small group goes out, there will be sufficient to maintain appropriate ratios for staff and children remaining on the premises.
- Equipment offered to children is developmentally appropriate, recognising that materials suitable for an older child may pose a risk to younger or less mature children.
- All dangerous material, including medicines and cleaning materials, are stored out of reach of children.
- Children do not have unsupervised access to kitchens, cookers or any cupboards storing hazardous materials including matches.
- Adults do not walk about with hot drinks, or place them in reach of children.
- Fire drills are held at least twice a term.
- A register of both adults and children is completed as people arrive so that a complete record of all those present is available in any emergency.
- There is no smoking in any rooms used by children.
- A correctly stocked first aid box is available at all times.
- Fire extinguishers are checked annually and staff know how to use them.
- Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults are present.
- Large equipment is erected with care and checked regularly.
- Activities such as cooking, woodwork and energetic play receive close and constant supervision.
- Fire doors are never obstructed.
- Heaters/fires/electric point/wires and leads are adequately guarded.
- Internal safety gates/barriers are used as necessary.
- The premises are checked before locking up at the end of each session.
- All staff to be trained to be aware of both risks and hazards and how to deal with both. All potential hazards/risks to be reported to the Health and Safety Officer.
- The group's appointed Health and Safety Officer responsible for Health and Safety issues and to ensure all staff are aware of the latest guidelines is: **Margaret Wales.**

HEAD LICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

As part of our Hygiene Policy our Committee and Staff have decided that it is appropriate to include a policy covering Head Lice.

1. Should an outbreak of head lice be found within the playgroup all parents/carers will be informed immediately.
2. **CHECKING THE HEADS OF THE WHOLE FAMILY**
3. Although the lice can be seen in dry hair, the best way to check is by combing of wet hair with a fine-toothed detector comb available from a chemist.
4. **IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT HEAD LICE SPREAD RAPIDLY. PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD'S HAIR REGULARLY. YOUR CO-OPERATION ON THIS ISSUE IS GREATLY APPRECIATED**

SICK CHILD POLICY & PROCEDURE

As part of our Health and Hygiene Policy, parents/carers are asked to keep their children at home if they have any infection and to inform the Playgroup as to the nature of the infection. If, however a child becomes unwell during a session, we would follow this procedure:

1. Make careful observations on the child and comfort and reassure them.
2. Contact the parent/carer as soon as possible.
3. If no contact is available during the session, make the child comfortable and warm in the quiet area on a beanbag or cushion and continue to monitor the child. A drink of water will be offered.
4. The other children will be asked to be as quiet as possible and to "look after" the child.
5. The Supervisor will continue to try and establish contact with parent/carer and other named contacts.
6. One staff member will be responsible for keeping an eye on the child and monitor the illness.
7. We feel that this procedure is sufficient for most common illnesses until the parent/carer collects the child at the end of the session. If however the child seems very ill we would make no hesitation to phone for medical assistance such as a doctor or ambulance. Should this be the case a member of staff will escort the child at all times.

This would also apply if there had been an accident in the Playgroup.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

Introduction

We intend to create in Playgroup an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. This document sets out Playgroup's position in relation to all aspects of the child protection process and will be reviewed on an annual basis. In the event that there are changes to legislation the review of this document will be addressed immediately. To ensure this policy is upheld a trained Child Protection Officer and Deputy Child Protection Officer are appointed from the Playgroup staff/volunteers.

Recruitment, Training and Induction

It will be made clear to applicants for posts within Playgroup that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

All applicants for work within Playgroup, whether voluntary or paid, will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide at least one reference. All such references will be followed up. In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in employment history, or who have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought.

All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and a successful check by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will not be confirmed unless Playgroup is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.

Staff and volunteers will receive a copy of the Safeguarding Children Policy as part of their induction training. In the event of changes to the policy, staff and volunteers will be notified. An additional copy of the policy will be made available and held on file at Playgroup. The policy, along with current information and leaflets is also displayed on a daily basis on the notice board at the entrance to the playgroup for everyone to see.

