

Policy 4

Physical Environment Policy

Updated: October 2025

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Section 1:

What is the specific information about this Policy?

What other Policies are relevant?

- Safety Policy - Policy 6
- Health Policy - Policy 7
- Meal, Menu and Nutritional Policy - Policy 8
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy - Policy 9
- SEND, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy – Policy 10

What else is important?

We must notify Ofsted if there are any changes made to the premises or their use.

What is the staff's responsibility?

Staff are responsible for providing a welcoming environment for children and parents. This includes:

- Greeting children and parents on arrival, using words of their home language where possible.
- Using accurate images and languages of children's home language and the local and wider community.
- Incorporating artefacts from the local, wider and global community into the Nursery environment.
- Preparing and clearing rooms for children.
- Displaying the outcomes of children's activities where they are visible for children, their parents and visitors.
- Displaying posters around the Nursery.

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- Having up to date planning and record boards for parents and their children.
- Celebrating children's birthdays in liaison with parents.
- Celebrating different festivals with the nursery community, with the wider and in the global community.
- Enabling access for children or their parents with special needs.
- Daily verbal feedback on the child's activities for parents and also completing daily reports for each child on the Family App and platform.
- To keep the premises clean and hygienic during the day.

Section 2:

What are the aims of this policy and the Policy Statement?

What does the Policy Statement tell us?

This Policy ensures the Nursery is an excellent environment for children to play, learn and develop. It upholds the focus of the welfare requirements *"The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities that promote their development"*.

What is the Policy Statement?

We endorse this advice: *"The environment should be warm and welcoming for children, staff and parents. It should be safe and secure, with well organised space, used appropriately to promote children's development."* Our nurseries benefit from well designed refurbishment. They are totally self-contained and sole use environments each with their own garden, kitchens, staff bathroom, and quiet area which is usually available to staff. There are several entrances to each Nursery which allow secure play in the garden and exits in an emergency. We have building consent, Fire Officer Approval and are registered with the local Environmental Health Department approval at all premises.

Section 3:

Manager's responsibility

What is the Managers Special Responsibility?

The Manager has the following additional responsibilities:

- Oversee the safe and effective running of the Nursery.
- Producing a monthly informative newsletter to make parents aware of nursery events.
- Greeting and meeting parents at drop off and collection time.
- Being available at all times to share any concerns with parents.
- Maintain a monthly year in action folder.
- Keeping an updated staff board.
- Maintaining an up-to-date menus and dietary requirements boards.
- Organising a variety of diverse activities during the year which welcome all parents and children into the Nursery.
- Maintaining and updating an informative, 'Parents Board,' in the Nursery.
- To oversee the cleanliness and maintenance at the Nursery.
- To oversee and monitor temperature control in the nursery for children and non-mobile children.
- To oversee the organisation of space in the Nursery to ensure there is space for children who wish to relax, play quietly or sleep.
- To oversee provision of bedding and bed bags in the Nursery to ensure that each child has their own clean bedding.
- Meet with room leaders to discuss their rooms and area's for development.
- Meet with Nursery Director and Nursery Coordinators to discuss possible improvements.

Section 4:

How is the Nursery kept clean safe and well maintained?

How does the Nursery clean and maintain the premises?

The premises are cleaned by an out of opening hours cleaning contract company. This ensures continuity and reliability. The Nursery Premises are maintained by a variety of people. We employ a gardener as required, a maintenance person who can be available and occasionally require emergency call outs. Contracts for building and decorating may be contracted out. Urgent repairs or concerns must be reported to the Nursery Director. The Manager completes cleaning audits with

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the cleaning company if there is anything to discuss. Managers or senior staff will send through images taken before the nursery opens if there are any concerns. These will be sent to the Nursery Director and the cleaning company team leader. In the Nursery Director's absence these will be sent through to the Nursery Coordinator and the cleaning company who can be seen here: <https://thecleanspace.com/>

Section 5:

What about Temperature control?

Nursery temperatures and safe sleeping Policy are dealt with in Health Policy 7. The Manager has responsibility for:

- Monitoring the heating, sudden drops in temperature and minimising drafts.
- Ensuring satisfactory temperatures are achieved early in the morning and later in the day or when the heating is faulty.
- Ensuring all children are in an adequately heated or cooled environment.
- Informing parents if the heating breaks down.
- Instructing the maintenance contractor to repair the heating system when required.
- Ensuring all hanging draft excluders are in a safe and functional condition at all times.
- Ensuring children have adequate blankets or sheets for sleep time.
- That the temperature both indoors and outdoors is monitored regularly.

Section 6:

What space does the Nursery have and what are the capacities?

