

The Spring Playgroup
&
Preschool
(including The Spring Out of
School Club)
Policies
&
Procedures
Including
HEALTH & SAFETY
POLICY STATEMENT

October 2023 Edition

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PART 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE SPRING PLAYGROUP, PRESCHOOL AND OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB'S HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY.

The Spring Playgroup, Pre-school, and Out Of School Club Policy for Health and Safety

1.1 THE SPRING POLICY STATEMENT

Our policy is to try to ensure that all reasonably practical steps are taken to secure the health, safety and welfare of everyone using the setting's premises. The procedures and arrangements set out in this document have been put in place to assist the setting and those responsible to:

- (a) Establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment throughout the setting.
- (b) Establish and maintain safe working procedures among staff and children.
- (c) Arrange to ensure safety and absence of risks to health when using, handling, storing and transporting articles and substances, and electricity at work.
- (d) Ensure there is sufficient information, instruction and supervision to enable all adults and children to avoid hazards, to contribute positively to their own safety and health at work and, to ensure that they have appropriate health and safety training.
- (e) Maintain a safe and healthy place of work, with safe access to and from the site.
- (f) Formulate procedures to be used if there is a fire or other emergency and for evacuating the setting.
- (g) Lay down procedures to be used if there is an accident.
- (h) Provide and maintain adequate welfare facilities.
- (i) Provide a system so that dangerous occurrences, accidents, defects and potential hazards are reported and recorded.
- (j) Teach safety where appropriate in the curriculum.
- (k) Promote partnership and co-operation between management and any Trade Unions in matters of health and safety.

Sarah Walters
Manager

Date:10/10/23_____

Review Date: 30/09/24_____

PART 2

HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, requires elected members, Trustees, and employees according to their particular roles, to take the initiative on certain matters.

The Spring Playgroup Charity will use its established lines of responsibility and organisation to authorise and give executive direction to its policy for health and safety. Specific responsibilities cannot be evaded by delegation to others.

The day to day responsibility for Health and Safety matters in the setting shall be the Manager's. More detailed responsibilities are set out below.

2.2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES (Hereafter THE TRUSTEES)

The Trustees accept responsibility for the establishment, monitoring and review of all setting-level health and safety policies.

The Trustees aim to provide a safe and healthy environment for staff, children and visitors to the setting. The Trustees recognise that policies alone cannot prevent accidents or ensure safe and healthy working conditions. Only good working practice will ensure safety. All staff will appreciate that their own safety, and that of all in the setting, depends on their individual conduct as well as this policy.

The Trustees will:

Ensure that all resourcing decisions take into account health and safety matters.

Delegate to the Manager a contingency budget to cover health and safety matters as appropriate to the setting's scheme of internal delegation.

Ensure that job descriptions for new staff include general and specific responsibilities relating to health and safety.

Together with the Manager or named responsible person, ensure that children and their staff have suitable health and safety provision.

Ensure that safety standards for purchased goods and equipment are met.

Ensure that procedures exist for checking that items offered for sale by the setting are safe.

Together with the Manager ensure that approved journeys are arranged and supervised safely.

Ensure that the setting has appropriate monitoring systems.

Arrange for a setting site health and safety committee to be established, on request from Safety Representatives and/or staff.

2.3 EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY

Insurance to cover Employer's legal liability for accidental bodily injury, illness or death of employees, along with staff and Trustees indemnity policies are held with:

2.4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL EMPLOYEES

2.4.1 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 states:

'It shall be the duty of every employee while at work:

to take reasonable care for the health and safety of herself/himself and of any other persons who may be affected by her/his acts or omissions at work, and
as regards any duty or requirement imposed on her/his employer or any other person by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, to co-operate with her/him so far as it is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with'.

The Act also states:

'No person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions.'

To observe the laws and carry out the responsibilities to children and other visitors to the setting, all employees are expected to:

- Know the special safety measures and arrangements to be adopted in their own working areas and to ensure they are applied.
- Observe standards of dress consistent with safety and/or hygiene.
- Keep good standards of hygiene and cleanliness.
- Know and apply the emergency procedures in respect of fire, and first aid.
- Not willfully misuse, neglect or interfere with things provided for his/her own safety and/or the safety of others.
- Co-operate with other employees in promoting improved health and safety measures.
- Co-operate with any appointed safety representatives and enforcement officers.
- Report any hazard or malfunction in accordance with setting procedure.
- Follow all instructions, written or verbal, designed to ensure personal safety/the safety of others.
- Conduct themselves in an orderly manner and refrain from any form of inappropriate behaviour.
- Use the provided safety equipment and/or protective clothing.
- Avoid improvisation in any form which could create unnecessary risks to health and safety.
- Maintain, or ensure safe maintenance, of tools and equipment, reporting any defect in accordance with setting procedure.
- Attend training courses to further the needs of health and safety as required.
- Report all accidents, assaults and "near misses" in accordance with setting procedures whether injury is sustained or not.

With support from the Manager, ensure that RIDDOR occurrences are appropriately reported.

2.5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE Manager

The Manager is the person initially and ultimately responsible to the Trustees for achieving the objectives of the Health and Safety policy in the setting. [In the future, where management structures permit, some of these responsibilities could be delegated to a deputy. This policy would then be updated to clearly identify which responsibilities are delegated. ((a) - (f) will not be delegated.)]

The Manager shall:

Ensure that the setting meets as far as is reasonably practicable, the requirements of the health and safety legislation.

Ensure that all staff know, accept and are trained to discharge their responsibilities regarding health and safety.

Ensure staff and children comply with agreed procedures.

Advise the Trustees on the resources and action required to meet statutory requirements, County Council/Departmental procedures, etc.

Liaise regularly with the Trustees on health and safety matters in the setting reporting at every meeting of the Trustees.

Encourage and promote a positive health and safety culture in the setting.

Be the focal point for day to day references on safety and give advice or indicate sources of advice.

Co-ordinate the implementation of the approved safety procedures in the setting.

Have established and maintained a suitable health and safety programme to eliminate potential for serious accidents so far as practicable.

Receive health and safety guidance and establish procedures to disseminate safety information concerning the setting to all employees and volunteers.

Review these procedures annually when the policy document is reviewed.

Ensure that, before introducing any change which may affect the health and safety of employees at work, there is adequate consultation with the Trustees and employees.

Ensure that Safety Representatives, where appointed under statutory regulations, can effectively carry out the duties required by those regulations.

Ensure that accidents and hazards are:

- recorded,
- reported as appropriate
- reported to the setting's specialist staff
- followed by appropriate remedial action.

Ensure that the advice of appropriate specialist staff is sought to assist or clarify any health and safety matter.

Regularly make, or arrange for, an inspection of premises, places of work, and working practices.

Ensure that:

recommendations or reports presented to the establishment by specialist support staff and other external organisations, e.g. the Health and Safety Executive, are communicated to the setting's management structure and to the relevant Safety Representatives;

such reports are followed up so that the required action or policy decisions are taken.

Ensure that proper concern is shown for the health and safety of everyone at the setting who is not an employee, including students, children, visitors, etc.

Ensure that workers at the setting conduct themselves according to the statutory requirements and safety procedures so that no one is put at risk.

Ensure all fire fighting and fire prevention equipment and facilities are maintained to the required standard, keep appropriate records and make employees familiar with the operation of such equipment; conduct regular evacuation drills at least once per term, ensure fire alarms are tested regularly and make all employees and persons using the premises aware of the emergency procedure;

Keep clear of obstruction all fire escape doors, alarm call points, and escape routes at all times and check that escape doors can be readily opened from the inside.

Ensure adequate first aid cover is provided in accordance with the Statutory Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Ensure that all approved items of first aid equipment are available under the control of a responsible person or trained first aider, and that all employees know where they are.

Review termly and make recommendations, if necessary, for improving the procedures on:

providing first aid in the setting

the emergency procedures

all safety procedures.

Take appropriate action when any hazard is reported to him/her and stop any practices or the use of any plant, tools, equipment, machinery, etc. he/she considers to be unsafe until he/she is satisfied they are safe.

Maintain contact with, and seek advice from, appropriate agencies.

Ensure all statutory registers are maintained.

Ensure the maintenance of safe access to and from the site.

Ensure that so far as is reasonably practicable, no plant, equipment or process under The Spring Playgroup Charity's control pollutes the atmosphere.

Where appropriate arrange a site health and safety committee in accordance with the guidelines in the health and safety folder.

Ensure that relevant risk assessments are performed, the results recorded and any necessary action taken.

2.6 RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEPUTIES

The Deputy is responsible for the safety of all the children in his or her care in all areas of the setting while children are the setting's responsibility and s/he is on duty until s/he has formally handed them into the care of another Deputy to participate in activities in another room or to the child's parent (or nominated responsible adult) on leaving the setting.

If for any reason, e.g. the condition or locations of equipment, the physical state of the room or the splitting of a group for practical work, a deputy considers she/he cannot accept this responsibility, she/he should discuss the matter with the Manager before allowing work to take place.

Deputies are expected to:

Set a good example by adopting good health and safety practices, and procedures.

Supervise the children and ensure that they know the emergency procedures in respect of fire, first aid and any special safety measures for the teaching area/activity.

Give clear instructions and warning as often as necessary (notices, handouts etc. are not enough).

Ensure that children's bags, coats etc. are safely stored, and good housekeeping is maintained.

Include all relevant aspects of safety in the curriculum.

Request/obtain protective clothing, guards, special safe working procedures, etc. where necessary and ensure their use.

Make parents/volunteers aware of safety procedures in the classroom/work area.

Recommend to the Manager, improvements on safety equipment and additions or improvements to plant, tools equipment or machinery which are dangerous or potentially so.

Ensure that relevant risk assessments are performed, the results recorded and any necessary action taken.

2.7 RESPONSIBILITIES OF VISITORS / VOLUNTEERS / HIRERS

Regular visitors, parents and volunteers, will be required to observe the safety rules of the setting. The Manager will ensure that visitors are informed of health and safety matters which may affect them during their visit.

Parents helping out in the setting will be made aware of the health and safety arrangements applicable to them by the Manager. Volunteer staff will be given a full induction which will include Health and Safety information.

2.8 RULES CONCERNING CHILDREN

Parents and guardians are requested to encourage their children, who are in The Spring's care, to:

Conduct themselves in a manner which is considerate to their own safety and the safety of others.

Observe standards of dress consistent with safety, sun safety and/or hygiene (this would preclude unsuitable footwear and other items considered dangerous).

Observe all the safety rules of the setting and, in particular, the instructions staff give in an emergency.

Not willfully misuse, neglect or interfere with equipment provided for their safety.

PART 3

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The arrangements and procedures laid down in this section of this Safety Policy have been devised in order to assist those responsible to meet their duties as laid down in the preceding section. The Health and Safety Manual contains details of other arrangements, and is an extension to this part of our policy document.

3.1 HEALTH AND SAFETY DEFECTS REPORTING PROCEDURE

The Trustees will ensure that regular reports of accidents and dangerous occurrences are provided by the Manager, and that any necessary alterations to working practices and procedures are implemented.

The arrangements for reporting defects on a day to day basis are set out in this section.

3.1.1 Any member of staff who discovers any defect shall immediately inform the Manager and note the defect in the Day Book.

3.1.2 The Manager is responsible for ensuring that the defect is rectified and will take the necessary steps to ensure safety by:-

a) ensuring the defect rectified, within a reasonable period of time, and record the details in the Day Book

b) if the defect is in equipment owned by the Sports and Social Club, an informal request for repair will be made. If repair is not completed within an acceptable timescale, then a formal request will be made on a defect form; a copy being retained by the setting, with the original provided to the Club.

b) removing the hazard or reduce the risk of injury to an acceptable level, pending corrective action. Including if necessary informing staff and children of the hazard and or taking the equipment / area concerned out of use.

3.1.3 If the defect is likely to affect the 'normal' running of the setting, the Manager will inform the Trustees that normal running has been affected.

3.1.4 If/Once the defect has been repaired/item taken back into use, the date that this occurs shall also be entered into the Day Book.

3.2 MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

3.2.1 The Trustees recognise the importance of monitoring health and safety matters.

Monitoring will be carried out in a number of ways:

- a) The Trustees will call for annual reports on:
- accident/incidents
 - results of internal or external health and safety inspections
 - maintenance reports
 - complaints, hazards and defect reports
 - reviews of any procedures carried out by the Manager

- b) The Manager shall provide such reports as required by the Trustees as part of his/her management of the setting.
- (c) The Manager on behalf of the Trustees shall carry out a termly visual inspection of the setting and report any issues which arise to the Trustees.
- (d) Safety Representatives, as appointed by staff, shall be allowed time to inspect/ monitor the setting and report any issues to the Manager
- (e) The manager and deputies will review risk assessments annually.

3.2.2 To help this process, the Trustees will ensure that all reasonable inspection facilities and information are provided on request to Inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive and any other bona fide health and safety officials.

3.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION DISSEMINATION PROCEDURE

Information and instructions on health and safety matters are available/given to staff, children and visitors as follows:-

3.3.1 Staff

Staff have been informed about all of the existing information held on the site and have signed a form to indicate that they have received and read those documents which relate to themselves and their work.

All documentation referred to in (a) above is kept in or with The Spring's health and safety folders which are located in the office. These folders are readily available to staff for reference purposes at any time.

