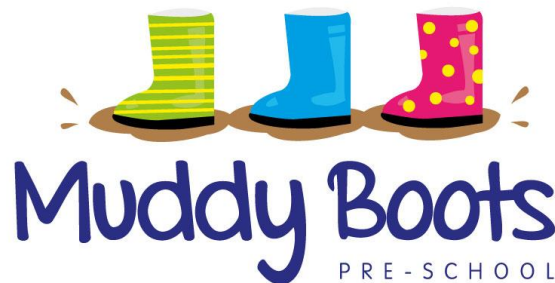


Muddy Boots Pre-School CIO

Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment – Health and safety general standards



Review Date:

SEE COMMITTEE POLICY REVIEW SCHEDULE

Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Health and safety general standards

Policy statement

This setting believes that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children to grow and learn, and for parents, staff and volunteers to visit or work.

- We aim to make children, parents and staff aware of health and safety issues and to minimise the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.
- Our members of staff responsible for health and safety are: Elaine Allen and Andie Merrey
We display the necessary Health and Safety poster in the entrance lobby. We ensure that each member of staff is;
 - competent to carry out these responsibilities;
 - has undertaken Health and Safety training and regularly updates their knowledge and understanding.
- Insurance is in place (including public liability) and an up-to-date certificate is always displayed in our entrance lobby.
- Risk assessment is carried out where it is helpful to do so, to ensure the safety of children, staff, parents, and visitors. Legislation requires all those individuals in the given workplace to be responsible for the health and safety of premises, equipment and working practices.
- Smoking and vaping are not allowed on the premises, both indoors and outdoors. If children use any public space that has been used for smoking or vaping, members of staff ensure that there is adequate ventilation to clear the atmosphere. Staff do not smoke or vape in their work clothes and are requested not to smoke or vape within at least one hour of working with children. The use of electronic cigarettes is not allowed on the premises.
- Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If staff are taking medication that they believe may impair them, they must seek further medical advice and only work directly with children if that advice is that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children. The setting manager must be informed.
- Alcohol must not be bought onto the premises for consumption.

- A risk assessment is carried out for each area as required and the procedure is modified according to needs identified for the specific environment.
- Risk assessments are monitored and reviewed by those responsible for health and safety.

Procedures

Awareness raising

- Parents and carers are asked to read our “Parents/Carers code of practice” when attending their child’s settling in sessions or “Stay and Play” sessions.
- Our induction training for staff and volunteers includes a clear explanation of health and safety issues so that all adults are able to adhere to our policy and procedures, as they understand their shared responsibility for health and safety. The induction training covers matters of employee well-being, including safe lifting and the storage of potentially dangerous substances.
- Records are kept of these induction training sessions and new staff and volunteers are asked to sign records to confirm that they have taken part.
- Health and safety issues are explained to the parents of new children so that they understand the part played by these issues in the daily life of the setting.
- As necessary, health and safety training is included in the annual training plans for staff, and health and safety is discussed regularly at staff meetings.
- We operate a no smoking policy.
- Children are made aware of health and safety issues through discussions, planned activities and routines.

Entrances and approaches

- Entrances and approaches are kept tidy and always uncluttered.
- All gates and external fences are childproof and safe.
- Main doors are always kept locked and shut.
- The identity of a person not known to members of staff is checked before they enter the building, or at the point they seek access to the area where children are being cared for.
- All staff and visitors to the setting sign in and out of the building.
- A member of staff is available to open and close the door and to greet arrivals, say goodbye to parents/carers and to make sure that doors and gates are shut.

- Back doors are always kept locked and shut if they lead to a public or unsupervised area, unless this breaches fire safety regulations or other expectations.
- Where building works or repairs mean that normal entrances/exits or approaches to the building are not in use, a risk assessment is conducted to maintain safety and security whilst the changes are in place.
- Building works or other changes to the premises which may affect the space available to children and the quality of childcare available to them, must be notified to Ofsted.