All adults involved in Playgroup will attend training opportunities to ensure that they recognise the signs of possible neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

Parental Assistance

Parents who volunteer to help out in playgroup on occasions and who have not been checked by the CRB, will not work alone with children and will be supervised at all times by someone who has been checked by the CRB.

Prevent Abuse by Means of Good Practice

Adults who have not been CRB checked will not take children unaccompanied to the toilet.

Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through the adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

The layout of the playrooms will permit constant supervision of all children. No adult will ever be left alone in a room with a child without the door being left ajar.

Sometimes it will be necessary for an adult to hold a child who is behaving in a way which might endanger themselves or others. The adult will always hold the child in a non-threatening, calm manner, using as little restraint as possible. How to restrain children appropriately will form part of our annual training and is detailed in the playgroup Physical Handling Policy and Procedure. Any

restraint which is considered by the member of staff doing the restraining, or the supervisor, to be more forceful than the usual gentle touch will be recorded in the incident book. The parent/carer will be told about the incident when they collect their child from Playgroup and the member of staff, the supervisor and the parent will sign and date the incident book.

Respond Appropriately to Suspicions of Abuse

If Playgroup has general concerns about a child's welfare these will be raised with parents/carers at an early stage in an attempt to work together to remedy the situation. All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the member of staff/keyworker, the Playgroup leader and the management committee chair.

Reporting Abuse

If Playgroup receives information about a child which suggests that he/she has been actually abused or neglected or that this is likely, it has a duty to refer these concerns to the Social Services Department or Police. The playgroup has no discretion in this matter. In these circumstances the Social Services Department's child abuse investigation procedures apply.

When concerns come to the attention of Playgroup staff they should refer to the Child Protection Procedure on how to progress these (see below).

NB

In all of the above circumstances Playgroup will keep a confidential record of its concerns and actions.

It is important to remember that a referral or consultation with the Social Services Department is an **expression of concern** about a child's welfare. It is not an accusation or a presumption of responsibility about a parent/carer.

To avoid any misunderstandings parents of children who sustain accidental injuries outside of playgroup, which results in cuts/bruises/fractures, will be asked to complete an incident form on the first day at playgroup following the accident. This will detail the injury and circumstances and will be signed by both the parent/carer and a member of the Court Moor Community Playgroup staff.

Keep Records

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific and confidential record will be set up, quite separate from the usual ongoing records of children's progress and development. The record will include, in addition to the name, address and age of the child: timed and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation: where possible, the exact words spoken by the child: the dated name and signature of the recorder.

Allegations against staff

All allegations against any member of staff/volunteer which have implications for the safety and welfare of children will be taken seriously and investigated in line with agreed Child Protection Procedure. When concerns come to the attention of Playgroup staff they should refer to the procedures on how to progress these (see below).

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PROCEDURE

- * **Every child has the right to be protected**
- * **It is everyone's responsibility to protect children**

Are you worried about a child?

All childminders, staff and volunteers in day nurseries, pre-schools, crèches, out-of-school clubs and holiday schemes have an important part to play in helping parents care for their children. They can work with parents during times of stress offering support and respite.

Most children are subject to minor accidental injuries, but there may be occasions when you are concerned about the nature or frequency of injury.

We are obliged to inform Social Services of any concern we may have that a child may be at risk or has been abused. The safety of children may include a duty to share confidential information with others involved in protecting children.

In line with the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures, any concerns of this nature should be reported to the local social services office promptly.

A few danger signs to look out for and write down:

- Behaviour changes for no obvious reason
- Bruising in unusual places – arms, stomach, around the mouth, head and back
- Bruised eyes – especially two
- Cigarette burns
- Finger marks – each finger may mark or bruise the skin
- Bite marks
- Child not using a leg or arm – it may have been broken by a blow
- Inadequate clothing for the time of the year
- Weight loss or an unexplained increase in appetite.

The most important signs may not be those listed above, but things that you notice about a child who you know well that make you feel concerned and uneasy.

Any concern for a child or any complaint of child abuse or neglect by a member of staff should follow the same procedure.