New documentation arriving at the setting will be copied. The original will be held on file and the copy circulated to appropriate staff. Staff will be required to sign a form to indicate that they have read the document concerned. After circulation the document will be put in the setting's health and safety folders referred to in (b) above. The circulation form will be kept on file with the document.

The manager will determine the circulation of each document and ensure that all named staff have signed the circulation form before the document is put into the health and safety file.

3.3.2 Children

It will be the responsibility of setting staff to ensure that children are made aware of existing and new health and safety information. This responsibility will be split between the Deputies, (general health and safety arrangements), and staff with a specialisation (curriculum determined arrangements e.g. cooking).

3.3.3 Visitors

The manager shall ensure that visitors are informed of any health and safety arrangements which may affect them during their visit.

3.6 FIRST AID

Training. There will always be a minimum of 1 person on duty with a current First Aid Certificate.

The First Aid box is kept with the Accident Book during sessions, except when the accident book is taken outside. There are several portable first aid bags in use for the different rooms, and the outdoor area.

Plasters must not be applied, but where necessary, a sterile dressing will be applied using micropore tape, with parental permission (which may be obtained by telephone if necessary). The manager should be informed of any First Aid supplies used so that they can be promptly replenished from stock.

Details of any accident or emergency must be written in the Accident Book as soon as it has been dealt with. When parents, or their representatives, collect the child they are asked to sign the Accident Book as evidence that they have been shown the entry.

To comply with the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), an online report would be made via <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor> should any notifiable incident occur. Further, if a serious injury or illness occurs, a report will be made to Ofsted, and to Warwickshire Children's Services, in line with guidance from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/childcare-reporting-childrens-accidents-and-injuries>.

3.7 FIRE SAFETY

1. Fire Drill is displayed clearly and practices are held regularly and recorded in the Register and Fire Log along with dates of inspections of fire equipment.

If Fire is detected by setting staff, the alarm will be raised by the operation of a break-glass point, and by voice. If fire is detected otherwise, The Spring will be alerted by the fire alarm.

The senior member of staff on duty will collect the register from its location on the landing, unless everyone is outside, in which case the register will have been brought down into the outdoor area and will be collected from there. He or she will also ensure that the setting's office staff are included in the evacuation.

All rooms will be confirmed clear by the last member of staff to leave them, before they leave and ensure the door to that room is closed behind them. A member of staff will be designated to check all of the toilets.

All staff and children will leave the building together if possible. A member of staff will first check and confirm there is safe passage to the assembly area. The exit routes used from the first floor rooms, in order of preference, will be:

Down the main stairs, along the corridor and out of the door normally used to access the outdoor area and assemble at the far end of the outdoor area.

Down the main stairs, out of The Spring's 'front door', across the car park, and through the gate, into the enclosed outdoor area.

Down the fire escape at the far end of the snooker room.

All staff and children will leave the building together, and will go into the outside area, at the far side from the building, where the children can be securely contained.

The Spring staff will not attempt to tackle the fire using the supplied equipment unless someone is trapped.

If it becomes apparent that the fire is a severe one and that the edge of the outside area is not far enough away, then the children and staff will go around the corner into the Blundells, which is a traffic-free area, and wait there.

Once assembled, the senior member of staff will call the register, whilst a second member of staff calls 999. The address to be given to the fire service will be, The Sports and Social Club, Upper Rosemary Hill, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2PA (the "What Three Words" is patio upset pepper)

If return to the building is impossible, parents will be contacted using the emergency contact details from the register.

If return to the building is possible, the senior member of staff will be responsible for ensuring that all areas of the building have been safely re-secured.

Testing and servicing of fire alarms. Fire equipment is tested/serviced, as required, by professionals employed by the Sports and Social Club. Fire alarms are tested by the Sports and Social Club

3.8 SECURITY

Identification. All staff within the setting are well known to one another. Any visitors who might not be recognized by all the relevant staff will be accompanied at all times by a member of regular staff who know the purpose of the visit and who the visitor is. I.D. cards are issued for staff who collect children from elsewhere for OOSC, and these are kept with the relevant registers.

Door Security:

1. Confirm the identity of the caller, using the intercom/video and validate their reason for entry before allowing them to enter. If the person is not known to us and not expected, the door will be answered by the Manager or a Deputy.
2. Lock up fully after admitting visitors even for short visits.
3. Ensure visitors are escorted from the setting and the door locked behind them.

Security While Children Are Arriving and Departing:

Designated member of staff on the door:

1. Welcomes/says goodbye to parents and children.
2. Challenges any strangers attempting to enter.
3. Ensures no child leaves alone or with an unauthorised person unless prior arrangements have been made with staff. Children will be transferred into the care of their parent/carer by a member of staff.
4. Other members of staff get children involved in free play activities as they arrive. Staff stay with children whose parents are late or who are staying on and keep them busy.

3.9 SUN SAFETY

Sun Safety is an important health and safety issue. Sunburn and skin damage can be caused by the harmful ultra-violet rays in sunlight. Since sunburn and almost all skin cancers are caused by the sun, it is preventable. We hope that encouraging sun safe behaviour at The Spring Playgroup, Preschool and Out of School Club and explaining about the risks of sunlight will help children develop a responsible attitude to their own sun safety and so avoid burning and help towards preventing skin cancer.

In order to succeed, we shall need parental help and support in this matter. We encourage children to avoid sunburn and overexposure to the sun via:-

seeking shade, particularly during the middle of the day

wearing suitable hats and clothes that cover the skin when outdoors

using a high factor sunscreen (SPF15+) in line with expressed parental wishes

asking parents to provide hats and longer sleeved shirts and shorts.

providing Boots Soltan sunscreen to protect children when they are outdoors for any length of time, provided parents have given consent.

staff setting an example

maximising the amount of shade available

trying to provide spare clothing and hats.

3.10 ELECTRICAL SAFETY AT WORK

The setting's appliances are tested by an authorised contractor as frequently as recommended.

Each piece of tested equipment is identified with a sticker as issued by the tester.

Each piece of electrical equipment is listed along with the date and outcome of its last test in an electrical test register kept in the Fire Log Book kept in the Office.

Any new electrical items must have a moulded plug and may be taken into use immediately.

Any equipment which fails an electrical safety test must be taken out of use immediately and disposed of, repaired or replaced.

Light bulb/tube replacements are undertaken by the caretaker.

3.11 GAINING HEIGHT

It is acknowledged that although we try to avoid the need to gain height, it is sometimes necessary for staff to access higher areas.

If it is necessary to gain height:

Staff must work in pairs

Proper access equipment, such as the stepladders or kick-stool provided, must be used in accordance with their safety regulations/recommendations.

3.12 RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessments are carried out annually, or as needed (for example, with any significant changes in practice). Results are stored on the office computer.

3.13 RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service's (DBS) Disclosures service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, The Spring Playgroup Charity complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against anyone on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed by the DBS check.

We select employees on the basis of their suitability for the post. Our first responsibility is the safety of the children we care for; however having a criminal record will not necessarily bar a person from working with us. This will depend on factors such as the circumstances and background of your offence(s), when it took place, and whether you have been open with us about it. Anything revealed on the DBS check will be discussed with the potential employee before withdrawing any offer of employment. We guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

3.14 EMPLOYMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER THE AGE OF 18.

The Spring Playgroup Charity recognises that young people in the workplace are differently susceptible to some of the risks which are inherent in the setting's environment. We therefore undertake to take particular care of young staff in respect of their lack of training and life experience, and their physical, psychological and emotional capacities to cope with work with young children. Young employees will receive additional training and support, according to their needs, and persons under the age of eighteen who are regular employees will have a specific risk assessment conducted in relation to their employment.

3.15 COSHH

Staff are advised how to recognise hazardous substances by the visual or written warning on the container (orange and black label).

No hazardous substances are authorised for use during sessions.

The SSC cleaners use a range of cleaning products, but these are stored in a separate cupboard, inaccessible to children, and not used while children are present.

3.16 ENSURING SAFETY OF PREMISES AND EQUIPMENT

The Manager, or a person nominated by them, carries out a daily inspection to ensure safety of premises including trip hazards and to exclude any damaged or defective toys or equipment, which is then noted in the Day Book, but it is the responsibility of all employees to be alert for any defects of premises or equipment.

3.17 DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

Users of computers as a significant part of their work should comply with the following safety recommendations:

- look away from the screen to a distant object every few minutes
- take regular breaks from screen work: 2-3 minutes every 30 minutes
- ensure they are not discomforted by lighting (e.g. glare, or insufficient light)
- position screen at right angles to bright light sources eg window
- if any discomfort is experienced to:
 - follow written advice kept in Health and Safety File
 - report any discomfort to the Manager to assess whether equipment needs attention, alteration or replacement.

PART 4

OTHER SETTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

4.1 ALCOHOL AND DRUGS POLICY

Whilst The Spring Playgroup Charity will do its best to support and assist any employee having issues around drug or alcohol use, it will not be acceptable for staff or volunteers to attend the setting whilst under the influence of illegal drugs, or of alcohol, and to do so may be considered a disciplinary offence.

4.2 NO SMOKING POLICY

The Spring has a strict no smoking policy both inside the setting and on the grounds. This includes the use of e-cigarettes, and vaping, because for young children, this is not easily distinguishable from conventional smoking, and the example of their familiar adults is an important model for children's own behaviour.

4.3 ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

The ability of employees to use external e-mail and to access the Internet facilitates communication and the gathering of information. The Spring encourages its employees and volunteers to access the internet whilst at work, in whatever way will enhance their work. The internet use policy set out here applies to all electronic media and services which are accessed using the internet connection made available by The Spring, or using equipment provided by the setting, or which are sent by staff when away from the setting but which clearly identify them with it. Misuse of electronic systems will be misconduct and may, in certain circumstances, be treated as gross misconduct.

Staff are permitted to make reasonable personal use of the internet, but must never allow use of this facility to interfere with their work performance or responsibilities. Personal internet use should be restricted to staff break times. If an employee's use of the internet is, in the opinion of the manager and at least one of the deputies, excessive, this may be considered a disciplinary offence. The Spring Playgroup Charity does not accept responsibility for the content of electronic communications sent by its staff or volunteers while at work, unless these have been approved by a manager or deputy. Volunteers and staff are welcome to use the internet access for personal communications, but should not expect the setting to take any responsibility for them. Personal mail should not be sent from, or received to, the setting's email address. Computer and e-mail access is provided by The Spring, primarily in order to assist in the performance of your work. You should, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in any e-mail sent or received, whether it is of a business or personal nature. Although it will not do so routinely, if The Spring Playgroup Charity considers it necessary, it reserves the right to monitor or examine IT resources, including desktop or laptop computers, and access, read or use information stored on them for any purpose. Users have a responsibility to ensure that copyright and licensing laws are not breached when downloading, copying or transmitting to third parties works of others without their consent.

When sending information electronically, consideration must be given to the possibility that the information may not be secure. It may be preferable to use another means of transmitting such information. The Spring Playgroup maintains an additional, secure, email address for sensitive and confidential emails, and users should be aware of which email address they use and/or disseminate, accordingly.

When accessing the internet via The Spring, staff and volunteers must use the browser specified. No software of any sort may be used on the network, or networked PC's without consultation with the manager.

If leaving the computer unattended, it must be "locked" using CTRL + ALT+ DEL. In order to access the playgroup computers, a password will be required, which can be obtained from the manager. The password must not be disclosed to others, except by the manager or one of the deputies. Passwords will be changed whenever a person who has had access to the computer concerned leaves the setting's employment.

Children attending the Out of School provision may access the internet with adult permission. Maximum protection settings will be used on all browsers and devices which are provided to children.

It is unacceptable to access, archive, store, distribute, edit or record material which is sexually explicit, discriminatory (on grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or otherwise), libellous, intended to make others fearful, or which is likely to bring The Spring Playgroup Charity into disrepute. Users must comply with any procedures put in place by the setting in order to try and protect the system from worms, viruses, trojans and other nuisance programs or files, and must not deliberately introduce these to the system.

4.4 CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY. The Spring Playgroup Charity is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom we come into contact and to fulfilling our clear duty to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of them. All practical measures are taken to ensure that the setting is a safe, positive environment and to ensure the character of our staff. The named person responsible for co-ordinating our Safeguarding Arrangements is Sarah Walters. The Child Protection Procedures detailed below, together with the policies for Health and Safety, Alcohol and Drugs, Behaviour and Discipline, Dealing with Trespassers, Dealing with Lost or Uncollected Children, Administration of Medicines, Policy on Outings, Outdoor Play Equipment, Lunchtime Procedures, Acceptable Use, Recruitment of Ex-Offenders, Fire Risk Assessment, Sun Safety, Security, First Aid, and Fire Safety, detailed in this booklet, as a whole constitute our Safeguarding arrangements.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES:

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES IN THE SETTING

The setting is organised so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children, young people or vulnerable adults may occur.

