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About our Pre-school

Our aims are to provide all children with a safe, secure and stimulating environment in which they can learn, grow and have fun within a framework which ensures equality of opportunity for all.

We also aim to provide your children with exciting, challenging and varied activities, which work within the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

We use the outside area as much as indoors on a daily basis and we are delighted to be able to offer a Forest School session on site once a week.

We offer your children support by means of a key person system, providing care and attention to their needs through our high adult to child ratio, which is currently 1 adult to 5 children.

Children are welcome to join us at Little Acorns from the term after they are 2 years.

We are open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 9.00am to 3.00pm during term time. These hours may change according to the demand of sessions.

Emergency Procedure

Fire

In the event of a fire, the teacher or adult who is first alerted will sound the electronic fire alarm by breaking the glass of the nearest alarm (our closest is in Little Acorns room by the fire exit), thus alerting the rest of the school, including the pre-school when in session.

The children will stop what they are doing, stand up and at the direction of the leader, walk out of the class room using the nearest fire exit (for the pre-school, down the steps and into the field) and proceed to the church in an orderly fashion. If possible close all doors and windows to prevent further spread of the fire.

The leader will ensure that they have the register and that no one is left on the premises. The roll will be called to ascertain that everybody who should be present is.

The fire brigade will be alerted using the telephone box outside the school gates.

If deemed safe and the children are adequately supervised, fire extinguishers may be used to extinguish the fire. These can be found hanging by the fire exit door.

Regular termly fire drills will be held over a week to familiarise everyone with the procedure.

Accident

In the event of an accident, minor or major, staff will ensure the safety of the injured child and all other children and staff around. Qualified staff will then assess the situation, taking appropriate action either by providing basic first aid, such as cleaning wounds and cold compresses, or by telephoning for medical assistance.

A designated member of staff will, in the event of a major injury, telephone for medical assistance as well as inform the parents of the incident. The other children will be removed from the scene to avoid anyone becoming stressed or upset.

All injuries, minor and major will be recorded in the Accident book and a signature from the parent will be needed. In the event of a serious accident RIDDOR will be informed (08453009923) as well as Ofsted.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Emergency Contact Procedure

If a member of staff has to leave Little Acorns, or for some valid reason is unable to attend a session, staff attending should immediately be informed.

Emergency contacts:

Elaine Ockenden	01694 781449
Julie Atkinson	01694 771658
Sam Carter	07890248627
Ceri Wilson	01694 771777
Anna Child	01694 771713
Simon Ayres	01694 771328
Jo Taylor	01584 841407

Should this happen at the start of a session, parents will be asked to stay until one of the above can come and stand in.

Should this happen during the session the mobile telephone should be used, so that the remaining member of staff can supervise the children at the same time.

If none of the above is available parents will be called to collect their children and the session will be cancelled.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

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Recruitment and Retention policy

At Little Acorns we aim to provide high quality care and education for children through employing appropriately qualified staff. We aim to create and maintain a skilled, balanced, conscientious and committed team.

Recruitment

- We are committed to recruiting, appointing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.
- Before recruiting staff, the committee and pre-school leader will consider our current staffing structure and identify our needs for additional staff.
- The job advert will reflect our commitment to equal opportunities and will be advertised in a wide range of places to attract applicants from all of the community. It will state that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- All applicants will be dealt with by the committee and pre-school leader and will be assessed against the job criteria.
- Applicants are considered on the basis of their suitability for the job, regardless of age, gender, culture, marital status, ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation.
- We use OFSTED guidance on obtaining references and criminal record checks for staff, committee members and volunteers. Anyone working directly with the children as part of the staffing ratios must have an enhanced DBS.
- Prior to appointment all relevant checks will be made (original qualifications, photographic evidence of identity, national insurance number and proof of address which is not less than 3 months old). At least two written references will be sought, one of which must be from the most recent employer.
- Interviews will be conducted by the same two members of the committee and the pre-school leader.
- Induction training will be issued by the pre-school leader and new staff will be introduced to our policies during this period.

Training

- Staff training meets all regulatory requirements, with all staff holding or working towards qualifications for their position in our group.
- In service training is available to all through the Shropshire County Council Early Years and Childcare Team, PLA and other organisations.
- The budget includes an allocation towards paid releasing of staff to access training, towards training costs and travelling time.
- Staff are supported and their training needs are identified by means of an annual staff appraisal. In addition staff have regular access to supervision meetings which gives an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues confidentially.

Students

In co-operation with educational providers we welcome students into our preschool on the following conditions:

- 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 engaged in genuine early years training, which provides necessary background knowledge and understanding of children's development and activities.
- Any information gained by students about the children, families or other adults in our pre-school must remain confidential.
- Students are never left unsupervised with children as they are not included in the child:adult ratios; unless they are aged 17 and over, on a long term placement and suitably qualified to be counted

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Adult Resources

Our high adult to child ratio is vital in providing quality pre-school care.

At Little Acorns:

- We have one member of staff to five children. This ensures individual attention to the needs and development of each child
- Our key person system ensures that each child and family has one member of staff who takes a special interest in them.
- Regular staff meetings provide opportunities for staff to discuss the children's progress, as well as raise any concerns or worries.
- We have a record keeping system in place, which enables staff to work together to identify your child's progress and move on to the next stage.
- Staff undertake regular training to further their knowledge and understanding of child development.

There are three members of staff working at Little Acorns:

- Elaine Ockenden is the pre-school leader. Elaine has a BA (Hons) in Early Years Leadership and Early Years Professional Status. She has a current First Aid certificate.
- Sam Carter is assistant leader. Sam has a CACHE Level 3 Diploma in Child Care and Education and a current First Aid Certificate.
- Julie Atkinson is a pre-school assistant. She holds a NVQ 2 in Residential Domiciliary and Day Care and a NVQ3 in Continuing Care, as well as a current First Aid certificate.