Protecting yourself from allegations of abuse:

- In the event of any injury to a child, accidental or otherwise, ensure that it is recorded and witnessed by another adult.
- Keep records of any false allegations a child makes against you. Record dates and times.
- Get another adult to witness the allegation, if possible.
- If a child touches you in an inappropriate place, record what happened and ensure that another adult knows (do not make the child feel like a criminal).
- On school trips have at least two members of staff.
- Do not place yourself in a position where you are spending excessive amounts of time alone with one child, away from other people.
- In residential settings, never take a child into your bedroom.
- Do not take children in your car by yourself.

- If you are involved in a care situation, try to have someone with you when changing nappies, clothing or bathing a child.
- Never do something of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves, for example wiping bottoms.
- Avoid going on your own to the toilet with children.
- Be mindful of how and where you touch a child. Consider using a lap cushion with young children or disabled children who need to sit on your knee.
- Be careful of extended hugs and kisses on the mouth, from children.
- Always tell someone if you suspect a colleague of abuse.

You can take action by:

- Talking to the Playgroup Child Protection Officer Margaret Wales, Deputy Child Protection Officer Jane Peacock or Chair person of the committee.
- The complaint must be put in writing and the immediate action taken will be recorded.
- Depending on the severity of the complaint, the action to be taken will be discussed by the group's management and appropriate steps will be taken, this may include
- Telephoning the local Children's Services Department to speak to a social worker in the **Reception and Assessment (R&A) team** (see below) or
- If out of normal hours contact the duty social worker on the **Emergency Duty Service – tel: 0845 6004555 (Hampshire and Portsmouth) 023 80233344 (Southampton)**
- Informing Ofsted
- In extreme circumstances when a member of staff is accused they may be suspended while the complaint is thoroughly investigated

The designated Child Protection Officer for Playgroup is Margaret Wales and her Deputy is Jane Peacock.

To contact Children's Services Department call one of the following numbers and ask for a social worker in the Reception and Assessment (R&A) team:

Alton/Aldershot	01252 314221
Andover/Winchester	01264 387400
Basingstoke	01256 362000
Eastleigh/Romsey	023 8061 8722
Fareham/Gosport	0845 6004555
Havant/Petersfield	023 9247 1644
New Forest	023 8084 6953

It is important to avoid any unnecessary delay.

(out of hours: contact duty social worker on Emergency Duty Service # 0845 6004555 (Hampshire and Portsmouth) or 023 80233344 (Southampton))

PHYSICAL HANDLING POLICY

It is our aim as a playgroup to help children take responsibility for their own behaviour. We will do this through a combination of approaches:

- Positive role modelling
- Planning a range of interesting and challenging activities
- Setting and enforcing appropriate boundaries and expectations
- Providing positive feedback.

There will be some occasions when a child's behaviour is challenging and may require physical handling.

The three main types of Physical Handling that will be used are:

Positive Handling

The positive use of touch is a normal part of human interaction.

- Giving guidance to children- showing them how to hold a paintbrush or when climbing
- Providing emotional support – such as placing an arm around a distressed child
- Physical care – such as first aid or toileting

All staff within the pre-school will exercise appropriate care when using touch. They will be informed by the supervisor/SENCO if there is a child within the setting for whom touch is inappropriate due to cultural or medical reasons.

Physical Intervention

This can include mechanical and environmental means such as locked doors, which will be used to ensure a child's safety.

Restrictive Physical Intervention

This is when a member of staff uses physical force intentionally to restrict a child's movement against their will, for the safety of the child and others. Where possible this will be done through the use of the adult's body therefore, using Restrictive Bodily Physical Intervention.

The Pre-schools principles for using Restrictive Physical Intervention are:

- Restrictive physical intervention should be used in the context of positive behaviour management approaches
- It will only be used in extreme circumstances
- It will only be used with the child's best interests in mind
- Only reasonable minimal force should be used
- Staff will use it for as short a period as possible
- Staff have a responsibility to intervene as they have a duty of care towards the children in the setting
- Staff within the setting will do all they can to avoid using restrictive physical intervention.

Restrictive Physical Intervention can be used:

- If someone is hurting themselves or others
- If someone is damaging property
- If there is suspicion that, although injury, or damage has not happened yet, it is about to happen.