Any disciplinary procedures are carried out discreetly but in plain sight of other staff and children. Our records of children's attendance, their places of birth, and family structures, also support us to identify children who may have been trafficked, or who are at risk because of relocation(s) making them invisible to authorities. If there is concern that this may be occurring, then advice will be sought from the Warwickshire Children and Families "Front Door". Every child's attendance is monitored, and where they are absent from the setting, contact will be sought in order to establish their whereabouts and safety. This will normally be done on the first day of any unexplained absence, and at intervals during absence which is explained but indefinite. Regular attendance, whilst not legally compulsory, gives children the best opportunity to make social connections and to benefit from their early education. The Spring Playgroup will use its best endeavours to support every family to bring their child regularly. The Warwickshire protocol "Children Missing Early Years Education" will be followed. If our record-keeping indicates that a child's care may constitute a private fostering arrangement, we will contact the Warwickshire Children and Families "Front

Door". When talking with children, staff in the setting will use the terms, "penis", "vagina", "testicles" and "breasts" to refer to those parts of the body. Whilst we recognise that children's families may find the use of these terms by young children challenging, evidence suggests that children's efforts to disclose abuse have sometimes failed due to difficulty in interpreting the terms they have used. For this reason, we have adopted the use of clear terminology as an additional protection for children.

The Spring recognises that sexual violence and sexual harassment may occur between children. Whilst this can involve children of any age or gender, we are aware that statistically, boys are more likely to be perpetrators, that children from OOSC are more likely than playgroup children to be involved in sexual behaviours, and that children with SEND are more vulnerable to this, as to other forms of abuse. It is important for staff to distinguish between behaviours that are developmentally normal, and those which have become harmful sexual behaviours. Appropriate responses to early signs of harmful sexual behaviour may in some cases be sufficient to prevent their later escalation in to sexual harassment or even violence; and toleration of sexually harassing behaviours as 'banter' or 'boys will be boys' runs the risk of normalising it.

We recognise that unwanted sexual behaviour arises in a context, and the setting will take steps to ensure that our values, and culture of respectful equality, make this a context in which such behaviours are less likely to occur.

Staff and volunteers working in the setting, and children attending, are not allowed to carry mobile phones, or other personal devices capable of taking photographs (such as smart watches with cameras) whilst in the setting, so that there is no possibility of unauthorized photographs of children being taken. The Manager and Deputies may on occasion use a personal electronic device, to facilitate a specific task. They will inform another Manager or Deputy on each occasion, in order that this use may be monitored and safeguarding standards maintained. Visitors are also asked not to use their mobile phones whilst with us.

Images of children, specifically photographs and video recordings, are sensitive material. At the Spring Playgroup we take seriously the issues of permission, appropriate use and safe storage. We will gain specific permission for such images to be taken on registration with the Playgroup, we will review carefully the use for such images and ensure that they are stored and appropriately destroyed as per our records management policy (4.4.1). Parents will be made aware that they can withdraw their permission at any time by resubmitting the permission form. Where the photograph is for use outside of the Playgroup setting a further check on permission status will be made by the requester of the images. Staff will be reminded of children for whom there are particular requirements regarding images, by the addition of a yellow sticker on their self-registration card.

Only DBS checked staff are allowed to be alone with any child or children at any time and no member of staff is left alone with a child or group of children for any length of time. Any volunteer helpers (generally parents or carers) who have not been checked remain with another member of staff at all times and are never left alone with a child or group of children.

All staff receive Child Protection training as part of their induction, and are given hard copies of the relevant parts of this booklet. They receive full safeguarding training as soon as possible after commencing paid employment, and regular refreshers. Safeguarding is also touched upon at all in-house training events.

Agreed procedures are applied equally to all staff, volunteers and any other adults who may ever have occasion to be alone with a child. These include DBS checking and registration of staff, requiring written

application and proof of full name, any former names, recent addresses, date of birth, details of work with children/young people/ vulnerable adults, permission to contact at least two people who can vouch for them and details of any criminal offences including spent convictions. We are also conscious of the possibility that children may be abused by other children- with particular awareness of the older children cared for in Out of School provision. Children are not left unsupervised with each other, and staff maintain awareness of conversations occurring between the children, for example with reference to possibilities such as extremist views, radicalisation, and being drawn into gangs. Should peer on peer abuse occur, or a specific risk of it be identified, staff are trained to consider that the child behaving abusively may be doing so as a result of having been a victim of abuse elsewhere. Therefore, the setting will take steps to safeguard the welfare of this child also.

All appointments are conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period during which time the employee will be supervised and observed. Probationary employees and volunteers will never be left alone with young children. Appointments will not be confirmed until appropriate checks are completed and we are sure of the person's ability and commitment to the prevention of abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Staff roles and responsibilities in this area are clearly detailed in their contracts of employment. Procedures to be taken if abuse is disclosed or discovered are explained to all staff in their induction training.

We maintain strong working relationships with Social Care and Health Visitors who can give advice and support in this area.

If staff are concerned about the welfare of any child, appropriate action will be taken. This could mean that the local Social Care Department may be contacted. To avoid the possibility of any misunderstanding or unnecessary upset, it is important that parents/carers inform the setting staff of any accidents, illnesses or medication. Please feel free to discuss this issue with the Manager, her Deputy or your child's keyperson.

a) RESPONSE TO ANY SUSPICION OF ABUSE

All Spring Playgroup Charity staff are required to receive formal training as soon as possible. Also, all staff, and volunteers, are trained during induction to recognise possible signs of neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse (which includes the possibility that children may be sexually exploited).

We have, and aim to ensure that we always have, sufficient members of staff fully trained in Child Protection to ensure that at least one trained staff member is always on duty. Under normal running conditions, we have two staff on duty who have completed Designated Safeguarding Lead training. Under all circumstances, we will have at least one member of staff on duty who is a DSL.

If any abnormal signs are noticed, parents will normally be our first contact, but unresolved concerns will be referred to the Social Care Service.

A confidential record is kept of any concern about any child. Records are kept entirely separate from the child's usual on-going record of progress and development; available only to those who need to know. The record includes name, address, age, timed and dated observations of behaviour and appearance, with the child's exact words if possible. These records are made using the WSCB "green forms".

The Management have the responsibility to ensure the children's safety at all times. If a parent/carer comes to pick up a child and is under the influence of drink or drugs, the manager or person in charge may refuse access to that child, and contact Children's Services.

Management and staff maintain an awareness that children with SEND are additionally at risk of abuse, and face additional challenges in disclosing it. For this reason, staff exercise particular vigilance for signs of abuse when working with children who have SEND. We also maintain particular vigilance in the case of children for whom any of the following are the case: they are young carers; they show signs of being drawn into anti-social behaviour outside the setting; they are frequently missing from home; they appear to be at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or exploitation; their family circumstances are challenging (particularly if there are issues of substance misuse within the home); they have been returned from care; they are privately fostered; as such children have been shown to be at increased risk.

b) STAFF PROCEDURES WHERE THERE IS SUSPICION OF CHILDREN AT RISK

New staff are encouraged to receive Child Protection training as soon as the opportunity arises. Level 1 training is now provided in-house by the DSLs, in line with Warwickshire's systems.

Induction training includes basic guidance about symptoms of abuse and their responsibility to report any suspicions they may have. The staff are also trained to be alert for the possibility of radicalisation, and of children being removed in order for female genital mutilation, or forced marriage, to take place.

All staff members are responsible to report any suspicion of abuse to their immediate leader who must refer such concerns to the Manager.

A written record of all such concerns is kept and where the Manager agrees there is cause for concern the relevant safeguarding authority must be informed without delay. The Children's and Families "Front Door" for Warwickshire can be reached via 01926 414144 (01926 886922 for Children's Team in out-of-hours emergencies). Solihull's Duty Office number is 0121 7884300 (out of hours:0121 605 6060). Coventry's is, 024 7678 8555 (out-of-hours 024 7683 2222). If needed, the local police can be contacted via 01926 451111.

If any member of staff feels that the Manager has failed to respond appropriately to a report of concerns about a child, that member of staff has a personal responsibility to bring the issue to the attention of Social Care themselves. Should they feel uncomfortable about this, they are encouraged to contact one of the Trustees for support.

The Spring is aware that unexplained absence from the setting may be a sign that a child is at risk. This risk must be balanced against the fact that children attending the Pre-school are below compulsory school age, and therefore are not required to attend. It is our usual practice to contact a child's family on the first day of any unexplained absence; though we may delay this to the second day at the Manager/Deputy's discretion. The reasons given for absence are recorded in our Day Book, which is a permanent record and creates an audit trail. Should The Spring Playgroup be unable to make contact with a child's family, after one week of absence, the family's Health Visitor would be contacted for advice. Where a child or family are known to be vulnerable the Health Visitor may be contacted sooner. Where a child is the subject of a Child in Need or Child Protection plan, arrangements for monitoring attendance and managing absence will be in accordance with the plan.

In case of an allegation of sexual harassment or violence by one child against another; the following actions will be taken:

If there is an allegation of rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault, these are criminal matters and should be reported to the police, even when the allegation is against a child under 10. Any allegation

suggesting that a child has been harmed or placed at risk of harm should be referred to Social Care (via the Warwickshire Children and Families "Front Door"). If the allegation involves sexual images of a child (e.g. 'sexting') care must be taken that staff avoid viewing this image, even to verify its existence.

If the alleged perpetrator and alleged victim both normally attend the setting, a Risks and Needs Assessment will be undertaken in order to determine how the interests of both children (and other children in the setting) can be best protected (given that an allegation can not be assumed to be proven). Unless the setting reasonably believe that to do so will place a child at additional risk, then the parents of both children involved will normally need to be informed.

Additional advice may be found within "Keeping Children Safe in Education".

c) ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT AGAINST THE SPRING PLAYGROUP CHARITY OR ITS STAFF

If such an allegation should be made, then the following actions must be taken immediately:-

i) Inform the Manager / Person in charge

If the allegation has been made against a specific individual, a "yellow form" (Logging a concern about the behaviour of a member of staff) will be completed. The person in charge must also ensure that individual has no further contact with children.

ii) The person in charge will make an assessment of whether the information constitutes an allegation (that a person has harmed, or placed at risk of harm, a child), a concern about the quality of care provided (for example, that insufficient supervision has been provided in the garden), or a complaint (for example, that their child's report is inaccurate). If the information is an allegation, then the person in charge must determine whether the information about the member of staff is a "low-level concern" (that is, it does not entail harm or a risk of harm to children). They will refer to the WCC Early Years and Childcare Safeguarding Flowchart: Low Level concern /allegations against a member of staff/volunteer. If the concern is determined to be low level, then the person in charge will make a note of it, and will address it using internal procedures and performance management structures. If the allegation is more serious in nature, then the person in charge must inform Ofsted (online via "Report a serious childcare incident", within 14 days), as well as the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO), via the Warwickshire Children and Families "Front Door". The instructions of the LADO must be followed. If necessary, a Warwickshire "Position of Trust MARF" form will be completed and sent to lado@warwickshire.gov.uk.

iii) Inform the Chairman of the Trustees, who will keep all Trustees informed.

iv) Contact The Spring Playgroup Charity's insurers for legal advice.

There will then be a full investigation into the allegation, which may lead to the use of the setting's internal disciplinary procedures, as well as any involvement from external agencies.

Policy for the Protection of Adults at Risk.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that The Spring Playgroup Charity takes action wherever necessary to prevent, or reduce the risk of, significant harm to adults with whom we come into contact, who may be at risk of having their human or civil rights violated by another person or persons; whilst supporting them to make their own informed choices so far as possible.

The Spring Playgroup Charity recognises that certain adults may be more at risk of abuse than others – for instance, by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, those who may be unable to take care of themselves, and those unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. However, we are conscious that any adult may become at risk due to changes in their circumstances, and we recognise and support the right of all people to live lives which are free from violence, harassment, humiliation and degradation.

Abuse of adults may include discrimination, sexual abuse, financial abuse, psychological abuse, neglect (including that from an institution), or physical abuse.

Should The Spring Playgroup Charity become aware, through a disclosure or otherwise, that an adult with whom we are involved is at risk of abuse, we will act in accordance with the following principles:-

- Empowerment- the presumption of person-led decisions and informed consent.
- Protection- support and representation for those in greatest need.
- Prevention- the belief that it is preferable to take action before harm occurs.
- Proportionality– the least intrusive reasonable response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Confidentiality- we will share information, but only so far as is necessary to protect the person who is at risk.

Where we reasonably believe that an adult does not have capacity to consent to actions we take to protect them, we will seek to find out if there is any person already with the power to act on their behalf or to advocate for them.

When it comes to our attention that an adult is at risk, we will also consider whether this places any other person also at risk- for example a child, unborn child, or other family members; and if necessary, will also act to protect such people.

If an adult makes a disclosure to a member of our staff, we will refer to the following guidance:-

- Remember that it may have taken a great amount of courage for the person to tell us that something has happened and fear of not being believed can cause people not to tell.
- Accept what the person is saying – do not question the person or get them to justify what they are saying – reassure the person that you take what they have said seriously.
- Don't 'interview' the person; just listen calmly to what they are saying. If the person wants to give you lots of information, let them. Try to remember what the person is saying in their own words so that you can record it later.
- You can ask questions to establish the basic facts, avoiding asking the same questions more than once, or asking the person to repeat what they have said.
- Don't promise the person that you'll keep what they tell you confidential or "secret". Explain that you will need to tell another person but you'll only tell people who need to know so that they can help.