See also:

Recruitment and Retention Policy

Confidentiality Policy

Work with children and families will sometimes bring us into contact with confidential information. To ensure that all those using and working in Little Acorns can do so with confidence we will respect confidentiality as follows:

- Parents will always have access to their own child's information but not that of other children.
- Staff at Little Acorns will not discuss individual children, other than for purposes of curriculum planning and management.
- Staff will not discuss work on social networking sites.
- Mobile phones will not be used at Little Acorns unless in an emergency with the supervisors consent.
- Little Acorns own camera will be used to photograph children. If staff or students need to take photographs with their own cameras for training purposes parental consent will be obtained first.
- Information given to staff will not be passed on to other adults without permission.
- Issues to do with employment of staff will remain confidential to the people involved with making personal decisions.
- Evidence relating to a child's safety will be kept in a confidential file and will only be shared with the child's key-worker, pre-school leader and the chairperson.
- Students on recognised early years training will be asked to respect our confidentiality policy.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

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Admissions Policy

It is our intention to make Little Acorns genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community.

We ensure that the existence of Little Acorns is widely known in all local communities. This is done by means of advertising.

We arrange our waiting list so that the eldest will get a place first. However Little Acorns committee may need to decide on individual cases as they arise.

We make our equal opportunities policy widely known to ensure that discrimination is not taking place. We are flexible about attendance patterns in order to accommodate the needs of individual children and families.

Parents are encouraged to visit Little Acorns before their child starts, and will be encouraged to stay with their child until both are happy about separation.

As a statutory requirement we keep a record of the children's details at Little Acorns. These include:

- Full name, address and telephone number of the child's parents and any emergency numbers.
- Child's date of birth.
- Name, address and telephone number of the child's doctor, carer/child minder.
- Dietary information.
- Names and telephone numbers of people authorised to collect the child from Little Acorns.
- Any other relevant information such as custody arrangements.

All this information is included on our registration form.

As another statutory requirement a daily register will be completed as the children arrive. This is vital for safety, for use in fire drills and emergencies.

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Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

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Transition Policy

Starting Nursery

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

In order to accomplish this we aim to create a partnership with parents by:

- Creating opportunities for exchange of information and providing them with a copy of Little Acorns prospectus and registration form.
- Encouraging parents to visit our pre-school with their children during the weeks before the child is due to start.
- Making it clear to families that they will be welcome and supported at Little Acorns for as long as it takes to settle their child.
- Encouraging parents to separate from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building to longer absences.
- Reassuring parents whose children seem to be taking a long time to settle.

Children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious and/or unhappy. Our settling in procedures aim to help parents and children to feel comfortable at Little Acorns, and to ensure that children can benefit from what the group has to offer and feel confident that their parents will return at the end of the session.

Transition to another Setting

Sometimes children will move to a new setting. In this situation we will ensure that the child's learning and development records at the time of transition are fully up to date and ready to pass on to the new setting. If needed, and with the parents/carers permission, we are always available to talk with the new setting and share any information that may be deemed useful.

Transition to School

The move from nursery to school is a big step for both children and their parents/carers. The majority of children that leave Little Acorns feed into Rushbury C of E Primary School. We are based on the school site and have very close links with the school.

We ensure smooth transitions by:

- The manager has termly meetings with the reception teacher and head teacher. These meetings provide a time to discuss planning and events that are taking

place at the school that the nursery children could be involved in and anything else that may be deemed relevant.

- Nursery children are actively involved in school events such as Sports Day, Harvest Festival and Nativity plays.
- Each week we join Class 1 for a story time and child initiated session, where children get to choose from a wide range of activities supported by the class teacher and staff from Little Acorns. This allows children to become familiar with the classroom and meet the teachers and older children. This is currently takes place on Tuesday afternoons.
- We also attend Forest School sessions on Thursday afternoons with Class 1. Again this provides the opportunity for Little Acorns children to familiarise themselves with the environment, staff and school children.
- A transition meeting is held between the manager and reception teacher to pass on learning and development records, and relay the child's interests and strengths. The children are offered three morning induction sessions at school (one including lunch).
- For children moving onto other primary schools, we encourage a school representative to visit the children in the nursery environment. We will make sure that learning and development records are passed to the child's relevant school and will prepare any reports necessary to help the children's transition to school.
- In the case of children with special needs the Senco will be responsible for sending to the receiving school information with includes the most recent IEP, the most up to date assessments/reports from other professionals and any other information considered of importance. If necessary, we will have a transition meeting with nursery/school staff to pass on information with the child's parent/guardian, and any other agencies involved.

We will always try to make any move for the children as smooth as possible and will help the child and their parent as much as is necessary with any transition their child may need to make, being it moving to school, another nursery, moving house, etc., and would encourage parents to make us aware of any changes to their child's life that we may be able to help them with.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Parental Involvement

Parents are the first educators of their young children. We aim to support all parents in this essential role, and involve them in their children's education and the full life of the setting.

To fulfil this we:

- Ensure parents are given information on a regular basis through informal conversations and letters.
- Provide information on their child's progress through informal conversations and written reports.
- Involve parents in the shared record keeping about their children, and ensure that they have access to their children's written developmental records.
- Ensure that all parents have opportunities to contribute their skills to the group – as part of the committee or joining in with our activities. We welcome the contributions of parents and make new parents aware of this.
- Hold regular meetings in venues which are accessible and appropriate for all.
- Ensure all parents know the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Selecting Play Equipment and Toys

The equipment and toys in Little Acorns 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 the stages of development of the children. It offers challenges to develop physical, social, personal and intellectual skills.

This equipment features positive images of people, both male and female, from a range of ethical and cultural groups, with and without disabilities.

It also includes a range of raw materials, which can be used in a variety of ways and encourages an open-ended approach to creativity and problem solving.

This equipment will enable children to develop individual potential within the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

This equipment also conforms to all relevant safety regulations and is sound and well made.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

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Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Food and Drink Policy

The sharing of refreshments can play an important part in the social life of the pre-school as well as reinforcing children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating.