The Pre-school has a duty of care towards the children in the setting and might use restrictive physical intervention if a child is trying to leave the setting and it is judged that the child would be

at risk. This duty of care extends to the charge of the children off site such as on trips.

If staff judge that restrictive physical intervention would make the situation worse, then, the staff would not use it.

The Playgroups aim in using restrictive physical intervention is to restore safety, both for the child and those around him or her. It must never be used in anger, as a punishment or as an alternative to measures that are less intrusive and which staff judge would be effective.

Where possible the child's keyworker or a member of staff who knows the child will be involved in a restrictive physical intervention.

Restrictive Physical Intervention that will not be used:

- The staff will not use seclusion (which is when a child is forced to spend time alone in another room)
- The staff will not use restrictive physical intervention to bring children to or hold them in, time out.

The staff at the Playgroup will have received specific training in the use of restrictive physical intervention and will undertake appropriate refresher training.

Planning

After an incident, the situation is reviewed. A risk assessment is drawn up, which considers:

- The risks presented by the child's behaviour
- The potential targets of such risks
- Preventative and responsive strategies to make these risks

The risk assessment is used to help to write an individual behaviour plan, which will support the child.

The Pre-school staff will pay particular attention to responsive strategies, such as humour, distraction, relocation and offering choices.

The Playgroup will draw from many different viewpoints as possible when it is known that an individual child's behaviour is likely to require some form of restrictive physical intervention. These could be:

- Parent/carer
- Staff in the setting
- Visiting support staff (Area INC'S , Portage Plus, Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Psychologists)

Planning meetings will be recorded and parent's signatures will be sought to confirm their knowledge of the plan. The Supervisor and SENCO will review the plans at least every 4-6 months.

Recording and Reporting Procedures

- Any use of restrictive physical intervention will be recorded
- This is done as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident
- The incident will also be noted in the Pre-school accident book
- Parent/carer will be informed by telephone (or by letter or note home with the child if this is not possible)
- Parents will receive a copy of the record form

- The head of the setting and the local authority (where appropriate) will be informed

Support and Reviewing

The Playgroup acknowledges that being involved in restrictive physical intervention can be distressing.

- Support is given to the child so they understand why they were held
- Where appropriate staff may have the same conversations with other children who observed what happened
- An independent member of staff will check for injury and provide appropriate first aid
- Support will be given to the adults who were involved, either actively or as observers

The Playgroup understands that the key aim of after incident support is to repair any potential strain to the relationship between the child and the adult that restrained him or her. After using restrictive physical intervention, the pre-school will review the child's individual behaviour plan, if one is in place, so the risk of needing to use restrictive physical intervention again is reduced.

Monitoring Procedure

- The policy is reviewed at least annually by the Supervisor and SENCO
- Playgroup will seek support from the Area SENCO where appropriate
- Monitoring the use of restrictive physical intervention will help identify trends and therefore help the development of our playgroups ability to meet the needs of the children without using restrictive physical intervention

Complaints

If a parent/carer has complaints about the policy or handling, they must refer to the Playgroups complaints procedure, which is located within this document.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE

We believe that children and adults flourish best in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

In order to achieve this:

- Rules governing the conduct of the group and the behaviour of the children will be discussed and agreed within the playgroup and explained to newcomers, both children and adults.
- Where appropriate this may be achieved by a period of 'time out' with an adult.
- All adults in the playgroup will ensure that the rules are applied consistently, so that children have the security of knowing what to expect and can build up useful habits of behaviour.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as bullying, racial or other abuse, the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes will be made clear immediately, but by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- All adults will try to provide a positive role model for the children with regard to friendliness, care and courtesy.
- In any case of misbehaviour, it will always be made clear to the child or children in question that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unwelcome.
- Adults in the playgroup will praise and endorse desirable behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.