Rooms and corridors

- Significant changes such as structural alterations or extensions are reported to Ofsted.
- A risk assessment is done to ensure the security of the building during building work.
- Door handles are placed high, or alternative safety measures are in place.
- Windows are opened regularly to ensure flow of air.
- Floors are properly dried after mopping up spills.
- Children do not have unsupervised access to stairways and corridors.
- Materials and equipment are not generally stored in corridors, but where this is the case, it does not block clear access or way out.
- Socket safety inserts are unnecessary, as there is no safety reason to use them, modern plug sockets are designed to remove risk of electrocution if something is poked into them. Socket covers (that cover the whole socket and switch) may be used, please note these are different to socket inserts.

Windows

- High level windows are made from materials that prevent accidental breakage or are made safe.
- Windows are protected from accidental breakage or vandalism from people outside the building.
- We ensure that any blind cords are secured safely and do not pose strangulation risk for young children.

Doors

- We take precautions to prevent children's fingers from being trapped in doors.

Floors

- All floor surfaces are checked daily to ensure they are clean and not uneven, wet or damaged. Any wet spills are mopped up immediately.
- Walkways are left clear and uncluttered.

Electrical/gas equipment

- We ensure that all electrical/gas equipment conforms to safety requirements and is checked regularly.
- Our boiler/electrical switch gear/meter cupboard is not accessible to the children.
- Fires, heaters, electrical sockets, wires and leads are properly guarded and we teach the children not to touch them.
- Storage heaters are checked daily to make sure they are not covered.
- There are sufficient sockets to prevent overloading.
- We switch electrical devices off from the plug after use.
- The temperature of hot water is controlled to prevent scalds.
- Lighting and ventilation are adequate in all areas of our setting, including storage areas.

Storage

- All our resources and materials which are used by the children select are stored safely.
- All our equipment and resources are stored or stacked safely to prevent them accidentally falling or collapsing.

Outdoor area

- Our outdoor area is securely fenced and gated in the surrounding area of the local school. The gated outdoor area is shared by the school and visitors. Staff make sure that children are aware of the rules when playing outdoors.
- Areas are checked daily to make sure animal droppings, litter, glass etc. is removed. Staff wear rubber gloves to do this.
- Bushes or overhanging trees are checked to ensure they do not bear poisonous berries.
- Stinging nettles and brambles are removed if they pose a risk to younger children.
- Safety mats are provided under climbing equipment, even when on grass
- Wooden equipment is maintained safely, put away daily and not used if broken.
- Wooden equipment is sanded and varnished as required.

- Broken climbing equipment or outdoor toys are removed and reported to the setting manager.
- Children are always supervised within ratios outside.
- Children are suitably attired for the weather conditions and type of outdoor activities.
- Long lasting sun cream is applied at home by parents and hats are worn during the summer months.
- Outdoor play is avoided in extreme heat between noon and 3pm.
- Children who have no adequate means of sun protection, such as hat, long sleeves and trousers or sun cream, will not be able to play outdoors in un-shaded areas.
- Children are supervised on climbing equipment, especially younger children.
- Water play is not left out but is cleared, cleaned and stored after each use.
- Receptacles are left upturned to prevent collection of rainwater, this is important in areas where there are vermin to prevent urine/faeces contaminating the water.
- Sightings of vermin are recorded and reported to the manager who reports to the Environmental Health's Pest Control Department
- Outdoor areas that have flooded are not used until cleaned down and restored. Grassed areas are not played on for at least one week after the floodwater has gone.
- If paddling pools are used, a risk assessment is conducted and consideration given to the needs of disabled children or those less ambulant.
- Adults and children are alerted to the dangers of poisonous plants, herbicides and pesticides.
- The local school pool area is always locked securely to prevent access at all times (when not being used for supervised lessons).
- Our outdoor sand pit is covered when not in use and is cleaned regularly.