Before a child starts at Little Acorns staff discuss with parents the child's dietary needs, including any allergies, and make appropriate arrangements to meet them.

All the children bring a piece of fruit in, which is cut up and shared, offering a wide choice. Snacks provided are nutritious and include foods from a range of cultures, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.

Dietary needs for religious groups are known and met in appropriate ways.

Water is always available, especially during hot weather. Milk provided for the children is whole and pasteurised.

Parents providing packed meals will be advised about safe storage, and our policy on healthy eating. They will be encouraged to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit and milk based deserts.

Packed lunches that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products are discouraged, and we reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Health and Hygiene – Policy and Procedures

Health

Food

Our snacks are provided by parents, who bring in one piece of fruit per session attended.

Milk is whole and pasteurised.

Outdoor play

Outdoor activities contribute to children's health, their physical development and their knowledge of the world around them. Outdoor play times are planned into each session when children are encouraged to participate in child-chosen and adult-led activities.

Trips are also planned into our curriculum to broaden children's experiences.

Risk assessments are carried out prior to the trip.

Illness

Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they have any infection, and to inform us as soon as possible by ringing 01694 771677.

Parents are asked not to bring to Little Acorns any child who has been vomiting or has had diarrhoea till at least 48 hours after the last motion.

Children with headlice are not excluded, but must be treated to remedy the condition. Parents are notified if there is a case of headlice within the setting.

The Health Protection Unit (01785 221126) and Ofsted are notified of any communicable diseases. Ofsted is informed of any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises.

If your child becomes ill within the hours of attending Little Acorns we will telephone the contact numbers and keep your child in a quiet and cared for state until your arrival.

Cuts or open sores will be covered with a plaster or other dressing.

If the child is on prescribed medication the following procedures will be followed:

- If possible the child's parent will administer the medicine. If not, then, the medication must be stored in the original container and clearly labelled with the child's name, dosage and any instructions.
- All medication will be kept out of reach of children.
- Written information will be obtained from the parent, giving clear instructions about the dosage, administration of the medicine and permission for a member of staff to follow the instructions.

- A medication book will be available to log the name of the child receiving medication, times that the medication should be administered, date and time of actual administration and the signature of the person who has administered each dose.

With regard to the administration of life-saving medication such as insulin/adrenaline injections or the use of nebulisers, the position will be clarified by reference to the pre-school's insurance company.

If specialist knowledge is required, staff involved in administering medication will receive training from a qualified health profession.

Little Acorns will ensure the first aid equipment is kept clean, replenished and replaced as necessary.

There will always be on the premises at least one qualified first aider trained to administer first aid to children.

Information sources

We will maintain links with health visitors and gather health information and advice from local health authority services and/or other health organisations.

HYGIENE

Personal hygiene

Hands are washed after using the toilet and before handling food.

Children are encouraged to blow and wipe their noses when necessary and dispose of soiled tissues hygienically.

Paper towels are used and disposed of appropriately.

Hygiene rules related to bodily fluids followed with particular care and all staff and volunteers are aware of how infection can be transmitted.

Cleaning and clearing

Rubber gloves are always used when cleaning up spills of bodily fluids.

Any spills of blood, vomit or excrement are wiped up and bagged and disposed of by the correct means.

Floors and other affected surfaces are disinfected.

Spare laundered pants and other items of clothing are available in case of accidents, and plastic bags available in which to wrap the soiled garments.

Food

- Little Acorns will observe current legislation regarding food hygiene, registration and training.

- Adults will always wash their hands under running water before handling food and after using the toilet.
- Adults will not be involved with the preparation of food if suffering from any infectious/contagious illness or skin complaint.
- No smoking on the premises.
- No coughing or sneezing over food.
- Different cleaning clothes to be used for kitchen and toilet areas.
- Food to be kept covered and either refrigerated or piping hot.

Little Acorns Health and Safety Officer: Elaine Ockenden

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Safety Policy

The safety of young children at Little Acorns is of paramount importance.

Environment

- Safety checks are performed daily both indoors and out.
- All equipment is checked for cleanliness and safety and any dangerous items are repaired or discarded.
- The toilet area and nappy changing equipment are included in these checks.
- Any maintenance found within the building is passed onto the school and managed by them.
- The back door at Little Acorns remains locked when not in use as an extension of free play.
- Outdoor facilities are securely fenced off.
- Heater and electric points are adequately guarded.
- The fire doors are free of obstruction and there are adequate systems and equipment for the detection and control of fire.

Supervision

- All the children at Little Acorns will be supervised by adults at all times.
- Children will leave Little Acorns only with authorised adults.
- Children will not have unsupervised access to the kitchen or any cupboard storing hazardous material.

Adult safety

- All adults in the group, both staff and visitors will be aware of Little Acorns safety policy.

Management

- Our accident book is available at each session for reporting of any accidents.
- Regular safety monitoring including checking the accident book as a basis for risk assessment.

- Adults will be aware of systems in operation for the children’s arrival and departures.
- Adults will not walk around with hot drinks or place hot drinks within reach of children.
- Fire drills are held every term.
- A register is taken of all present at “Good morning” time and throughout the day recording times of arrival and departure.
- We are a non-smoking school.
- The first aid box is always to hand. Names of first aid officers are on display.

Social considerations

Children playing with or near water, during cooking activities and when children are near or on the climbing frame, will be continuously supervised.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Equal Opportunities Policy

Little Acorns works in accordance with all relevant legislation including:

- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986
- Children Act 1989
- Special Needs and Disability Act 2001

Little Acorns welcomes, values and represents all children, families, staff and volunteers. We aim to ensure that all those who wish to be involved in our pre-school have an equal chance to do so.

Admission

Little Acorns is open to every family in the community. We base our admissions policy on a fair system. Parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy which is reviewed regularly.