The following actions will be taken, on the day upon which we become aware of the possibility of abuse:-

- Immediate protection- taking actions to safeguard anyone at immediate risk of harm, including summoning medical assistance.
- Listen, Reassure & Support.
- Detection & Prevention of crime- where there is evidence a criminal offence has taken place, or a crime may be about to be committed, contact the Police immediately.
- Record & Preserve evidence- preserving evidence through recording, and taking steps to preserve any physical evidence.
- Report & Inform. If the adult concerned is someone defined as “vulnerable” (“Who is, or may be, in need of community services due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability, or is, or may be, unable to take care of himself/herself, or unable to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation”). REFER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (in Warwickshire via the Children and Families “Front Door”), AND IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES ON THE SAME DAY AS THE ALERT IS RAISED
- Take any required actions under employment vetting schemes- e.g. the ISA scheme.

As soon as possible, a written record will be made, making sure that all members of staff who have been involved record what they know. The report will be based upon the “Green Forms” used to record concerns about children.

All situations involving abuse of Vulnerable Adults based in Warwickshire will be reported by telephone on 01926 412080:- (out of hours, Emergency Duty Service on 01926 412080)

If The Spring Playgroup Charity considers a criminal offense has occurred, or is about to occur, we will also contact Warwickshire Police (01926 415 000 if not an immediate emergency).

If The Spring Playgroup Charity believes that as a result of the adult being at risk, a child or children are also at risk of harm, we will also follow our Child Protection procedures in respect of them.

4.4.1 RECORDS MANAGEMENT.

In order to comply with regulatory frameworks, and for smooth running, The Spring needs to keep a large number of records relating to staff, children, and families. All records are stored securely, and access is available only to those who need it. We are registered as Data Controllers with the Information Commissioner’s Office.

All financial records are stored for 6 years after the end of the accounting period to which they relate, and subsequently destroyed.

Accident forms are kept until the child referred to reaches their 25th birthday. Paper copies are destroyed (shredded or burned) after parents/guardians have signed them, but secure electronic copies (scans) are kept.

Agreement forms, medical forms, and sun-policies are destroyed at the end of the term after the term in which the child leaves playgroup.

The Spring will not retain paper copies of any records relating to Child in Need or Child Protection plans or meetings for more than 1 month after a child has left. Where it is unclear whether a child is attending poorly, or has left, records will be kept for up to one term after the child's most recent attendance.

Children's written records and physical copies of photographs of them are given to the families when the child leaves the setting. In the case of folders which have not been collected, we will store them under lock and key for up to one full term after the term in which the child leaves, after which they will be destroyed (shredded or burned).

Electronic copies of children's reports are stored until the end of the term after the term in which the child leaves the setting, and are then deleted.

Electronic copies of photographs are deleted shortly after the child leaves (usually at the end of their last term with us).

Where a child's photograph has been used in a document which The Spring Playgroup Charity uses to evidence our work and development to regulatory authorities these will be kept for longer. These files will normally be renewed on a 2 year cycle, though in an exceptional circumstance, a photograph may remain through 2 cycles (ie for 4 years). All such folders and photographs are stored securely within the setting at all times. Children's names and other identifying details are never used in these documents.

Where there have been Safeguarding concerns about a child, and there are "Logging Concern" forms, we are required to pass these on to the receiving setting when a child leaves The Spring. This will normally be done by hand, in a sealed envelope; but sometimes the postal service will be used, in which case, a service requiring a signature will be used.

Whilst data is stored as securely as possible, we recognize the possibility that a breach of data may occur. In such a case, the following procedure would be followed:-

Data Breaches: For the purposes of data protection, we have adopted the following definition of a data breach (from ICO, at <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/personal-data-breaches/?q=breach>)

"A personal data breach can be broadly defined as a security incident that has affected the confidentiality, integrity or availability of personal data. In short, there will be a personal data breach whenever any personal data is lost, destroyed, corrupted or disclosed; if someone accesses the data or passes it on without proper authorisation; or if the data is made unavailable and this unavailability has a significant negative effect on individuals."

We are aware of the potential seriousness of any data breach, and it is always our intention that no such event should occur. Should a reportable breach occur, then the ICO will be notified as soon as reasonably possible (within the 72 hours permitted after we become aware of it). The report will contain the following information:-

- a description of the nature of the personal data breach including, where possible:
 - the categories and approximate number of individuals concerned; and
 - the categories and approximate number of personal data records concerned;
- the name and contact details of the data protection officer (if your organisation has one) or other contact point where more information can be obtained;

- a description of the likely consequences of the personal data breach; and
- a description of the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, to deal with the personal data breach, including, where appropriate, the measures taken to mitigate any possible adverse effects.

If the breach involves the unauthorised access of personal information, then the person/s concerned (or their legal guardians) will also be informed within the reporting period.

Following any breach, all of the above data security procedures will be reviewed, with a particular view to preventing any potential repeat of the breach.

4.5 CHILD BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

We believe the care of your children is a privilege and trust. We value them as individuals and care about their feelings. We therefore undertake to treat all children with love and respect, and never to allow any child in our care to be made fun of or humiliated. We actively encourage all children to develop a positive self-image and recognise their value as individuals. Children are also encouraged to treat each other according to these same standards, and behaviour which causes distress to other children is always dealt with. Bullying is never tolerated.

Any incident requiring discipline is dealt with promptly and it is made clear to the child why their behaviour is unacceptable and that it is only the behaviour and not the child that is unacceptable. Staff are trained to employ a policy of reasoning with children with behavioural difficulties. Children are never smacked and raised voices are discouraged at all times. Children generally respond well to gentle but firm direction and encouragement to obey instructions.

In situations where other children may be endangered or if there is persistent disruptive behaviour, a member of staff is assigned to move the child in question to a quiet part of the room to calm them, possibly involving them in another activity before returning them to the general session as soon as is practicable. If the age and strength of a child make this impractical, we may instead move other children away from the area. If a distressed child needs to be in an area on their own, this will be facilitated, and a second member of staff will observe discreetly and support the first member of staff if needed. When a physical intervention has been needed in managing a child's behaviour, a Physical Intervention Record will be made of this event, as soon as possible after it occurs. This will be shared with parents/carer and they will be asked to sign it in the same way as with accident forms. It will be reviewed by a manager the next working day, with a view to minimising any such incidents. Should parents be unhappy with the intervention which has been used, they will be able to make a complaint using the method detailed in under "Complaints".

Persistent behavioural problems are discussed with parents, joint action plans are agreed and progress is monitored.

4.6 SECURITY OF PROPERTY

It is the policy of The Spring Playgroup Charity to mark all valuable property visibly with the name of the group as a deterrent to theft.

4.7 DEFECT REPORTING PROCEDURE

Setting Equipment.

It is the responsibility of all employees to report to the Manager immediately any defects found on the premises.

The Manager will note any defects found in the daybook; decide on appropriate action, and report to the Trustees if necessary.

Sports and Social Club equipment:- the Manager will report any defects found in the club's premises or equipment to the Committee, which is responsible for ensuring they are made good.

4.8 CRIMINAL DAMAGE

Where criminal damage is suspected the police are informed immediately. The incident is recorded, and reported to Sports and Social Club management and the Trustees.

Where damage to premises compromises safety, e.g. broken windows:

After calling the police, debris will be cleared carefully, safely & as soon as possible.

Sports and Social Club staff will be informed to effect immediate repair.

Any insurance form required should be completed.

A note should be made in the daybook if any expense is incurred.

4.9 DEALING WITH TRESPASSERS

The setting has an open doors policy to allow prospective families to visit at any time.

When children are outside there are at least two members of staff with them.

No member of staff is expected to be on the premises alone with children.

Any strangers will be approached by a member of staff in view of other adults.

If any suspicious persons are noticed, police would be informed immediately and "Alpha" would be shouted to alert other staff to the situation. Any children outside at the time would be immediately brought inside and doors secured.

4.10 POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR LOST OR UNCOLLECTED CHILDREN

LOST CHILDREN

The Spring Playgroup Charity has strictly enforced security procedures which should prevent any child being lost - see also Policies and Procedures for Outings.

If there is any suspicion of a lost child, a member of staff with a mobile phone (there are at least two on the premises at all times) will be sent to look for the child immediately.

The Senior member of staff present will then call the child's parents and/or emergency contacts, and, if necessary, the police.

UNCOLLECTED CHILDREN

Should parents be more than 10 minutes late collecting their child the Senior Member of Staff present will try to contact the person due to collect the child and/or their parents either direct or via the alternative emergency contact numbers.

In the case of a child being uncollected, two members of Staff would remain with the child for up to one hour after the end of their session continuing to try to reach a parent or other emergency contact. Should a child be uncollected beyond the time at which the Sports and Social Club opens, then the child would remain, with 2 members of staff, in a room which is for the exclusive use of The Spring at all times. The child would be encouraged to use the toilet shortly before the time at which the Sports and Social Club opens, but one toilet will remain designated as closed to Sports and Social Club members until after that child has left.

One hour after the child's session ends the Warwickshire Children and Families "Front Door" would be contacted and their instructions followed. In the case of a child who has not been collected by 17:45, the Emergency Duty Team (or "Front Door" until closure at 17:30) may be contacted earlier at the discretion of the Person in charge.

4.11 ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES

It is Setting Policy that staff will undertake the administration of medicines to children in their care within the following guidelines:

When storing and administering medicines at the setting the following procedures must be followed:-

Medicines must be stored in a locked cupboard, or, if they need to be stored in the fridge, in a box within it, to ensure that children have no access (the exception to this rule would be adrenalin auto-injectors, which will be stored in the playroom in the First Aid Box for rapid access; or in some circumstances, inhalers, where there is a child who may need it in an emergency).

Medicines must be clearly marked with the child's name.

Parents must complete a consent form giving permission for the medicine to be administered and stating the dosage. In the case of children attending Out of School provision, who have medicines which they are capable of self-administering, individual arrangements will be made in discussion with that child's family, and a record will be made of the agreement and signed by all parties.

A log must be kept stating when, how much and who administered any medicine.

All appropriate Staff should be shown how to support a child when administering medication, particularly inhalers; and be taught what signs to be observant for in relation to individual children.

In the case of reliever inhalers, if a child needs their inhaler twice within the session, their parent will be contacted to be informed of this and asked to collect the child, due to the increased likelihood of a serious asthma attack occurring.

These rules include applying creams and lotions and under no circumstances should staff give medicines without consent.

NB The setting cannot generally undertake the care of sick children.

Records are also kept of staff's medical needs, and these are stored with their confidential personnel files.

4.11.1 SPECIFIC MEDICAL NEEDS

Where children have specific medical needs, of which the setting has been made aware, all staff will be trained in the appropriate handling of these needs after consultation with the child's parents. If it is considered necessary, written procedures will be drawn up on a case-by-case basis. Children with allergies will be listed as such in the personal details section of the register, and on an 'allergy list', copies of which will be available in all food service areas; and staff will be further reminded about the allergy via the addition of a red sticker on the child's self-registration card.

4.12 SICKNESS

The Spring Playgroup and Out of School Club cannot take sick children

If a child becomes unwell during the session, the person in charge would contact the child's parent or carer.

Each child has an agreement form completed by the parent on entry into The Spring. Details on this form include emergency contact numbers for the children which ensure that we can inform someone as quickly as possible of any accident or illness and they can contact the parent and be with the child (if necessary) as it is important in times of distress for the child to see a familiar face.

It is also important that a child with an infectious illness is removed from the setting as soon as possible to minimize the possibility of cross infection.

Children absent from the setting with infectious illnesses are not re-admitted until the relevant period of quarantine is past. Exclusion times will be taken from UK Health Security Agency advice.

4.13 OPERATIONAL POLICY ON OUTINGS

Parents are encouraged to accompany us on outings whenever possible.

A ratio of 1 adult to 3 children is the absolute minimum but we would not consider an outing of any length with pre-school children without a ratio of 1 adult to 2 children. With children attending Out of School club, individual needs, stage of development, and usual behavior will be taken into account in deciding what ratio of staff is needed.

All outings for pre-school-aged children within walking distance are accessed by taking children holding an adult's hand (possible through using our pool of parents/volunteers). Children attending the Out Of School club will not necessarily have to hold an adult's hand- their age, usual behavior, and stage of development will be taken into account (see below for details of routine Out of School Club collection procedure).

A senior member of staff is always at the head and rear of the group and registers and a mobile phone accompany us in the care of the Person in charge or their deputy.

Children attending Out of School Club are routinely collected from St. Nicholas' School, and also from the Kenilworth schools bus stop outside St. Nicholas' field in Priory Road. The procedure for this is as follows:-

- A member of staff who is known to the children involved will attend in good time to meet them.
- Daily consideration will be given to numbers and ages of children expected, and 2 members of staff sent whenever this is considered necessary.
- The staff will carry a register and a mobile phone.
- Children will be met from Reception (school) or at the bench (bus).
- Children will wear the provided high visibility jackets.
- The member of staff will mark children off on the register.
- Any children expected who do not arrive, the member of staff will confirm with the school secretary, or the bus driver, that they have not been present. If this is not confirmed, the member of staff will telephone the setting to check whether parents have been in touch. If the setting is not clear after this, they will telephone the parent. The member of staff will remain at the school until the whereabouts of all children expected have been confirmed.
- Children will walk back to the setting with the member of staff keeping all of them in view at all times.
- On arrival at the setting, all children's names will be collated into a single register.

4.14 OUTDOOR PLAY EQUIPMENT

Outdoor play equipment is subject to a visual check each time it is used.

Any defect found is recorded and affected equipment taken out of use until fit for use.