When children behave in unacceptable ways:

- Physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking, will be neither used nor threatened.
- Children will never be sent out of the room by themselves.
- Children who misbehave will be given one-to-one adult support in seeing what was wrong and working towards a better pattern.
- Adults will be aware that some kinds of behaviour may arise from a child's special needs.
- Any behaviour problems will be handled in a developmentally appropriate fashion, respecting individual children's level of understanding and maturity.
- Recurring problems will be tackled by the whole playgroup, in partnership with the child's parents, using objective observation records to establish an understanding of the cause.
- Sometimes an adult will need to intervene in a physical disagreement between children. He/she will use as little physical restraint as is possible, simply acting to keep the child or children safe, removing them from potential harm. He/she will stay calm and non-threatening, and reassure the children that the problem can be talked about and sorted out.
- An incident book will be kept and any recurring incidents of unwanted behaviour will be recorded in it and shown to the parent/carer at the end of the session. The parent/carer and a member of staff will sign and date the incident.
- Recurring problems will be tackled by the whole Playgroup, in partnership with the child's parents, using if necessary, objective observation records to establish an understanding of the cause.

The Playgroup has a nominated Behaviour Management Officer who is responsible for behaviour management issues and training. The named Behaviour Management Officer is: **Margaret Wales**

LOST CHILD WITHIN SETTING PROCEDURE

The care and safety of all children must always be paramount and we comply with all safety procedures in our setting making it very difficult for any child to leave the premises. However, if a child did appear to be lost during or at the end of a session, we would follow this procedure: -

1. A member of staff will keep the children in the main room quietly on the carpet and check the register again.
2. Two members of staff to firstly check the main door to see if the catch is still in place before checking the following:
 - All cupboards
 - Toilet area
 - Kitchen area
 - Play equipment
 - Any other areas where a child could hide
3. The child's name will be constantly called during the search.
4. If there is no result in the building the two staff members will check play area and car park areas outside of the building. They will ensure that the door through which they exit is securely closed behind them.
5. If no further result the Supervisor will inform the parents, other named contacts on the admission form, Police and Social Services.

LOST CHILD ON GROUP OUTING PROCEDURE

Again the care and safety of all children must be paramount and we will make a full risk assessment of the venue before the date of the trip. If a child appeared to be lost whilst on our group outing we would follow this procedure:

1. Gather all adults and children together and complete a head count.
2. Two members of staff to systematically search the area calling the child's name constantly.
3. A member of staff will stay with the remaining parents and children.
4. The Supervisor accompanied by the lost child's parent will inform the management team of the venue to get their assistance with the search.
5. If no further result the Supervisor will inform the Police and Social Services

SELECTING EQUIPMENT/TOYS POLICY & PROCEDURE

The toys and equipment in playgroup provide opportunities for children, with adult help, to develop new skills and concepts in the course of their play and exploration. The equipment we provide:

- Is appropriate for the ages and stages of the children.
- Offers challenges to developing physical, social, personal and intellectual skills.
- Features positive images of people, both male and female, from a range of ethnic and cultural groups, with and without disabilities.
- Includes a range of raw materials that can be used in a variety of ways and encourages an open-ended approach to creativity and problem solving.
- Will enable children, with adult support, to develop individual potential and move towards nationally approved required learning goals.
- Conforms to all relevant safety regulations and is sound and well made.

UNCOLLECTED CHILD PROCEDURE

The care and safety of all children must always be paramount and we comply with all safety procedures in our setting. Should a child not be collected at the end of a session we would follow this procedure:

1. If after ten minutes the parent/carer has not arrived to collect a child the Supervisor will phone the parent/carer and other named contact on the Admission Form. The staff must make sure not to alarm or upset them, or make any derogatory comments about the lateness in front of the children.
2. If there were no reply, we would presume that they are on their way to the Playgroup. A member of staff will wait with the child, reassuring and keeping them happy for another 10 minutes whilst continuing to try the contact numbers.
3. The person in charge will remain on the premises with the child. If the parent is more than ½ h late, a committee member should be contacted for support, assistance and consultation over any decisions.
4. In the event of a real emergency, where it is getting late and no contact can be made with parents, a decision will have to be made about what to do.
5. The person in charge will not make the decision alone or remove the child from the premises without the prior agreement of another responsible person – committee member, member of staff, social services.
6. The police and social services will also have to be informed of our intentions and they may possibly advise. Ofsted should also be informed.