Employment

Any vacancies will be advertised. Little Acorns will appoint the best person for the job and will treat fairly all applicants for the job and all those appointed. Commitment to implementing Little Acorns Equal Opportunities Policy will form part of the job description for all workers.

Families

Little Acorns aims to offer support to all families. Little Acorns offer a flexible payment system for families with differing means.

Festivals

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all major events in the lives of the children and families in Little Acorns and in our society as a whole.

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. Management of resources within the pre-school will ensure that both boys and girls have full access to all kinds of activities and equipment and are equally encouraged to enjoy and learn from them.

Resources

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

Special Needs

Little Acorns recognises that children have a wide range of needs which differ from time to time, and consider what part it can play in meeting these needs as they arise.

Discriminatory behaviour/remarks

Any discriminatory language, behaviour or remarks by children, parents or adults are unacceptable at Little Acorns.

Language

Basic information, written and spoken, will be clearly communicated in as many languages as are necessary and possible.

Bilingual/multilingual children and adults are an asset to the whole group. Children and parents who have English as a second language will be valued and their language recognised and respected.

Food

Working in partnership with parents, children's medical, cultural and dietary needs will be met.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Behaviour Management

Little Acorns recognises the need for rules within the group and the necessity for the procedures for managing difficult behaviour.

Little Acorns committee will ensure that this policy is available to parents and that all staff and volunteers are aware of the policy and comply with it. They also expect courtesy between staff and volunteers towards children and adults in the group.

The aim of this policy is to foster a consistent caring atmosphere within our pre-school.

Children will be distracted, gently restrained and/or removed from the activity when they are creating dangers or disruption to themselves or others or likely to damage property or equipment. They will always be told why this behaviour is not acceptable. Children will be given opportunities to develop social skills.

Under no circumstances will a child be smacked, punched, slapped or shaken. Isolating a child within a closed room will not be acceptable. Withholding snacks or drinks is also not acceptable. Shouting at humiliating, embarrassing or frightening a child is not allowed.

Little Acorns does not tolerate bullying of any kind. If we discover that an act of bullying or intimidation has taken place, we act immediately to stop any further occurrences of such behaviour. Our aim is all children who attend Little Acorns attend free from fear. These incidents are recorded in the incident book and discussed with the child's parents.

Where difficult behaviour is persistent or serious, a record will be made in the incident book and discussed with parents. Little Acorns recognises that we all have "off" days- including children.

Little Acorns Behaviour Management Officer: Julie Atkinson

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Special Needs Policy and Procedures

Little Acorns provides an environment in which all children are supported to reach their full potential.

We have regard for the DfES Special Education Needs Code of Practice, and include all children in our provision. Children with special needs, like all other children, are admitted to Little Acorns after consultation between parents, pre-school leader and key-worker.

We aim to provide for the developmental needs of each individual child. All children, irrespective of their special needs, are encouraged wherever possible and appropriate to participate in all of the groups activities.

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.

The needs and progress of children who have Special Educational Needs (SEN) are monitored by Elaine Ockenden who is our SEN co-ordinator.

Our staff to child ratio ensures that each child receives plenty of adult time and attention. We use a system of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing individual educational plans (IEPs) for children with SEN/disabilities.

If it is felt that the child's needs cannot be met in the pre-school without the support of a one to one worker, funding will be sought to employ one.

We work closely with parents of children with SEN/disabilities to create and maintain a positive partnership, and ensure that they are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning provision and review of their children's education.

We liaise with other professionals to meet children's individual needs and are committed to learning all we can about any particular difficulties, so as to provide the highest standard of care possible.

Our staff attend in-service training on special needs.

SEN procedures are found in the SEN folder.

Little Acorns SEN Co-ordinator: Elaine Ockenden

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Child Protection Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

At Little Acorns we believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognise that safeguarding the welfare of **all** children and young people is everyone's responsibility. We follow Shropshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) procedures and acknowledge that the welfare of the child is paramount.

At Little Acorns it is our duty to respond promptly and appropriately to all concerns, incidents or allegations of abuse or neglect regardless of whether or not the child concerned attends our setting and make a referral without delay if necessary. We work in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies in accordance with SSCB procedures. Our statutory duties are set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2012, the Compulsory Childcare Register and Working Together To Safeguard Children 2013, a copy of this has been downloaded to refer to and is kept on Little Acorns' computer.

Every Child Matters five outcomes for children. This states that all children have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse and the child's needs must come first.

The Children Act 1989 and 2004 - Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as; protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

Section 3 (5) of the Children Act 1989 states that the law empowers anyone who has care of a child to do all that is reasonable in the circumstances to safeguard his/her welfare.

All members of staff are familiar with the definitions signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect stated in Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2013 as set out in **Appendix A**.

Adult Roles

All staff are made aware of their individual roles in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children including their responsibility to be alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. We ensure that all staff members undergo an induction process, are given copies of the procedures they must follow if they suspect abuse or neglect and are able to put these procedures into practice. On-going support is provided through regular supervision and appraisals.

All members of staff are expected to update their child protection training at least every three years.

The practitioner designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection issues is: **Elaine Ockenden**.

The committee member who oversees this work is: Ceri Wilson

Our Designated Lead Practitioner will update their child protection/safeguarding training regularly and has specific responsibilities as listed in **Appendix B**

Responding to disclosure or concerns

If it is necessary to raise a concern about a child, this will be discussed with the family and consent sought unless this may place the child at increased risk of significant harm, place any other person at risk of serious harm or obstruct a police investigation. If you feel that a child is in danger of significant harm you may over-ride a parent's withholding of consent. The lead practitioner will be responsible for seeking consent from the family.