Hygiene

- We regularly seek information from the Environmental Health Department and the Health Authority to ensure that we keep up-to-date with the latest recommendations.
- Our daily routines encourage the children to learn about personal hygiene.
- We have a daily cleaning routine for the setting which includes main entrance lobby, play room, kitchen, toilets and nappy changing areas. The check list is kept on the kitchen wall. Children do not have access to our kitchen.

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- 3 members of staff remain after hours once a week for other cleaning duties.
- The cleaning of resources and equipment, dressing-up clothes and furnishings is done at the end of Term 6 or when necessary.
- The toilet area has a high standard of hygiene for hand washing and drying and the disposal of nappies, which are placed in a nappy disposal unit. This is emptied once a week by a professional hygiene company outside the setting.
- We implement good hygiene practices by:
 - cleaning tables between activities;
 - cleaning toilets regularly;
 - wearing protective clothing – such as uniform and disposable gloves – as appropriate;
 - providing sets of clean clothes;
 - providing tissues and wipes; and
 - ensuring individual use of paper towels;
 - wearing an apron and tying back long hair when preparing snacks, and;
 - adopting a kitchen opening/closing procedure which is followed daily.
- A clearly marked and appropriately stocked First Aid box is kept in the kitchen.

Cleanliness and hygiene

Staff follow the recommended cleaning schedules in Safer Food Better Business (SFBB).

- Inside of cupboards are cleaned monthly.
- Cupboard doors and handles are cleaned regularly.
- Fridge and freezer doors are wiped down regularly.
- Where possible all hand-washed crockery and cutlery are air dried.
- Plates and cups are only put away when fully dry.
- Tea towels, if used, are used once. They are laundered daily.
- Any cleaning cloths used for surfaces are washed and replaced daily.
- There is a mop, bucket, broom, dustpan, and brush set aside for kitchen use only.
- Any repairs needed are recorded and reported to the manager.

Activities and resources

- Before purchase or loan, equipment and resources are checked to ensure that they are safe for the ages and stages of the children currently attending the setting.
- We keep a full inventory of all items in the setting for audit and insurance purposes.
- The layout of play equipment allows adults and children to move safely and freely between activities.
- All equipment is regularly checked for cleanliness and safety and any dangerous items are repaired or discarded.
- We make safe and separate from general use any areas that are unsafe because repair is needed.
- All materials, including paint and glue, are non-toxic.
- Sand is clean and suitable for children's play.
- Physical play is constantly supervised.
- Children are taught to handle and store tools safely.
- Children who are sleeping are checked regularly.
- Children learn about health, safety and personal hygiene through the activities we provide and the routines we follow.
- Any faulty equipment is removed from use and is repaired. If it cannot be repaired it is discarded.
- Large pieces of equipment are discarded only with the consent of the manager and the chairperson or owner.

Maintenance and repairs

Any faulty equipment or building fault at Muddy Boots Pre-school is recorded, including:

- Date fault noted.
- Item or area faulty.
- Nature of the fault and priority.
- Is a risk assessment required?
- Who the fault reported to for action?

- Action taken and when.
- If no action taken by the agreed date, when and by whom the omission is followed up.
- Date action completed.

Any area that is unsafe because repair is needed, such as a broken window, should be made safe and separated off from general use.

- Where maintenance and repairs involve a change of access to the building whilst repairs are taking place, then a risk assessment is conducted to ensure the safety and security of the building is maintained.

Jewellery and accessories

- Our staff do not wear jewellery or fashion accessories, such as belts or high heels that may pose a danger to themselves or children.
- Parents must ensure that any jewellery worn by children poses no danger; particularly earrings which may get pulled, bracelets which can get caught when climbing or necklaces that may pose a risk of strangulation.
- We ensure that hair accessories are removed before children sleep or rest.
- Health and safety take precedence over respect for culture, religion or fashion.
- Parents/carers must ensure that any jewellery worn by children poses no risk, for example, earrings which may get pulled, bracelets which can get caught when climbing, or necklaces that may pose a risk of strangulation.
- Children may wear small, smooth stud earrings.
- Children, staff, and volunteers do not wear anything with sharp edges that could scratch children, or jewellery with small elements that could become detached and swallowed.
- Hair accessories that may come loose pose a choking hazard are removed before children sleep or rest.
- Parents/carers are requested not to send children wearing hair beads. If staff see beads that are coming loose, they will remove them.
- Hair accessories that may pose a choking hazard to other children should they become detached, should be removed if members of staff consider this to be a possibility.