MAJOR INCIDENT EVACUATION POLICY

Conduct of Playgroup Staff

1. On receipt of a bomb threat stay in the building unless you are advised to leave by the Police.
2. Close all doors, windows and curtains.
3. Shelter under tables and stay there until you are advised to leave the building or you are given the “All Clear” to return to normal business.
4. If possible, take shelter in a room without windows.

Receipt of a Bomb Threat

1. Try and keep an accurate record of the conversation e.g. write down exactly what is being said including bad language.
2. Ask who is calling and the name of their organisation.
3. If the warning contains a codeword, the codeword must be passed accurately to the civil police.
4. If possible, keep the telephone line open after the caller ends the call. This will make it easier to trace the call. Contact the police immediately on another line by dialling 999.
5. Comply with any requests made by the caller, then, if the bomb is on your premises, evacuate to a pre-determined location e.g. local school or church. If the bomb is not on your premises, await instructions from the police.
6. On evacuation the following items should be taken:
 - Register
 - Emergency contact telephone numbers
 - Personal belongings, if possible

MAJOR INCIDENT EVACUATION PROCEDURE

ON EVACUATION OF THE BUILDING TAKE ALL NECESSARY PROCEDURES:

1. Stay calm
2. Reassure the children
3. Leave the doors open
4. Walk in an orderly manner to the pre-arranged evacuation point, making sure the building is out of sight.

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

The Playgroup Chairperson and Supervisor will carry out a Fire Risk Assessment at the beginning of each Academic Year. Any hazards will be reported in writing to the Youth Suite Manager.

FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURE

On hearing a Fire Alarm the staff and children will evacuate the building in an orderly fashion.

ON EVACUATION OF THE BUILDING TAKE ALL NECESSARY PROCEDURES:

1. Stay calm
2. Reassure the children
3. Close all doors
4. Walk in an orderly manner to the pre-arranged evacuation point, making sure the building is out of sight.

Detailed instructions can be found on the inside of the storage cupboard door in playgroup.

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

As a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family and to provide a warm and caring environment within which all children can learn and develop as they play.

We believe children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time.

Making Concerns Known

- A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the group's provisions should first of all talk over any worries and anxieties with the playgroup leader.
- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome within two of weeks, or if the problem recurs, the parent should put the concerns or complaint in writing requesting a meeting with the playgroup leader and the chair of the management committee. Both parents and the leader should have a friend or partner present if required and an agreed written record of the discussion should be made.

Most complaints should be resolved informally or at this initial stage.

- If the matter is still not resolved to the parent's satisfaction, the parent should again contact the Chair Person of the Committee.
- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome within two weeks, or if the problem recurs, the parent should put the concerns or complaint to Ofsted at:

Ofsted – Complaints
National Business Unit
Royal Exchange Building
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

08456 404040

The mediator will keep all discussions confidential. She/he will meet with the group if requested and will keep an agreed written record of any meetings held and of any advice that he/she has given.

The Role of the Registering Authority

In some circumstances it may be necessary to bring in the local authority registration and inspection unit, who have a duty to ensure laid down requirements are adhered to and with whom the Pre-school Learning Alliance works in partnership to encourage high standards. The registering authority would be involved if a child appeared to be at risk or where there seemed to be a possible breach of registration requirements. In these cases both parent and pre-school would be informed and the Pre-school Learning Alliance fieldworker would work with the social services department to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint followed by appropriate action.

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interests of the playgroup and parents that the complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way, which respects confidentiality.

Handling and Safekeeping of Disclosure Information Policy

It is a requirement of the CRB's Code of Practice that all Registered Bodies must have a written policy on the correct handling and safekeeping of Disclosure information. It also obliges Registered Bodies to ensure that a body or individual, on whose behalf they are countersigning Disclosure applications, has a written policy.

General Principles

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Court Moor Centre Community Playgroup complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information.

Storage and Access

Disclosure information shall be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed and it is a **criminal offence** to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, we will consult the CRB about this and will give full consideration to the data protection and human rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we shall keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of any recruitment decision taken.