If there are concerns that a child is at risk of abuse or significant harm the designated lead for safeguarding will telephone Shropshire Council's Initial Contact Team and make a referral. This referral will be made without delay. The name of the officer to whom details are given will be recorded. This will be followed up in writing within two working days. Where a child is considered to be in immediate danger then the police will be contacted by telephoning 999. Referrals will be made even if the child concerned is already known to Children & Young People's Services. Careful consideration will be given to any other children who may also be at risk such as siblings or peers, (whether or not they attend our setting), and the Initial Contact Team will be made aware of these concerns.

All staff are aware of the referral process and are able to make a referral in the absence of the Designated Lead for Safeguarding or the Leader/Manager.

If the Designated Lead is unsure whether or not the concern meets the threshold for child protection he/she will refer to the SSCB Threshold Criteria and discuss the concern internally. Any concerns that require further consideration may be discussed with an Early Help Advisor, who will get back to us within 48 hours. If the concern is thought too urgent to wait 48 hours for discussion it will be referred to the Initial Contact Team as a Child Protection Referral.

If a child is considered to be at risk of neglect, the SSCB Neglect Strategy and Toolkit will be used to record concerns over time and submitted to the Initial Contact Team as evidence.

It is not our responsibility to attempt to investigate the situation, which is the role of the Police and Shropshire Council's Child Protection Team.

We will continue to offer support to the family on an on-going basis.

Record Keeping

When a concern about a child's welfare or safety is raised it will be discussed with the lead practitioner and recorded. All records will be stored in a separate confidential file in a locked, secure place with restricted access.

Records will be retained for at least six years and then destroyed, or handed on to the child protection officer in the next organisation if advised to do so.

Information is shared as necessary with confidentiality maintained. We will follow the guidance on information sharing set out in the practitioners guide HMG 2006 included in the DfE booklet 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'.

When information is being accumulated prior to possible referral it will be reviewed by the designated practitioner at appropriate intervals and at each review a decision will be made as to whether or not to refer and the reasons recorded.

Records will include;

- Full name, date of birth and home address of child
- details of parent child normally lives with
- all concerns/ nature of injuries with dates / times / location (you may wish to use a body map to record the site of injuries)
- exact words used by child if disclosure made and name of others present
- observations made
- actions taken
- reasons for any decisions
- practitioner's printed name, role and signature, dated and timed
- clearly and concisely written report in a manner that cannot be erased or added to, as soon as possible after the event

Escalating Concerns

If the Designated Lead for Safeguarding is unhappy with the outcome of the referral they will raise the issue with their line manager. Their line manager should then discuss the concern with the Initial Contact Team manager to try and agree a way forward. If a consensus cannot be reached, the concern can be escalated further following the SSCB's procedure for escalating concerns.

Follow Up

Shropshire Council has a statutory duty to inform you of the outcome of your referral. If we have not heard anything within 3 working days, we may contact the Initial Contact Team and request this information. This can then be recorded along with the name of the social worker and stored with our referral notes.

Whistleblowing

Whistle blowing is a mechanism by which adults can voice their concerns in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern regardless of source should be reported to the designated practitioner or appropriate agency. See Whistleblowing policy for procedures.

Responding to allegations against staff or volunteers.

If an allegation of inappropriate behaviour is made against a member of staff or a volunteer relating to a child, or that abuse may have taken place on the premises, the designated practitioner or manager will follow the procedure for responding to disclosure or concern (see above). Information about the allegation will be passed to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at Shropshire Council within 1 working day, and if necessary the Disclosure & Barring Service. Ofsted will be

notified about both the allegation and about any action taken. Notifications to Ofsted must be made as soon as possible, at least within 14 days.

Once the case has been considered and discussed with the LADO and Ofsted, we will follow their advice as to whether or not to suspend the individual.

If advised to do so, the member of staff will be suspended on full pay for the duration of the investigation; this is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process. Clear advice will be given to workers on the process of investigation by other agencies. We will follow advice about how to inform families about the allegation.

If an allegation is made against the Designated Lead the Chairperson will make the referral.

Recruiting Staff

We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children. (More information can be found in our recruitment and retention policy).

Job adverts and application packs make reference to our safeguarding policy and procedures.

Applicants for posts are clearly informed that positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. We ensure that we meet our responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

Where applicants are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

We comply with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the Compulsory Childcare Register in respect of references and Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service disclosures for staff and volunteers to ensure that no disqualified or unsuitable person works with or has access to the children.

We have procedures for recording the details of visitors, including prospective candidates, to the setting and ensure that we have control over who comes in to the premises so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

Little Acorns will make a referral, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, to the Disclosure and Barring Service if a member of staff is dismissed (or would have been had the person not left the setting first) because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm.

Staff Supervision

In order to ensure that all staff are alert to any issues for concern, staff receive regular training and updates in safeguarding and child protection through a range of training and supervision activities. This includes both formal and informal supervision, annual appraisals, staff meetings and access to SSCB approved training.

Partnership with parents

A copy of this policy is made available to all parents prior to their child joining our setting as well as details of the complaints procedure. In general any concerns will be discussed with parents and agreement sought to making a referral unless such a discussion would place the child at an increased risk of significant harm. Parents are requested to notify us of any accidents, incidents or injuries that may affect the child which will be recorded.

Injuries

All accidents and injuries are recorded with parents/ carers signing to acknowledge being informed. Parents/ carers are encouraged to inform staff of any pre-existing injuries which are also recorded with signatures.

Any serious injury occurring in the setting eg. broken bone, is reported to HSE via RIDDOR. This is also reported to Initial Contact Team and to Ofsted (within 14 days)

Early Help Offer

Sometimes we may come across situations which are not necessarily a child protection concern but where we think a child could benefit from additional support from outside agencies to ensure they reach their full potential. In this process known as Early Help we would consult fully with parents. See **Appendix C** for an overview of the Early Help Offer.

Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras

Appropriate use of mobile phones is essential at Little Acorns, and does not detract from the quality of supervision and care of children. All parents have the mobile phone number that is used and are encouraged to text or phone. Important contact details of the children may be kept on the setting's mobile phone in case of an emergency.