How do we ensure the best use of space in the Nursery?

The number of children we provide care for in our Nursery forms part of the planning consent, Insurance and Registration with Ofsted. The capacity depends on the amount of floor space we have and is regulated by Ofsted. We make the best use of our space by:

- Dividing our Nursery space up to cater for children of different ages and different development stages, which has been calculated by professional laser drawings.
- Using the different spaces with different age groups at different times of the day.
- Using the garden and outdoor areas with different age groups at different times of the day.
- Enabling children to move around the Nursery to different activities within each session.
- Staff deployment to ensure good use of space.
- Using shelving and other storage to ensure a wealth of resources are available to children.
- Monitoring use of space within the Nursery.
- Changing the use of space at different times over the month and year as best suited to the planned activities and special activities.
- Enabling children to move around safely and freely.

Section 7:

Do the children have sleep and rest areas?

What rest areas do we provide for children?

Each room group at Nursery has cosy areas where the children can relax. To ensure children have adequate rest and sleep we:

1. Have a safe sleeping policy in Health Policy 7.
2. Have individual bedding and bed bags for all children.
3. Provide nursery beds for all other children.
4. Allow children to sleep when they want, providing the parents are in agreement.
5. Encourage older children to have a rest and or quiet time as a group after lunch.
6. Incorporate parent's wishes into individual children's sleep patterns.
7. Move furniture to allow adequate space to sleep and rest.

Section 8:

What about storage space?

The Nursery has been very carefully planned to maximise storage space. We have high level shelves which are fitted to maximise storage and fit the storage boxes in Nursery. These are adaptable and can be moved so that resources are rotated. Children have individual trays which we call home boxes in which they put special things and work. As many resources as possible are stored at the children's level to encourage self-selection and to enable children to follow their own interests. There

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is an outdoor buggy storage shed at each Nursery. Parents and Carers are encouraged to provide their own padlock as the Nursery is unable to claim from their insurance for lost or stolen buggies. All food and kitchen equipment is stored in the kitchen. The office, utility areas, washing areas, children's and adult bathrooms provide additional storage.

Section 9:

What about toilet facilities?

The Nurseries have been carefully planned to ensure accessible toilet and nappy changing facilities in the right places. It is Nursery policy to:

- Supervise children's hand washing, taking into account children's developing autonomy.
- Provide doors on toilets to children approaching three years and above
- To ensure cultural or religious requirements of children are observed
- To ensure that the toilets are clean, hygienic and well maintained at all times
- To ensure that there are toilet and nappy change facilities for children who have special needs and who are partially abled or disabled
- Each child provides their own potty, nappy wipes, nappies and cream
- Staff are trained in the hygienic changing of nappies and always use clean disposable gloves and a disposable apron for each child.

Section 10:

What about kitchen facilities?

Safe transportation of food is covered in the Meal, Menu and Nutritional Policy 7. Each Nursery has its own fully fitted kitchen which is inspected by the local Environmental Health Officer. Children do not have access to the kitchen. Children's cooking activities take place in the Nursery rooms. Sterilisation of baby feeding equipment is the staff responsibility and is monitored by the Nursery Manager. Children's dietary preferences, allergies and religious and cultural needs are checked and eliminated from children's cooking experiences when their room is enjoying cooking experiences.

Section 11:

What outdoor spaces and garden spaces can the children play and learn in?

Each Nursery has its own laundry and drying area. Washing and drying machines have maintenance contracts. The Manager is responsible for overseeing the hygienic storage of dirty washing and drying of laundry. Parents should provide a change of clothes for their children. We return clothes to parents for laundering should their child require clean clothes. The Nursery will loan clothes to children whose parents do not wish to provide a change of clothing for them,

Section 12:

What outdoor and garden spaces can the children play and learn in?

The outdoor area is monitored and managed by the garden coordinators in each setting and overseen by the managers. The outdoor area must be set up daily with wow factor activities in line with children's interests and topics. Children have set times to access the garden with their room age as well as free time to access when the nursery is busy.

Section 13:

What about the children's rooms?

The children's rooms have set capacities for children of each age group based on the different Ofsted requirements for different ages. Each aged based, room has a different name so that the children feel part of their group. Rooms are set up with age appropriate, toys and activities for each age. The room leader is responsible for maintaining their room and ensuring the team members in the room ensure the smooth and effective running and presentation of the room.

Section 14:

What about displays?

Displays in the Nursery are monitored by the Manager. Team members must set up displays that present children's images, art-work, that has not come from a template or been tampered with, EYFS quote, description, links to EAL and home links. Displays must be updated monthly to incorporate new topics and events. Some display boards are used for parent information, safety, rotas, staff information and planning.

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