4.15 STUDENT PLACEMENT POLICY

The Spring Playgroup Charity realises that the quality and variety of work which takes place in the setting makes it an ideal place for students on placement from Early Years training and qualifications and school children wanting work experience placements.

In cooperation with the relevant education providers, we welcome students into the setting provided:

It is understood that the children's needs are our first priority and that students will not be accepted in numbers that would hinder the essential work of the setting.

Students are on bona fide early years training courses which provide the necessary background understanding of children's development and activities or, in the case of school children undertaking work experience, accept appropriate limitations and restrictions on the work they are permitted to undertake in the setting.

Any information gained by students about the children, families or other adults in the setting must be kept confidential.

Unless students have a DBS check, they will not have unrestricted access to children and will not at any time be left alone with a child or children.

4.16 POLICY FOR SELECTING PLAY EQUIPMENT AND TOYS

Toys and equipment for Playgroup and Out of School Club are selected to provide opportunities for children, with adult help, to develop new skills and concepts as they play and explore.

The equipment provided is:

appropriate to the ages and stages of the children for whom it is provided

able to offer challenges and stepping stones to children in developing physical, social, personal and intellectual skills

inclusive of positive images of all people - both male and female, from a wide range of ethnic and cultural groups, with and without disabilities, and of all ages.

wide in its range of raw materials which can be used in many different ways to encourage an open-ended approach to creativity and problem solving.

designed to enable children, with adult support, to develop their individual potential

conforms to all relevant safety regulations and is sound and well-made

Selection of new and replacement equipment is governed by the above and undertaken after staff consultation and research and consideration of current available products and suppliers in order to ensure the most appropriate resources are provided representing the best value for money.

4.17 PARENTS AS PARTNERS POLICY

The Spring Playgroup and Out of School Club believes that a child's first and most vital educators are their parents and that if a child is going to get the very most from their education, settings and parents must collaborate in the process.

To this end we aim to:

- understand and respect the unique relationship, knowledge and understanding each parent has with, and of, their own child.
- affirm parents in the significance of their vital role and never undermine them.
- Where children come to The Spring from another setting (e.g. school) or are delivered from The Spring to another setting (e.g. school) we undertake to clearly and reliably pass on any relevant messages from or to parents.
- recognise the part parents have played in their child's education prior to entry into the setting and encourage the continuation of their involvement
- create an atmosphere and environment which make parents feel welcome and at home in the setting both before and at any and all times during their child's time with us.
- use settling in procedures which are flexible and responsive to the needs of individual children and families.
- make key persons available to discuss children's progress and gain the confidence of parents enabling them to share their children's interests, abilities, progress and circumstances with us as a two-way communication, including any concerns they may have.
- share children's Records of Achievement with parents and encourage their participation in the making of the records by sharing accomplishments they note outside the setting.
- make as many opportunities as possible for parents to be involved and informed in their child's education. Presently this includes keeping parents informed through newsletters, informal chats at the end of sessions, progress reports, special events and concerts, a private facebook group for parents.
- welcome comments, suggestions and constructive criticism from parents.
- to facilitate parent involvement by communicating opportunities for involvement clearly and widely.
- enable parents to continue learning, special interests and skills development at home by keeping them informed about the curriculum.
- encourage parents to come in to sessions and share their own life experience, knowledge and skills with all the children.
- encourage parents who wish to do so to come in as extra helpers in Playgroup and make them aware of the wide variety of training in early years education that is available to those who would like it.
- provide partnership events at intervals through the year to celebrate the children's group and individual accomplishments and to encourage parents to take a full part in planning, preparing for and participating in these events.

4.18

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

The Spring Playgroup Charity recognises that many individuals and groups experience oppression, disadvantage, discrimination and harassment in one or more aspects of their lives. This denies them basic human rights and an equal chance to access information, services and opportunities.

This policy is designed to raise awareness of the issues that affect people's lives and to encourage our organisation to work in ways that challenge the effects of oppression, disadvantage, discrimination and harassment.

The Spring Playgroup Charity acknowledges that there are many issues which affect opportunities for people in Warwickshire and in the particular area where we are located, for example in relation to family circumstances, health, age, gender, disability, ethnicity and other discriminating factors. We recognise that barriers exist preventing participation in the opportunities we provide.

OUR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES BELIEFS AND AIMS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

We believe all children have the right to a high quality education and care experience regardless of their circumstances. Because of this we try to ensure that no child is denied the opportunity to attend playgroup, benefit from good pre-school education, and enter full time education on equal terms with their peers as far as is possible. Equally, we seek to ensure that any child who requires Out of School care can receive it from us on an equal footing with all others. We are committed to ensuring that the services and opportunities we offer are free from prejudice and discrimination and strive for equality of opportunity for all. Given the restrictions of our first floor location, there are some inevitable limits to our ability to accommodate people with limited mobility. However, we encourage anyone in this situation to contact us, visit (ground floor access is available), and discuss their needs with us, as we will certainly seek to make every possible adjustment to accommodate.

We use all the means at our disposal to ensure that as much playgroup experience as would benefit a child is available to them regardless of their financial resources. We are registered with the Early Education Funding Scheme, and, since September 2000 have provided Playgroup free at the point of use in order to ensure less well-off children have equal access to good preschool education with their better-off peers. Any parents in a position to do so may make free will donations. Out of School provision is chargeable, given that families needing to use this will generally be working.

We are known to be a setting which welcomes children with Special Educational Needs, physical disabilities or behavioral difficulties and have a proven record of integrating and helping these groups of children to progress and of supporting their parents as needed.

We believe every child should have the right to attend playgroup when they are ready and seek to enable every child to fulfill their potential regardless of race, culture, religion, disability, gender or financial circumstances, making every effort to meet the specific needs of all children and families entrusted to our care as fully as possible, opposing any injustice and working to promote and extend opportunities for those affected by oppression, disadvantage, discrimination and harassment. All resources and activities are intended for all children and they are all encouraged, though not obliged, to take a full part.

We are committed to equality of opportunity in the services we provide, in the management of our organisation and in our employment practices. Staff are recruited solely on their ability to do the job through fair recruitment and selection practices.

Because children learn very young to assign values to different races, cultures, abilities and standards of living, we aim to raise our own and the children's awareness of people who are different from them, whether in race, colour, ability, gender or standard of living and to encourage them to value and respect all kinds of different people. We actively seek to ensure that nothing is ever said or done to make anyone feel unhappy or uncomfortable with themselves and to promote positive images of minority groups.

We aim to have our services, working practices and policies under constant review to ensure that they are working as well as possible and to work towards continual growth and development.

4.19 ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

All children are welcome at The Spring Playgroup and Out of School Club in line with our equal opportunities policy. Should we have more children than we can offer places to, we would prioritise admissions as follows:

Firstly, children who have siblings in the setting.

Then children who have had their names down with us for the longest.

We also prioritise places for children who have been referred to us by the Social Care Service, when vacancies are available.

4.20 CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Playgroup and Out of School Club have a strictly enforced policy on confidentiality.

All documentation on any child is kept confidential and made available only to the child's parents or primary carers.

The only exception to this rule is other relevant agencies where there are safeguarding concerns.

Verbal information given in confidence by parents may not be disclosed to anyone outside the setting and only on a "need to know" basis within the setting given that the Person in Charge will generally need to know.

If parents entrust their children to our care it is vital that we respect their privacy and keep confidential anything they tell us.

4.21 DOCUMENTATION POLICY

It is Playgroup's policy to keep documentation in line with that required by the Statutory Requirements of the Foundation Stage, in respect of children attending the playgroup and preschool. Children attending the Out of School Club will have fewer written records kept, given that they are not receiving the majority of their educational experiences with us. All such documentation may be made available to anyone who wishes to see it on site (with the exclusion of confidential items, which will only be shared with those who have a right to see them). Copies will be provided on request but we reserve the right to make a small charge to cover the cost of providing copies.

4.22 COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

COMMENTS

The Staff and Trustees of The Spring Playgroup Charity hope that you and your child will enjoy your experience with us. We are always keen to hear your comments to help us be continually improving our provision. We welcome your views and opinions and are always willing to listen to any suggestions you might have.

COMPLIMENTS.

Needless to say we are always pleased and encouraged to hear anything positive you would like to say to us. Apart from it being nice to be complimented, it is also very helpful to hear about anything you as parents feel your child has found particularly enjoyable about our provision or about anything you feel has been a particularly effective learning experience. Please do also tell us about anything YOU especially like or which you feel is particularly effective in making you feel welcome and valued as a parent. Telling us what you like helps us to know what NOT to change!

COMPLAINTS

If you are not happy about anything at Playgroup or Out of School Club, including the provision of Funded sessions, please discuss it in the first instance with your child's key person where appropriate. If you are not satisfied with their response or the matter is not directly applicable to your own child, please talk to the manager.

Should you feel unable to do this or if you are not satisfied with the manager's response, you can contact the Trustees in writing at 13 Arthur Street, Kenilworth, CV8 2HF- clearly marked "Private and Confidential- for the attention of the Trustees only". You and your child are very important to us and it is the sincere aim of The Spring's staff and Trustees to talk through any problem until it is fully resolved; so that you are fully reassured about anything that might concern you and are satisfied that we respect your views and wishes. Any written complaint will be investigated, and we will respond with the outcome within 28 days.

We very much hope that we shall never fail you in this but should we ever be unable to resolve an issue, you can contact Ofsted online at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted/about/complaints-procedure#complain-about-childcare. Please note that they will normally expect you have to use the setting's own complaints procedure in the first instance.

4.23 STORAGE OF LUNCH BOXES

Parents are advised to use lunch boxes designed to keep food cool. In normal circumstances, these are stored on the table downstairs, which is reasonably cool and dark. When it is very warm weather, we will do our best to store the contents in the fridges. However, this will not always be possible, and parents should treat the lunch box accordingly, and are advised to use a cool pack within it.

4.24 LUNCHTIME and SNACKTIME PROCEDURES

The Spring Playgroup offers care over the lunchtime period between our main sessions, but the number of places is limited, and we may not always be able to offer a lunchtime place for your child. Lunchtime places may be chargeable, depending upon factors such as the age of the child, the reason for a lunchtime session being requested, and the total number of hours the child spends at playgroup. However, lunchtime places for children who have 30-hour free places are never charged for. We do prioritise places for families having a specific need for these, and further details about this are available, confidentially if necessary, from the manager. During their preschool year, 15-hour children can usually access some free lunchtime sessions as part of their entitlement, providing we have sessions available.

Parents whose children are staying for lunch will be requested to supply a suitable meal, and drink, in a lunchbox, with an ice-pack to keep the contents cool.

The children will be cared for by at least two members of staff at all times, and where possible, these staff will have their own lunch alongside the children.

Suitable hygiene procedures will be used, including:-

Tables will be cleaned with anti-bacterial spray before and after the children eat

Staff serving food will wear disposable aprons and gloves

Staff and children will clean their hands before eating

Waste food will be placed in a bag and sealed.

Children will be encouraged to eat, and to have savoury foods before sweet ones, but staff will prioritise a happy and relaxed eating environment over the specifics of what a child does or does not eat. If there has been a problem with the child's lunch, parents will be informed when they pick up the child.

Snacks will be offered during each session, and these will be selected so as to offer a choice of snack, but still healthy options. Playgroup and preschool children will be offered fruit, and occasional other small snacks. Out of School Club will have access to a wider range of snacks, chosen in consultation with the children attending. Whilst The Spring will only provide healthy snack foods, if parents wish to send special foods in to share for a birthday or other special occasion, this will be welcomed.

4.25 EMERGENCY/CONTINGENCY PLANS

The Emergency Plan is kept in a plastic sleeve on the outside of the safe, available for instant access.

As every emergency is unique, it is not practical to attempt to pre-plan a detailed response to every potential scenario. Rather, the senior staff on duty when an emergency arises will consider the circumstances and respond accordingly. In planning their response, they will consider the following factors:

- Maintaining health and safety for children and adults attending the setting.
- Minimising the disruption to the care and education of the children (both in terms of severity and duration)
- If attendance is by necessity restricted, prioritising attendance for vulnerable children, then children of critical workers, then pre-school, then the younger children.
- Notifying social workers of any children who have them and are not able to be accommodated.
- The need for ongoing welfare and practical support during and after any serious incident.

Information about upcoming necessary changes to opening will be communicated using the parents' Facebook group, AND the email distribution list, backed up by informing parents of any children in attendance face-to-face, and should the senior member of staff consider it necessary, also a handout placed in children's drawers.

Should there be an ongoing closure to all pupils, the senior staff will consider how best to sustain contact with children considered vulnerable, either statutorily or by the setting.

Should the premises need to be evacuated, under normal running conditions, the register plus visitors' sheet will give a checklist of people to be accounted for. In the event of an emergency occurring during a special event, or at a time when parents are in the building picking up children, evacuation will be assured by a member/members of regular staff, detailed to that task by the person in charge, checking all areas of the building which have been in use to ensure that they are clear.

Should there be a need to maximise safety within the building due to a threat from outside- such as a terrorist threat, a threat from an individual seeking to enter, a suspect package, etc, then staff will consider

that the large room has the highest windows, and easiest access to an additional emergency exit; while the 'Sunshine room' has windows only away from the street side, and has a fitted blind, which would offer a visual barrier but not one against broken glass.

Contacts for external agencies are available in the Emergency Action Plan, on the safe door in the office.