Practitioners should not use their personal mobile phones during working hours, unless in an emergency with the supervisors consent. Visitors to the setting (including parents) are requested not to use their mobile phones on the premises.

We believe that photographs validate children's experiences and achievements and are a valuable way of recording milestones in a child's life. Parental permission for the different ways in which we use photographs is gained as part of the initial registration at Little Acorns. We take a mixture of photos that reflect the pre-school environment; sometimes this will be when children are engrossed in an activity either on their own or with their peers. Children are encouraged to use the camera to take photos of their peers. In order to safeguard children and adults cameras should be used in view of colleagues and should not be used during intimate care situations such as nappy changing or toileting. All adults whether practitioners, committee or volunteers at the setting understand the difference between appropriate and inappropriate sharing of images.

Little Acorns own camera will be used to photograph children. If staff or students need to take photographs with their own cameras for training purposes parental consent will be obtained first.

Related policies:

Recruitment and Retention

Confidentiality Policy

Whistle Blowing Policy

Little Acorns Child Protection Officer: Elaine Ockenden

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Appendix A

Working Together - Definitions of Abuse

All members of staff are familiar with the definitions signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect stated in Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2013 as set out below:

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

These are also available in the Shropshire Safeguarding Children Board guidance which is accessible online at www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk

Appendix B

Role of Designated Lead Practitioner

Our Designated Lead Practitioner will update their child protection/safeguarding training regularly and is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues;
- Ensuring that staff are enabled to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. Signs that indicate possible abuse may include significant changes in children's behaviour; deterioration in children's general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; children's comments which give cause for concern; any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home; and/or inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. E.g. inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images;
- Being the first point of contact for staff, volunteers, parents and children/young people where concerns about children's welfare, poor practice or child abuse are identified;
- Providing basic advice and support with regard to child protection and poor practice;
- Completing the organisation's reporting and recording procedures following the policy and procedures;
- Promoting safe working practice/code of conduct;
- Attending, promoting and organising training;
- Promoting and ensuring confidentiality is maintained;
- Promoting anti-discriminatory practice;
- Maintaining records related to child protection and unsuitable adults, and ensuring these are stored securely on the premises;
- Reviewing records on a regular basis to identify possible patterns of abuse;
- Making decisions on whether or not to refer any concerns, recording the reasons for that decision;
- Completing safeguarding audits including multi-agency audits, termly Practice Audits and annual Section 11 Compliance Audits in line with SSCB requirements;
- Maintaining up to date contact details for other agencies and know how to access the most up to date SSCB guidelines;
- Passing information to other relevant organisations /agencies as appropriate;
- Making referrals to the investigating agencies - Shropshire Council Initial Contact Team and the Police - in line with child protection procedures;
- Informing Ofsted of any allegations of abuse made against a person working in the setting, or any other abuse alleged to have taken place on the premises;
- Sharing information about Safeguarding Children procedures with parents prior to their child starting in the setting;
- Updating the policy and procedure, and communicating any updates with staff, committee members, volunteers and parents;
- Contributing to multi-agency meetings, assessments, core groups and conferences as required.

Appendix D

Important Contacts

- Shropshire Council Initial Contact Team (via the Customer Service Centre) 03456 789021
- Emergency Social Work Duty Team after 5pm and at weekends 03456 789040
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 03456 789021
- Disclosure and Barring Service 01325 953795
- Ofsted (General helpline) 0300 123 1231
- Ofsted (Whistle blower helpline) 0300 123 3155
- NSPCC 24 hour helpline 0808 8005000

Early Help

- COMPASS 03456 789021
Includes consultation with an Early Help Advisor or CAHMS Advisor; Early Help Implementation Enquiries; and to check if an EHAF has already been completed by another professional

Serious Accidents and injuries

- Ofsted 0300 123 1231
- Shropshire Council Initial Contact Team (via the Customer Service Centre) 03456 789021
- RIDDOR (all incidents may be reported online, telephone service for fatal and major injuries only) www.hse.gov.uk 0845 300 9923

Whistle Blowing Policy

Little Acorns promotes and encourages good staff communication and any questions of bad practice should be dealt with satisfactorily long before the need for Whistle Blowing. The manager operates an open door policy for all staff to enable them to express concerns at any time.

This policy outlines the right for all employees to be able to speak out in confidence about wrong-doing which may be illegal or inappropriate within the setting.

Procedures

- Identify bad practice
- Record exactly what was witnessed
- Report to the manager or registered person
- If necessary involve other agencies – Early Years and Childcare Team, Ofsted Whistleblowing hotline **0300 123 3155**, Disclosure and Barring Service or Initial Contact Team
- Ask to be informed about any outcome of the investigation

Concerns will be fully investigated and action taken to ensure that legal requirements are met and good practice is followed.

Employees making malicious or false accusations will be disciplined under the disciplinary procedure.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Outings and Transport Policy

The pre-school will do all they can to ensure the safety of the children, staff and parents on any outings from Little Acorns. We will also try to ensure that the outings are suitable for the children's age and stage of development.

- Full details of the outing are given beforehand, and written parental consent obtained.
- A risk assessment is carried out before an outing takes place.
- Our adult to child ratio is high, normally one adult to two children.
- Coaches will be hired from a reputable company providing coaches with seat belts. Little Acorns will ensure that the maximum seating capacity is not exceeded.
- For local outings we use the school minibus. Records are kept of the vehicles used to transport children, with named drivers and appropriate insurance cover.
- Staff take essential records and equipment on outings including contact details for children, mobile phone, first aid kit, spare clothing, food and drinks.
- If a parent attends the outing with their child they will be responsible for their child during the journey and duration of the outing.
- If a child is lost during the outing the procedure for a lost child will be followed.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Uncollected Child Policy

When the situation arises where a parent/carer does not arrive to collect a child the child's welfare is the first consideration. Two members of staff who have undergone OFSTED checks and provided with suitable activities and refreshments will care for the child.