- Amber beads for teething pain relief are not to be worn due to the risk of choking posed to the infant and other children who may remove them.

Safety of adults

- We ensure that adults are provided with guidance about the safe storage, movement, lifting and erection of large pieces of equipment.
- We provide safe equipment for adults to use when they need to reach up to store equipment or to change light bulbs.
- We ensure that all warning signs are clear and in appropriate languages.
- We ensure that adults do not remain in the building on their own.
- We record the sickness of staff and their involvement in accidents. The records are reviewed termly to identify any issues that need to be addressed.

Staff cloakrooms

- All areas are kept tidy and always uncluttered.
- Doors to staff/visitor toilets and cloakrooms are kept always shut.
- Staff are provided with lockers or a secure area for storing personal belongings, including any medication they are taking. Lockers are emptied each evening.
- Toilet areas are not used for storage due to the risk of cross-contamination.
- Staff/visitor toilets are cleaned daily using disinfectant.
- Toilet flush handles are disinfected daily.
- There is a toilet brush provided per toilet and separate cleaning cloth.
- Toilets that are not in use are checked to ensure that the U-bend is not drying out and are flushed every week. Taps that are not in use are run for several minutes every two to three days to minimise the risk of infections such as legionella.
- Cubicle doors and handles are washed weekly.
- Staff hand basins are cleaned daily using disinfectant. Separate cloths are used to clean basins etc. and are not interchanged with those used for cleaning toilets.
- Floors in staff toilets are washed daily.

- Mirrors and tiled splash backs are washed daily.
- Paper towels or hot air dryers are provided for hand drying.
- Bins are provided for sanitary wear and cleared daily (or as per contract agreement).
- Bins are provided for disposal of paper towels and are cleared daily.
- All bins are lined with plastic bags.
- Members of staff who are cleaning toilets wear rubber gloves that are kept specifically for this purpose to prevent cross contamination.

Control of substances hazardous to health

- We implement the current guidelines of the *Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)*.
- We keep a record of all substances that may be hazardous to health - such as cleaning chemicals, or gardening chemicals if used and where they are stored.
- Hazardous substances are stored safely away from the children.
- We carry out a risk assessment for all chemicals used in the setting. This states what the risks are and what to do if they have contact with eyes or skin or are ingested.
- We keep all cleaning chemicals in their original containers.
- We keep the chemicals used in the setting to the minimum in order to ensure health and hygiene is maintained. We do not use:
 - bleach;
 - anti-bacterial soap/hand wash, unless specifically advised during an infection outbreak such as Pandemic flu; or
- anti-bacterial cleaning agents, except in the toilets, nappy changing area and food preparation areas. Anti-bacterial spays are not used when children are nearby.
- Environmental factors are taken into account when purchasing, using and disposing of chemicals.
- All members of staff are vigilant and use chemicals safely.
- Members of staff wear protective gloves when using cleaning chemicals.

Legal framework

- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) (2002)
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended 2004)
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (1992)

Further guidance

- Health and Safety Law: What You Should Know (HSE Revised 2009)
- Health and Safety Regulation...A Short Guide (HSE 2003)
- Electrical Safety and You: A Brief Guide (HSE 2012)
- Working with substances hazardous to health: What You Need to Know About COSHH (HSE Revised 2009)
- Getting to Grips with Manual Handling – Frequently Asked Questions: A Short Guide (HSE 2011)