Should there be a number of cases of any infectious disease in the setting, then UKHSA resources would be consulted and any relevant guidance followed. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>

Emergency contact details for children and staff are kept within the register.

PART 5

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

5.1 AIMS OF OUR S.E.N.D. POLICY:-

To ensure that everyone has clear information about how The Spring Playgroup and Out of School Club aims to work with children who have S.E.N.D., and with their families.

To enable early identification of children's needs, and help develop effective ways of managing them.

To support children with S.E.N.D. to make the best possible progress during their time with us.

To promote full integration of children with S.E.N.D. into the life of the group, and smooth transfer into school where applicable.

To promote good practice in the setting, ensuring compliance with legislation.

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENDCOS) are Sarah Walters and Gail Wright. Their role is to take day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of this policy, and work with staff to co-ordinate our provision for children with S.E.N.D. This will include ensuring suitable planning and record-keeping to meet the needs of children with S.E.N.D., supporting other staff in working with the children, liaising with parents and any other agencies and keeping the S.E.N.D. register. They are also responsible for ensuring our compliance with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, and the relevant parts of the Foundation Stage documents (copies are kept in the setting and are available for all to read).

5.2 ADMISSIONS

Children who have already been identified as having Special Educational Needs will be allocated places at The Spring in exactly the same way as any child seeking admission.

Having been allocated places, in common with all new children, those with S.E.N.D. will be invited to visit the setting with their parent(s) initially. At this meeting, the Manager/SENDCO will spend time getting to know parents and child, and will encourage the parents to share as much information as possible about the child's needs. Any available information from other agencies involved with the child, or from previous settings, will be used to help in planning to meet the child's needs. Where it is felt the child will need additional equipment or facilities in the setting, we will do all we can to obtain these as soon as possible.

As with all new admissions, only when it is felt the child is ready will the parent be encouraged to leave them.

5.3 SPECIALISED FACILITIES AND STAFFING

The Spring Playgroup has a long-standing commitment to integration in the early years, and we have a strong track record of enabling children with additional needs to enjoy playgroup on an equal footing with their peers. In order to ensure we are able to meet the needs of children with SEND, the SENDCOS have received the following additional training:-

SEND Code of Practice
I.E.P. Writing

Additionally, the Manager and deputies have received training in:- SEND Code of Practice, Supporting Children on the Autistic Spectrum, Positive Behaviour Management, Applied Psychology, Recognising and Supporting Children with Speech and Language Difficulties.

All staff and students working with a child who has additional needs will receive appropriate in-house training, and will be enabled to receive additional training if appropriate.

Within the setting, we have a range of specialist books and resources, including visual timetables, staff with Makaton training, and access to a symbol printing package.

5.4 INCLUSION

Within the setting, opportunities and expectations for all children are based upon their own needs and development- each child is treated equally, and individually- no two are the same. Activities are planned so that they can be presented to each child at a level that is appropriate for them, whether they have S.E.N.D. or not. Provision is made according to the child's stage of development, and not based upon their age. Visual resources and 1:1 support are used where needed, so that all children can access all activities. During planning, the setting identifies activities where extra support may be needed, and the Individual Education Plans of children are referred to in order to target specific developmental needs.

5.5 MONITORING OF POLICY

S.E.N.D. policy is reviewed annually, and is updated with any staff changes. In reviewing the policy, we consider the overall progress made by children in the setting who have S.E.N.D., and the feedback we have received from other agencies who work with us to support the children. If alterations in policy are needed to ensure the effectiveness of our provision for children with S.E.N.D., or to bring it up to date with current good practice, then we revise the policy accordingly.

5.6 COMPLAINTS ABOUT S.E.N PROVISION

Naturally, it is our intention that no-one should have the need to complain about the S.E.N.D. provision at The Spring, but if a problem should arise, the Sendcos will aim to resolve it in discussion with the family. If the difficulty continues, the setting's usual complaints procedure can be used. Families of a child with S.E.N.D. who wish to take their complaint to an outside agency may choose to contact the LEA's specialist IDS team.

5.7 S.E.N. TRAINING

The SENCOS ensure their knowledge is kept up to date. A "cascade" system ensures this information is shared with other staff in the setting, so that all have the knowledge they need to fulfill their roles.

Time is allocated during our regular in-house training days to training in S.E.N.D. issues, and also to ensuring all staff are made familiar with children's current Individual Education Plans.

5.8 PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

In line with our Parents as Partners policy, the Spring Playgroup and Out of School Club recognise that the parents of children with S.E.N.D. are their children's first and most important educators. We recognise that close cooperation between family and setting is especially important for children with S.E.N.D., and seek to provide every possible support to their families.

Where concerns arise about the progress of a child attending the setting, parents will be told at an early stage, and we will seek to work jointly to support the child in the most appropriate way. If any additional

provision is to be made in the setting, the parents' permission will be sought to place the child's name on the S.E.N.D. register. Thereafter, we will share information about the child's progress on a regular basis, and will provide the parent with copies of any Individual Education Plan we draw up.

5.9 OTHER AGENCIES

The Spring Playgroup has connections with a range of agencies who can provide advice and/or support to us in working with children having S.E.N.D. They include:- IDS, educational psychology, Speech and Language services, Health visitors, Social Services, and visiting teachers. We will never share information about a child with other agencies without prior permission from the parent, except where issues of child protection arise.

When a child with S.E.N.D. moves on from the playgroup, we will consult with parents about what information they wish to have passed on to the receiving setting. Staff from the receiving setting will be enabled to visit us if they wish to do so, and staff from The Spring Playgroup will attend meetings with them, if requested, as far as is possible. It is anticipated that transition planning will be less of an issue with children attending Out of School Club, as The Spring is a smaller part of their lives; but where it is felt to be needed, we will be happy to participate.

5.10 DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT PROGRESS, AN OUTLINE COURSE OF ACTION

When the progress of a child attending The Spring Playgroup is causing concern, we will:-

Discuss the child within the staff team, and with the parents, and monitor progress closely.

If progress is satisfactory, and concerns are not shared, we will take no further action.

If concerns are shared, or progress is not good, we will:-

Meet with the parent(s)

Place the child's name on the S.E.N.D. register.

Draw up an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Implement the plans on the IEP.

Review the IEP at the agreed time.

Provide feedback to the parents.

If good progress is made with the IEP targets, we will either:-

Remove the child from the S.E.N.D. register

OR draw up a new IEP and proceed as above.

If we remain concerned at IEP review, we will consider requesting guidance from other agencies, in which case we will:-

Seek permission from the parents.

Refer to an appropriate agency.

Retain the child on the S.E.N.D. register.

Draw up a new IEP with support from the new agency, and proceed as above.

If there is concern about the progress of a child attending Out of School Care, we would normally expect that this would be identified by the school being attended, rather than being initially identified by The Spring. However, in either case, our first point of liaison will be the parents, and we will agree with them a plan of action which meets the child's OOSC needs. If appropriate, and with parental permission, we will also liaise with the school to ensure consistency of approach.

5.11 THE EQUALITY ACT IN SETTINGS

The services offered by The Spring Playgroup, Preschool and Out of School club, are subject to the Equality Act. This means that we must offer the same standard of service to everyone, whether they have one of the "protected characteristics" or not. The duty is anticipatory, and we have given consideration to the general means we might use to help everyone access our services on an equal footing. We believe that we have made our services as fully accessible as we can, but as it is our aim to respond to each individual/family and their individual needs, we will undertake a needs assessment, working alongside anyone wishing to access our services who may find it difficult so to do; and will then make specific adjustments as needed.

PART 6

STAFF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

6.1 SUPERVISION AND APPRAISALS

As part of The Spring's commitment to excellence, we wish to ensure all our staff are supported to achieve the highest possible standards of work. We therefore offer all employees an annual appraisal with their manager. In-between appraisals, there will be less formal supervision meetings between the Manager, or a nominated deputy, and each member of staff. These will normally take place once a term, during terms which do not contain the appraisal meeting. At any time that a member of staff wishes to arrange an additional meeting with their manager, The Spring Playgroup Charity will do everything possible to facilitate this.

6.2 DISCIPLINARY POLICY

The Spring Playgroup Charity requires good standards of discipline from its employees along with satisfactory standards of work. The Spring Playgroup's disciplinary procedure applies to any misconduct or failure to meet the required standards of performance or attendance, whether in working at Playgroup or at Out of School Club.

The purpose of the Spring Playgroup disciplinary procedure is to be corrective rather than punitive and it should be recognised that the intention of the disciplinary procedure is to help and encourage employees to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of conduct, attendance and job performance and to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all employees.

Issues of Staff discipline are in the first instance the responsibility of the Manager. It is anticipated that in most cases careful and thorough discussion of the problem will result in it being resolved. In the event of the Manager being unable to resolve a problem or in circumstances where she feels it is best for the smooth running of the setting, she may refer matters of discipline to the Trustees who will discuss the situation with the Manager and the member of staff concerned and seek to understand the difficulties and find a solution.

If discipline of the Manager should be necessary this is the province of the Trustees.

In the case of discipline being necessary with a trainee, the training agency concerned may be called in by either party.

Should cause for concern about staff behaviour/performance persist, despite every effort being made to resolve difficulties, the staff discipline procedure, issued to each member of staff with their contract, will be followed.

6.3 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE.

Minor disagreements

Minor disagreements among staff, or between staff and the Manager or Trustees, can usually be resolved at regular meetings or informally by discussion. Minor incidents of misconduct will normally be dealt with in this informal manner. If the manager or management team feel it is necessary to deal with a disciplinary matter, even informally, a record of this event will be kept, in case of further disciplinary action being needed later.

Disciplinary Procedure. A more serious situation arises when a dispute cannot be resolved, when an allegation of misconduct is more serious, or when the Manager or Trustees are dissatisfied with the conduct or activities of an employee.

Any disciplinary matter will normally be dealt with using the following procedure. At every stage the employee should be given reasonable notice (5 days) that a disciplinary hearing is due to take place to give him/her the opportunity to prepare his/her case, and s/he should be offered the opportunity to be accompanied by a colleague or union representative if s/he so wishes. The employee will be given in writing details of the allegations against them, and copies of any documents the setting intends to use at the meeting. The disciplinary panel will consist of the setting Manager and two of the Trustees, who should ensure that confidentiality is maintained within the panel.

1. Formal written warning

If the allegation is too serious to be dealt with informally, or if minor misconduct is repeated.

- i) The employee will be interviewed and given the opportunity to state his/her case. (Reasonable time must be allowed for the employee to prepare his/her case.)
- ii) If a formal written warning is considered to be appropriate, this will be explained to the employee and a letter confirming this decision will be sent to the employee
- iii) The letter will:
 - a) contain a clear reprimand and the reasons for it
 - b) explain what corrective action is required and what reasonable time is given for improvement
 - c) state what training needs have been identified, with timescales for implementation
 - d) make clear what mitigating circumstances have been taken into account in reaching the decision
 - e) warn that failure to improve will result in further disciplinary action which could result in a final written warning, or even dismissal with appropriate notice
 - f) explain that s/he has a right to appeal against the decision.

2. Final written warning

If the employee fails to correct his/her conduct and further action is necessary, or if the original offence is considered too serious to warrant any initial warnings:

- i) The employee will be interviewed and given the opportunity to state his/her case. (Reasonable time must be allowed for the employee to prepare his/her case.)
- ii) If a final warning is considered to be appropriate, this will be explained to the employee and a letter confirming this decision will be sent to the employee.
- iii) The letter will:
 - a) contain a clear reprimand and the reasons for it
 - b) explain what corrective action is required and what reasonable time is given for improvement
 - c) state what training needs have been identified, with timescales for implementation
 - d) make clear what mitigating circumstances have been taken into account in reaching the decision
 - e) warn that failure to improve will result in further disciplinary action which could result in dismissal
 - f) explain that s/he has a right to appeal against the decision.

3. Dismissal

If the employee still fails to correct his/her conduct, or if the initial misconduct is considered to be gross, then: the employee will be interviewed as before

if the decision is to dismiss, the employee will be given notice of dismissal, stating the reasons for dismissal and giving details of the right to appeal.

If a member of staff is dismissed (or would have been dismissed had they not resigned) due to having harmed, or put at risk or harm, a child, then the setting will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

If progress is satisfactory within the time given to rectify matters, the record of warnings in the individual's file will be destroyed.

Suspension

If the circumstances appear to warrant instant dismissal, an employee may be suspended with pay while investigations are being made. These should consist of obtaining written statements from all witnesses to the disciplinary incident, and from the employee who is being disciplined. Obviously these investigations should be carried out within as short a time as possible.

Instant dismissal is possible only in circumstances of gross misconduct. Examples of such misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- theft or fraud
- serious failure to comply with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- assault
- serious or repeated breach of The Spring's own policies or procedures
- bringing The Spring into disrepute (which includes incidents the setting is obliged to report to parents and which are likely to lead to a significant reduction in their satisfaction with the setting)
- malicious damage
- using the setting's internet connection to access or distribute obscene or illegal material
- breaches of confidentiality
- gross carelessness which threatens the health and safety of others
- being unfit through use of drugs or alcohol.

Should an employee be dismissed following an incident of gross misconduct, this dismissal will normally be without notice or payment in lieu of notice. Except in cases of gross misconduct, an employee should not be dismissed without the appropriate warnings.