- If a parent/carer knows they will be late arriving to fetch their child they should contact the pre-school at least 10 minutes before the end of the session on 01694 771677.
- If the parent/carer does not arrive to collect the child the pre-school leader will try and contact them at home, on their mobile, or work number.
- If this is unsuccessful the people nominated on the child's registration form will be contacted to collect the child.
- If no-one collects the child after one hour and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures for uncollected children.
- We contact the Initial Contact Team (telephone no. 03456789021).
- The child stays at Little Acorns in the care of two fully vetted workers until the child is safely collected by either the parents or social worker.
- Social services will aim to find the parent or relative. If they are unable to do so, the child will be admitted into the care of the local authority.
- Under no circumstances are staff to go to look for the parent, nor do they take the children home with them.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Missing Child

All exits from the premises are locked/guarded in a way which makes it impossible for a child to leave unobserved, while allowing a rapid exit in the case of an emergency.

An accurate and up to date register is kept of both adults and children, this includes visitors.

All children and adults at Little Acorns should know the rules and the reasons they are there.

We carry out regular risk assessments to identify any potential hazards and dangers and we work together to avoid them.

These are the procedures we follow if we cannot find a child:

1. Find out quickly

The chances of finding a missing child are greatest if the child's absence is soon discovered. Know how many children should be present.

2. Search systematically

We are responsible for the missing child and also for the other children in the group. Our high adult to child ratio allows us in any emergency to free a member of staff to respond to the emergency without neglecting the needs of the other children.

- Ask the remaining children if they have seen or heard the missing child. They can sometimes be a useful source of information.
- Make sure all staff are present and that all know of the situation. If possible determine where and when the missing child was last seen or heard.
- Check Little Acorns hiding places and premises to make sure that the child is not hiding somewhere.
- Ask teachers and staff at Rushbury School if they have seen the child or know where he might be.

3. Parents

If the missing child is not found within five minutes, call the child's parents to warn them that their child may be attempting to get home. If they are out or at work we have alternative numbers we can ring in emergencies. If the child lives within walking distance of Little Acorns, one adult should make the journey on foot in order to catch up with or intercept the child if possible. Remember that as soon as parents are informed they will need advice and support.

4. Police

If the above steps do not locate the child, the police must be called after ten minutes from the time that the child was discovered missing. They have the resources to conduct a search and speed is important.

5. Informing other people

Make regular checks to ensure that if an incident of this sort does happen you have the necessary telephone numbers at hand – correct, up to date and kept all together.

If you have to call the police, inform Social Services.

The chairman should be informed as soon as possible.
Call our insurance company direct (PLA 02076 972585 ref 72343).

6. The Accident and Incident Book

Start to build up a record of the event as soon as an adult has time to do so. This is important even if the child is found safe within a few minutes.

7. Dealing with people's reactions

The child's parents will be frightened, distressed and probably angry. These feelings are natural.

Because powerful emotions are involved, people's behaviour can be unpredictable. People who seem quite calm about the incident at the time can later on become very angry, threatening legal action or recourse to the local press.

It is therefore important to be very careful from the beginning about the words you use to talk to people about the incident. Don't say anything which might invalidate the insurance by implying that you accept liability. However that does not mean that you have to appear uncaring. Do not say "no comment", which can make you appear indifferent and unhelpful.

Say:

- How sorry you are that the incident has happened.
- That a full investigation is in hand.
- That Social Services have been informed and will also be investigating.

8. Dealing with the media

The chairperson will be the one who speaks on behalf of Little Acorns to the media. As early as possible, advise all adults about what they should say, or ask them to refer all inquiries to the agreed spokesperson.

9. Informing other parents

Other parents need to be given brief, accurate information as rapidly as possible. This is the best way to prevent spreading of gossip.

There is no point in trying to hide what has happened. The important thing is to enlist the support of the whole local community in learning from the event in order to ensure that it does not happen again.

10. When the child is found

During the time the child is missing, however briefly, all adults involved – parents and others- suffer great fear, guilt and distress. It is not always easy to control all these emotions when a child is found. It is important to remember:

- That the child might have been afraid and distressed and might now need comfort.
- That the child may be completely unaware of having done anything wrong (one child found quite safe after a terrifying few minutes said simply "I just went to get my Mummy")

- That the incident provides good opportunity to talk to all the children to ensure they understand that they must not leave the premises and why.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Complaints Procedure

Little Acorns believes that 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, seeking to deal fairly and confidently with any concerns or complaints. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

Many concerns can be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff.

If this does not achieve the desired result, we follow these guidelines:

- Talk over worries and anxieties with the pre-school leader. Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, a written complaint should be sent to the Chair of the committee and the pre-school leader. This then becomes a formal complaint to be investigated by the setting within 28 days.
- If the complaint is about the pre-school leader, then the Chair will deal with it. If the complaint involves the Chair, then another officer of the committee will deal with it.
- If the complaint relates to a child protection issue we follow our child protection policy and procedures
- A written account of the outcome of the investigation will be sent within 28 days of the complaint being received.
- If the complaint remains un-resolved and relates to EYFS statutory framework or the requirements of the Childcare Register it will be referred to Ofsted.
- Complaints relating to other matters, such as fees, should be referred to the Chair of the committee. Un-resolved issues may be referred to the committees' constitution (Pre-School Learning Alliance).

Record keeping and confidentiality

- The identity of all individuals involved are kept anonymous including the complainant.
- A record of the complaint and investigation is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.

- Records of complaint must be made available to Ofsted on request and retained for three years. They will also be shared with any parent who asks to see them.

Ofsted

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. Details of how to contact Ofsted are displayed at the pre-school.

Ofsted Early Years
National Business Unit
Royal Exchange Building
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA
Tel: 0300 123 1231

Concerns and complaints about Ofsted can be made following guidelines in the Ofsted publication "Complaints Procedure – Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted" reference 070080, published June 2010.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Nappy Changing Policy

We wish to include all children in our setting and understand that children arrive at pre-school at different stages in their development, and that some children may still be in nappies or trainer pants.

In order to care for the child's physical needs we ask that parents/carers:

- Make sure that wherever possible children arrive at Little Acorns wearing a clean nappy or trainer pants.
- Provide nappies, cream, wipes and nappy bags so that if it is necessary to change the child their individual needs can be met.
- Discuss any issues arising from the policy with the child's key worker.

Little Acorns will ensure that:

- Children only have their nappies or pants changed by a person who has relevant police checks.
- Children will be changed in a designated area.
- Staff are provided with disposable gloves.
- Soiled nappies will be double wrapped in nappy bags and returned to parent/carer for disposal.
- Staff will discuss any concerns about the child with the parent/carer.

It is not acceptable to the pre-school that children should persistently arrive in soiled or wet pants. If this situation does arise the key worker will have a discussion with the parent/carer to support the care and comfort of the child, and support the development of the child's toilet training.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Smoke Free Policy

Purpose

This policy has been developed to protect all adults and children from exposure to second hand smoke and to assist compliance with the Health Act 2006.

Policy

It is the policy of Little Acorns that all our workplaces are smoke free. Smoking is prohibited in any part of the school premises, entrances or grounds, and in company vehicles. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, students, parents/carers and visitors.

Implementation

Overall responsibility for policy implementation and review rests with the manager, Elaine Ockenden. However, all staff are obliged to adhere to, and support the implementation of the policy. The person named above shall inform all existing employees, consultants and contractors of the policy and their role in the implementation and monitoring of the policy. They will also give all new personnel a copy of the policy on recruitment/induction.

Appropriate 'no-smoking' signs will be clearly displayed at the entrances to and within the premises, and in all smoke free vehicles.

Non-compliance

Local disciplinary procedures will be followed if a member of staff does not comply with this policy. Those who do not comply with the smoke free law may also be liable to a fixed penalty fine and possible criminal prosecution.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

The Use of Dummies Policy

The aim of this policy is to foster an environment where all children whatever their needs are welcomed and have the same choices and opportunities, that enable them to reach their full potential during their stay at the group.

It is understood that children who attend pre-school may still use a dummy or bottle. The Department for Children, Schools and Families have issued a document called, 'Supporting children with speech, language and communication needs: Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage', from which the following quotation can be found:

'Dummies and bottles can contribute to delayed communication development.

Babies and young children spend lots of time making sounds and exploring their own mouths and voices before they begin to use words. In doing so they are not only practising and developing the skills needed for speech but they are also encouraging other people in the world to notice them and communicate with them. Children who suck dummies through the day make fewer sounds, gain less experience of using their voices, and hear less language from adults around them.

If toddlers are allowed to continue to suck a dummy and talk with it in their mouths, there is also a risk that the child will learn distorted patterns of speech because the teat prevents normal movements at the front of their mouth. These patterns may be difficult to change later on.

Although a dummy or bottle can be a source of comfort when a child is upset, and may form part of a child's sleep routine, parents should be encouraged to use it only at these times, and to phase out dummies and bottles as soon as possible.'

In the light of this information, the pre-school would strongly recommend that children who use a dummy or a bottle refrain from bringing it to the setting. However, should removal of the dummy cause considerable upset and consequently the child is unable to settle, special compensation will be given. Where necessary, each child will be given an appropriate personalised strategy agreed between the pre-school and parents to encourage the phasing out of the dummy and or bottle.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Fee Collection Policy

Children are eligible for nursery funding for 38 weeks per year from the term after their 3rd birthday. Each child is entitled to 15 hours per week which is offered in five three hour sessions per week, and can be divided between different providers.

Charges for non-funded children are currently £10.50 per three hour session (January 2014). Fees will be reviewed annually, and are payable per half term in advance. Fees continue to be payable if a child is absent for a short time. In the case of absence a child's place will be kept open for them if in receipt of Nursery Education Funding or because the fees are paid. In the case of non-permanent closure i.e. for a day, all fees are non-refundable.

Payment is due in the first two weeks of each half term. After this time our procedures for late payment will be followed:

1. A reminder will be sent after the payment due date has expired
2. In the event that the bill has not been paid, when the next bill is being composed, then the bill will show the amount in arrears and an accompanying letter will explain that if the parents/guardian does not discuss the matter with the staff or committee then they risk losing their child's place.
3. Little Acorns will however offer a 'payment plan' to help parents to gradually pay off the arrears.
4. In extreme circumstances Little Acorns has the right to pursue legal proceedings in order to recover outstanding monies.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

Reserves Policy

Statement of Intent

We aim to hold sufficient financial reserves to sustain the Pre-School if our income falls below expected levels. Our intention would be to continue functioning as a Pre-School if at all possible and cover the payment of staff redundancies in the unlikely event that the Pre-School had to close.

Aims

To manage our finances responsibly, budget for predictable fluctuations in income and hold reserves to cover expenses due to other eventualities including staff redundancy payments in case the Pre-School had to close.

Methods

Due to the local school admissions policy of all children starting school at the beginning of the school year that they are 5 years old, and our policy that children may start at Little Acorns when they are 2 years old, the Pre-School has fluctuating numbers in children, with fewer in the autumn term, more in the spring term and most in the summer term.

Our expenses are approximately the same each term. Our estimated annual running costs are approximately £25,000 and it would be useful to hold 3 months running costs which would be £6,250. However, due to Little Acorns being only a small village Pre-School it is unlikely we will ever be in the position to have this money set aside.

Although we do not have the running costs put to one side it is essential to hold sufficient reserves to pay for redundancy to all staff as required by law, according to the number of complete years' service with Little Acorns. This equates to the sum of £4,680 as at 31.03.14. Each year the sum should increase to cover the length of service and age of all staff.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.04.15