Appeals

At each stage of the disciplinary procedure the employee must be told s/he has the right to appeal against any disciplinary action, and that the appeal must be made in writing to The Spring Playgroup Charity's Trustees within five days of a disciplinary interview. The appeal hearing should be heard, if possible, within 10 days of receipt of the appeal. Two or three Trustees - if possible, not those involved in the initial disciplinary procedures - will serve as an appeals committee. If this is not possible, the appeal group may consist of the same people as the original panel, and they will make every effort to hear the appeal as impartially as possible. The employee may take a friend or trade union official to speak for her/him.

The employee will explain why s/he is dissatisfied and may be asked questions.

The leader, manager or chair will be asked to put their point of view and may be asked questions.

Witnesses may be heard and may be questioned by the appeals committee and by the employee and the leader, owner, manager or chair.

The committee will consider the matter and make known its decision.

A written record of the meeting will be kept.

6.4 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

It is the policy of The Spring Playgroup Charity to treat all employees and job applicants fairly and equally regardless of their sexual orientation, marital status, race, gender, gender presentation, culture, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, disability or union membership status.

Furthermore, the Spring Playgroup Charity will ensure that no requirement or condition will be imposed without justification which could disadvantage individuals purely on any of the above grounds.

The policy applies to recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment including pay, promotion, training, transfer and every other aspect of employment.

The Spring Playgroup Charity will regularly review its procedures and selection criteria to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and otherwise treated according to their relevant individual abilities and merits.

The Spring Playgroup Charity is committed to the implementation of this policy and to action to ensure that the policy is, and continues to be, fully effective. The overall responsibility for the policy lies with the manager. All staff are required to comply with the policy and to act in accordance with its objectives so as to remove any barriers to equal opportunity.

Any act of discrimination by employees or any failure to comply with the terms of the policy will result in disciplinary action.

6.5 GRIEVANCE POLICY

1. Raising a Grievance Informally

Any employee who has a grievance relating to their employment may raise the matter informally with their manager during the course of normal work. This is not part of the grievance procedure. Only if the matter is not resolved between them should the formal grievance procedure need to be used.

2. The Formal Grievance Procedure

Stage 1

The employee should put their grievance in writing. The employee does not need to state that their complaint is a formal grievance, however it would be helpful if they would do so.

Stage 2

Once a written grievance has been received by the Trustees, then the organisation has a responsibility to investigate the matter and to invite the employee to a formal grievance hearing.

The employee may at this stage, if they wish, be accompanied by another employee/work colleague from the organisation or a trade union official or representative in accordance with the provisions of the Employment Relations Act 1999 when requesting that an issue be raised formally.

The supervisor is required to:

1. Record full details of the matter, or accept signed written details of the matter
2. Provide an answer in writing to the employee with a copy to the representative, if any. Should the employee then wish to take the issue to the next stage of this procedure, the supervisor shall notify the Stage 3 management representative without delay.

Under the statutory standard grievance procedure, a grievance hearing must not take place unless the employee informs the employer of the basis of their grievance. Also, such a hearing must not take place unless the employer has had a reasonable opportunity to consider their response to that information.

The timing and location of the grievance meeting must be reasonable. Therefore should an employee make a complaint with regards to an unacceptable working environment, the meeting would usually take place away from this environment and in most circumstances the meeting will take place during the employee's normal working hours.

Stage 3

The Stage 3 management representative will arrange to meet the employee concerned and/or, at the latter's wish, their representative. At this meeting the employee may be accompanied as at Stage 1.

Following the meeting, the management representative is required to dispatch an answer, in writing, to the employee and, if applicable, to the representative.

The decision of the Stage 3 management representative will be final.

3. Time Limits

Under the Employment Relations Act 1999, if the employee's chosen companion (fellow worker or union official or representative) is not available on the day of the meeting the employee may reasonably request that the meeting be held on another day within five working days of the selected date.

The various steps of the procedure should be held within a reasonable time, and we will do so as soon as possible; but we do not specify a fixed timescale as the circumstances and preparation/investigation time will vary with each case. For example, if a detailed investigation is required, time will have to be extended. In the absence, for any reason, of the appropriate management representative, the person responsible for running the setting will contact the Trustees for their advice. The steps of the procedure will not begin until after this has been done. At the request of the employee, however, consideration may be deferred until the return of the appropriate management representative.

Grievances will be dealt with as quickly as possible, and as close to the level of origin as possible.

6.6 MATERNITY POLICY

When a member of staff or volunteer becomes pregnant, they should inform their manager as soon as possible. The information will be held in confidence for as long as the member of staff wishes, but management need to be aware so that necessary adjustments can be made to the employee's work.

Specific potential risks to pregnant employees, and measures taken to mitigate:-

Viral infections:- The Spring Playgroup Charity is aware that exposure to certain infections during pregnancy may cause problems for the unborn child. If any of the conditions listed below are found in playgroup or out of school club when a pregnant employee is working there, that person will be informed immediately and asked to seek the specific advice of their midwife/doctor:-

mumps (in the first 16 weeks), cytomegalovirus, rubella (in the first 16 weeks), measles, parvovirus/slapped cheek (in the first half of pregnancy), chicken pox/shingles, hepatitis, zika.

The setting will review this list of conditions against Health Service advice annually when conducting the review of Policies and Procedures, but will also ask each pregnant member of staff to request appropriate up-to-date information from their own midwife/doctor.

Lifting:- The Spring Playgroup and Out of School club are aware that ligaments soften in pregnancy, and that therefore lifting brings a specific risk of injury to pregnant individuals. For this reason, all pregnant employees are advised not to lift anything heavier than a full kettle (this includes children). All staff working in the setting are advised to help pregnant staff avoid lifting by being aware of their needs.

Sitting for extended periods:- Where the normal work of a pregnant employee involves extended periods of sitting (for example, if they work in the office), they will be provided with a chair designed for office use (adjustable and padded) and will be advised to take regular breaks.

Other adjustments may be made to an individual's work requirements at the Manager's personal discretion. Paid time off is available for ante-natal appointments, in accordance with current legislation.

Staff will be entitled to Statutory Maternity Leave and Pay, and should they wish to return to work, every consideration will be given to meeting requests for altered working hours.

6.7 SICKNESS AND ABSENCE POLICY

Aim of this Policy

This policy is designed to assist the Spring Playgroup Charity in effectively managing sickness-related and other staff absence. The Spring Playgroup Charity recognises the importance of ensuring that employees are supported through any periods of absence and their subsequent return to work. Through an effective Sickness and Absence Policy the Spring Playgroup Charity will be better positioned to identify any potentially unsafe work practices, any issues affecting employee morale and any other underlying problems employees may be facing.

Sickness and Absence.

Medical and other appointments should not normally be booked in work time. However, we do recognize that sometimes this is unavoidable, and if this is the case, you should inform the setting as far in advance as possible. If you are unable to come to work for any emergency reason, you must inform the setting by contacting Sarah Walters (or the currently acting Manager, in her absence) at least one hour before the time you would normally be due to start work on the first day of absence. You should indicate the reason for your absence and its likely duration. In the event that your absence continues for a number of days or weeks, you must maintain regular contact with The Spring to keep us informed of the reasons for your ongoing absence and the date when you expect to be able to return to work.

(removed reference to self-certification forms here)

For sickness absence of over 7 calendar days, you must provide a medical certificate ("fit note"). Subsequent medical certificates must be produced as necessary to cover the total duration of the period of absence.

Provided you comply with The Spring's sick pay requirements you will be paid your normal basic salary for up to 10 days in any academic year. Unavoidable absences for reasons other than your own sickness will normally be treated as unpaid leave. In exceptional circumstances, the Manager may choose to treat such absences as paid compassionate leave, and take it from the 10 days allowed for sickness.

Long-Term and Persistent Absence

The Spring Playgroup Charity will treat as long term absence any period of extensive absence due to serious or significant illness over a prolonged period. Alternatively, long-term absence may consist of a series of unconnected short-term illnesses. Where The Spring is of the opinion that a period of absence is long-term, it will inform the employee accordingly and:

- require that the employee keep in regular contact with the Spring Playgroup Charity, at such intervals as agreed between the organisation and the employee; and
- ensure that the employee is kept informed as to any possible threat to their employment

It may be necessary in incidences of long-term or persistent absence to treat the matter as an issue of capability or conduct. In such circumstances the Spring Playgroup Charity will:

- investigate the absence through "Return to Work Interviews" (and, where appropriate, the obtaining of medical reports as detailed below)
- set time limits on the assessment of the employee and keep him or her informed of these;
- consider adjustments to the job in order to facilitate a return to work or to allow the employee to do their job more easily, for example the implementation of flexible working arrangements;
- consider whether the illness amounts to a disability. Where it is found to do so the employee shall fall under the scope of the Spring Playgroup Charity's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy and The Spring shall make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary; and
- keep the employee informed in all the circumstance of any threat to employment.

Where the Spring Playgroup Charity requires medical reports relating to an absence it will either:

- request that the employee undergo an independent medical examination; or
- obtain a report from the employee's doctor, subject to employee consent.

In either case the employee may refuse to attend or refuse to consent to the release of a medical report, or request that corrections are made. Employees are reminded however that any decision regarding their future will be taken on the basis of the information available to the Spring Playgroup Charity, which could result in dismissal.

The Spring Playgroup Charity will hold all medical reports and related information as private and confidential. The Spring stresses that dismissal will only ever be a last resort. Where, however, the absence is found to be a matter of misconduct, the employee will be subject to The Spring Playgroup Disciplinary Procedure.

Return to Work Interviews

After any sickness absence longer than two weeks, or which has been dealt with as “long term”, the employee will attend a return to work interview with their manager in order to:

- ensure the employee’s fitness to return to work;
- agree any necessary actions required to facilitate the employee’s return to work;
- ensure the proper certificates have been completed/obtained in respect of the entire period of absence; and discuss any problems that may exist.

Staff also have the option to request a Return to Work interview after any sickness absence if they feel that it would be useful.

6.8 WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The Spring Playgroup and Pre-school, and Out of School Club, is committed to best practice, and as such encourages all its staff to be pro-active in bringing to management attention any practice by individuals, or by the organisation as a whole, which falls below the highest standards. We recognise that there are circumstances in which staff may find this difficult, but we encourage them to realise that any disclosure made in good faith is supportive to the setting and to the children we serve. In order to support staff, we offer the following guidance:-

Under employment law, setting staff enjoy legal protection against being disadvantaged in the workplace if they make a disclosure about:-

- criminal offences
- failure to comply with a legal obligation
- miscarriages of justice
- threats to individual health and safety (of staff or others, including children)
- damage to the environment
- a deliberate attempt to cover up any of the above

The Spring Playgroup Charity has chosen to extend the same protection to disclosures made about any failure to comply with our Policies and Procedures, as laid down in the relevant booklet.

If you make such a disclosure, provided it is made:-

- in good faith (which means with honest intent and without malice)
- when you reasonably believe that the information is substantially true
- when you reasonably believe you are making the disclosure to the right 'prescribed person'

then the setting will not take any actions against you, or do anything which places you at a disadvantage. The information you provide will normally be treated in confidence, and if there is a reason why it is not possible to do so (such as if a criminal offence has been committed), this will be explained to you immediately. This protection applies whether or not the information is found to be correct when the allegation is investigated.

Disclosures under the whistleblowing policy should normally be made to the manager, Sarah Walters. However, if a member of staff prefers to do so (for example in the case of misconduct by the manager), they may make such a disclosure directly to a trustee- (Safe Guarding Representative –Felicity Hawke) or to one of the deputies who will take the appropriate action on their behalf.

Any disclosure made under the whistleblowing policy will be fully investigated, and the result of the investigation shared with the person reporting it.

6.9 SAFE TOUCHING POLICY

The Spring Playgroup and Pre-school, and Out of School Club, is committed to acting at all times in the best interests of the children entrusted to our care. As part of this, we have a strong desire to safeguard them from any potential harm, from whatever source. As part of their safeguarding strategy, some settings make use of “no touch” policies. The Spring Playgroup Charity has made a decision not to employ a no touch policy, but rather to make clear guidelines about touching and explain our reasons for doing so.

We acknowledge that there is a potential for adults working in the setting to cause harm to children through inappropriate touching. We do our best to ensure that we do not employ such adults, through active checking of all recruits and volunteers, and through the layout of the setting and the way staff are deployed.

There are two aspects to consider within this policy:-

Firstly, the care of young children necessarily involves touch as part of their physical care. This type of touch has never been in dispute. In order to safeguard children, we have to balance the child's need for privacy when receiving personal care against the need to avoid leaving an adult alone with a child. For this reason, personal care is provided in a secluded area- a side room. However, the doors to these rooms are never closed and no adult is alone with a child for any length of time.

Secondly, there is the use of touch as part of our communication with children and our routine dealings with them. It is recognised that there are situations in which it would be distressing and unkind not to touch a child. If a child is distressed and seeks comfort, for example, a refusal to touch them may be experienced as a rejection. Equally, when a young child is in any highly emotional state, including anger, their ability to

interact with others through language may be reduced. In this situation, calming touch may be an effective means of supporting the child.

Therefore, The Spring Playgroup Charity supports the use of touch with children in the following circumstances:-

All touch arises from the needs of the child, and never from the needs of the adult, and:-

1. The touch is necessary for personal care/health and hygiene reasons. Examples of this include for nappy changing, when a child has wet or soiled themselves, when a child needs support with using the toilet, for wiping of noses, cleaning up after vomiting, wiping bottoms etc.

Or,

2. Touch is initiated by the child and does not involve the touching of intimate areas.

Or,

3. Where a child is in any emotional state (e.g. distress, anger, extreme excitement) and verbal methods of calming them have already been tried without success.

As part of these latter two, children will be able to sit on adults' laps. We believe that this is a normal part of warm relationships between adults and children of this age. The setting manager and deputies will always be aware of it, and if any adult is making excessive contact with children, this will be addressed immediately via our Safeguarding policy.

Touch under 2 and 3 will always avoid the areas which would be covered by swimwear, and will not be unnecessarily prolonged. The child will always be freely able to move away when they want to, except where a child is being prevented from causing injury or damage. In such a case, a Physical Intervention Form would be completed and shared with the parent/carer.

6.10 STAFF CLOTHING POLICY

There is no set uniform but we do ask you to wear comfortable clothes and flat shoes (you can wear trainers if you prefer). Clothes should not be revealing (no low necklines, and the midriff should be covered both front and back). Strapless tops should not be worn, to avoid the possibility of them slipping down. T-shirts, rather than vest tops, are preferred. Shorts are permitted, and preferred over skirts. If skirts are worn, they should be knee-length at least. You will be working outdoors some of the time and should come with suitable clothing for this. If you have a body piercing, you are advised to keep it covered up.

6.11 RECRUITMENT POLICY

The purpose of recruitment and selection is to enable The Spring Playgroup and Pre-school, and Out of School Club, to meet its staffing needs with the people best able to do the job. Therefore, no recruitment will be undertaken before there is a clear job description specific to the requirements of the post being filled. The Spring will ensure that all staff and Trustees involved in the recruitment process are aware of current legislation regarding equality of opportunity, and that the recruitment process must be fair at all stages. Every effort will be made to avoid indirect, as well as direct, discrimination. All information about candidates for any vacancy will be kept confidential and shared only with those who need to access it.

The Spring Playgroup Charity may appoint people known to us into positions which become available, however, no one will be appointed without interview. All potential volunteers or staff will be required to undertake a DBS check, and provide 3 references, personal or professional (unless volunteers will not be undertaking "regulated activity", in which case different law applies and a DBS check may not always be required). The setting's policy on recruitment of ex-offenders should be referred to.

Where it is necessary to advertise a vacancy, this will be done in local media, such as the local paper and Warwickshire Early Years, in the first instance. If no suitable candidates are found by this method, wider advertising will be considered. Advertisements will be drafted by the setting manager in consultation with the deputies, and will be reviewed by at least one trustee before being placed.

Where more than one candidate expresses interest in a position, they will be asked to submit a letter of application. Appropriate information will be provided about what needs to be included in the letter. These letters will then be used to shortlist candidates for interview. The shortlisting will be undertaken by the setting manager and at least one other member of staff.

Interviews will normally be conducted at the setting, and will include a tour of the premises during a session, so that the interviewee has an opportunity to see the setting at work. Interviews will be conducted by at least two people, one of whom will be the setting manager, and at least one of whom will have completed Safer Recruitment training. In order to be both fair and responsive, interviews will involve the same initial questions being asked of each candidate, with subsequent discussions being led by their responses to these.

6.12 LONE WORKING POLICY

The Spring Playgroup Charity recognises that it may be sometimes be necessary for a member of staff to be alone in the setting- for example, the person who is opening up in the morning, or securing the building in the evening. We also acknowledge that staff may find it helpful to be able to access the rooms during non-working hours in order to complete paperwork, or to bring or fetch items.

Working alone carries a degree of risk, and therefore, the following guidelines are in place:-

- Anyone in the premises alone is to inform a responsible adult of their whereabouts, and of how long they expect to be gone. Procedures are to be agreed between the lone worker and their emergency

contact as to what action will be taken in case of failure to return. In particular, the emergency contact must know how to obtain access to keys to enter the building.

- A telephone number is to be left with that person, so that the lone worker can be contacted.
- The lone worker will carry either their mobile phone or the setting's landline phone on their person at all times, to enable them to summon help even if they are injured and immobile.
- The external door must be locked at all times when working alone.
- A person working alone will not allow anyone not known to them to enter the premises for any reason unless their identity has been verified.
- When working alone, staff will confine their work to routine office, cleaning, or basic maintenance work. They will not, for example, operate power tools, do electrical work, heavy lifting, or tasks requiring them to gain height.
- Staff will not work alone if they are not medically fit to do so- in particular if their medical condition makes them liable to sudden collapse or loss of consciousness.

6.13 **FOLDERS PROCEDURE**

It is an unavoidable part of the duties of the early years staff to complete children's record folders at home. In order to comply with the Statutory Requirements, the process for taking home and returning folders is as follows: -

- Under normal circumstances, no more than 2 folders at a time will be taken (in exceptional circumstances, the manager may vary this condition).
- Folders will at all times be stored securely whilst away from the setting. Specifically, folders will not be left in unattended vehicles.
- A note will be made in the Day Book on the date when the folders are being taken. This will record the initials of the children whose records are removed, and the initial of the member of staff responsible for them.
- This record will be updated when the folders are returned, indicating the date of return.
- Folders will be returned, and signed back in, on every day that the setting is open. If the responsible member of staff is absent, due to sickness, or other leave, arrangements will still be made for the folders to be available in the setting whenever it is open.

6.14 **ANTI-BRIBERY POLICY**

Policy statement

It is the policy of the Spring Playgroup and Preschool (the Playgroup) to conduct business in an honest and ethical manner. As part of that, the Firm takes a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption and is committed to acting professionally, fairly and with integrity in all its business dealings and relationships, wherever it operates, and implementing and enforcing effective systems to counter bribery.

Purpose

The Playgroup will uphold all laws relevant to countering bribery and corruption in all the jurisdictions in which it conducts business, including, in the UK, the Bribery Act 2010 (the Act), which applies to conduct both in the UK and abroad.

Scope and applicability

This policy applies to all individuals working for or on behalf of the Firm at all levels and grades, whether permanent, fixed-term or temporary, and wherever located, including consultants, contractors, seconded staff, casual staff, agency staff, volunteers, agents, sponsors and any other person who performs services for or on behalf of the Playgroup, (collectively referred to as Workers in this policy).

In this policy, Third Party means any individual or organisation that Workers come into contact with during the course of work and the running of the Playgroups's business, and includes actual and potential clients, intermediaries, referrers of work, suppliers, distributors, business contacts, agents, advisers, government and public bodies (including their advisers, representatives and officials), politicians and political parties.

What is bribery?

A bribe is an inducement or reward offered, promised or provided in order to improperly gain any commercial, contractual, regulatory or personal advantage, which may constitute an offence under the Act, namely:

- giving or offering a bribe;
- receiving or requesting a bribe; or
- bribing a foreign public official.

The Playgroup may also be liable under the Act if it fails to prevent bribery by an associated person (including, but not limited to Workers) for the Playgroups's benefit.

Gifts and hospitality

This policy does not prohibit normal and appropriate gifts and hospitality (given and received) to or from Third Parties unless otherwise specifically stated. However, we have specific internal policies and procedures which provide guidance to Workers as to what is to be regarded as normal and appropriate gifts and hospitality in terms of financial limits, subject to the principles set out below (the Overriding Principles), namely that any gift or hospitality:

- must not be made with the intention of improperly influencing a Third Party or Worker to obtain or retain business or a business advantage, or to reward the provision or retention of business or a business advantage, or in explicit or implicit exchange for favours or benefits;
- must comply with local law in all relevant countries;
- must be given in the name of the organisation, not in an individual's name;
- must not include cash or a cash equivalent;
- must be appropriate in the circumstances;
- must be of an appropriate type and value and given at an appropriate time taking into account the reason for the gift;
- must be given openly, not secretly; and
- in the case of gifts, they must not be offered to, or accepted from, government officials or representatives, politicians or political parties, without the prior approval of the Playgroup Manager.

What is not acceptable?

It is not acceptable for any Worker (or someone on their behalf) to:

- give, promise to give, or offer, a payment, gift or hospitality with the expectation or hope that they or the Playgroup will improperly be given a business advantage, or as a reward for a business advantage already improperly given;
- give, promise to give, or offer, a payment, gift or hospitality to a government official, agent or representative to facilitate or expedite a routine procedure;
- accept payment from a Third Party where it is known or suspected that it is offered or given with the expectation that the Third Party will improperly obtain a business advantage;

- accept a gift or hospitality from a Third Party where it is known or suspected that it is offered or provided with an expectation that a business advantage will be improperly provided by the Playgroup in return;
- threaten or retaliate against another Worker who has refused to commit a bribery offence or who has raised concerns under this policy; or
- engage in any activity that might lead to a breach of this policy.

Facilitation payments and “kickbacks”

We do not make, and will not accept, facilitation payments or “kickbacks” of any kind, such as small, unofficial payments made to secure or expedite a routine Playgroup action by a Playgroup employee, or payments made in return for a business favour or advantage.

Record keeping

We keep appropriate financial records and have appropriate internal controls in place which evidence the business reason for gifts, hospitality and payments made and received.

Responsibilities and raising concerns

The prevention, detection and reporting of bribery and other forms of corruption are the responsibility of all those working for us or under our control. All Workers are required to avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of this policy

Workers are required to notify the Playgroup as soon as possible if it is believed or suspected that a conflict with this policy has occurred, or may occur in the future, or if they are offered a bribe, are asked to make one, suspect that this may happen in the future, or believe that they are a victim of another form of unlawful activity.

Any employee who breaches this policy may face disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal for gross misconduct. We reserve our right to terminate our contractual relationship with non-employee Workers if they breach this policy.

If any Third Party is aware of any activity by any Worker which might lead to, or suggest, a breach of this policy, they should raise their concerns with the Playgroup Manager.

Monitoring and review

The Playgroup monitors the effectiveness and reviews the implementation of this policy at appropriate intervals, considering its suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Any improvements identified are made as soon as possible. Internal control systems and procedures are also subject to regular review to provide assurance that they are effective in countering any risks of bribery and corruption.

All Workers are aware that they are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure they use it to disclose any suspected danger or wrongdoing.

6.15 EXPENSES POLICY (various alterations in this section)

The Spring Playgroup will reimburse employee expenses where appropriate.

Procedures: Reimbursement of Expenses & Purchases Submitting Claims for Reimbursement of Expenses & Purchases

- Claims for the reimbursement of expenses must be accompanied by documentary evidence of the expense (eg: point-of-sale receipt, travel ticket, etc). Where such evidence is not available the claimant

must provide a written explanation to the Treasurer for approval; The Charity reserves the right to decline to reimburse expenses for which reasonable documentary evidence has not been provided;

- Employees' and volunteers' expenses claim must be in writing/digital writing, and authorised by the manager or a trustee;
- Trustees' expenses must be authorised by the Chair or Treasurer;
- All expenses claims should be submitted as soon as possible. Expenses may only be claimed later than 30 days with prior approval of the Treasurer.
- Expenses claims may include claims for the reimbursement of goods/services purchased by the claimant on behalf of the Charity.
- Claims for the reimbursement of purchases must be accompanied by documentary evidence of each purchase (eg: point-of-sale receipt, travel ticket, etc).

Travel Expenses

- Public transport should be used wherever possible. Standard class travel only will be reimbursed.
- When it is not practical to use public transport, or where more than one employee or volunteer is travelling the same journey, travel by private vehicle (car, motorcycle, etc) is allowed and a mileage allowance (at the rates available from the Charity office) will be paid. You may only use your private car in connection with Charity business if, at the time of each journey, it has a valid: (a) certificate of insurance for the kind of journey involved; (b) road tax (if required); (c) MOT certificate (if more than 3 years old). Mileage should be claimed from your normal place of work unless you are travelling from home and the distance is less than that from your normal place of work in which case you should claim from home. Parking costs incurred when on charity business away from the normal place of work will be reimbursed.
- Taxis (preferably pre-booked mini-cabs rather than "on demand" hire) may be used where either no public transport is available or the journey time by public transport is unreasonably long (particularly where the journey involves multiple changes).

Subsistence

Subsistence costs (eg: for refreshments, meals & hotel accommodation) can only be claimed when an employee or volunteer is on authorised Charity business away from his/her normal place of work for more than 4 consecutive hours. All such claims must be authorised in advance of the event by the Playgroup Manager or Playgroup Trustee.

Other Types of Expenses

The above examples of expenses claims are illustrative, not definitive. Expenses not detailed above will only be paid if authorised (in advance whenever possible) by the Treasurer or, if not available, a person appointed by the Trustees to act on his/her behalf.

Reimbursement of Expenses & Purchases

- All claims submitted for the reimbursement of expenses incurred on Charity activities and/or purchases made on behalf of the Charity will be vetted for compliance with charity law, taxation law and these policies and procedures before being authorised for reimbursement.
- Claims which are not in the prescribed form, incomplete (eg: missing required supporting documents), inaccurate or otherwise not compliant with relevant legislation will be returned for correction or rejected.
- Valid claims will be authorised for reimbursement as soon as is reasonably practical after receipt. Payment will usually be made by BACS transfer directly to the claimant's bank account. Alternatively, in the case of small claims (less than £10) payment can instead be made by cash, where appropriate.