

# Health and Safety Policy



## Policy Statement

Little Acorns notes the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (s.2(1)), which states that it is the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees, and (s.3(1)), which states that it is the duty of every employer to conduct his or her business in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that persons who are not in his or her employment but who may be affected by it are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. This includes a responsibility to take all reasonably practicable steps to secure the health and safety of children, parents, contractors, and other visitors.

The aim of Little Acorns is to provide a caring, safe, and healthy environment for children, staff, and visitors.

The organisation will take all such steps as are reasonably practicable to fulfil its responsibilities, paying particular attention to regulations in:

- Management of health and safety, especially through risk assessment
- Control of substances hazardous to health, first-aid equipment, facilities, and staff training
- Annual audits
- Maintenance of electrical systems and appliances
- Manual handling operations

This policy has been prepared and published under the requirements of Health & Safety legislation including the following:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Fire Safety (Employees capabilities) (England) Regulations 2010
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Act 1999
- The reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DFE 2021).

## Responsible person

The Manager of each setting is the Responsible person. The Responsible Person has responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance and development of safe working practices and conditions for all people using those premises. They manage and monitor appropriate

health and safety procedures. These should embody the minimum standards for health and safety in the workplace. They are responsible to bring to the attention of all members of staff, the rules and detailed guidelines and procedures appropriate for their work including:-

- Regulations governing the work and role of the employee
- Immediate matters of health and safety concern, such as fire drills, fire exits, lockdown procedures, first aid and COSHH sheets
- Training standards
- Accident reporting procedures (for both adults and children)
- General safety rules
- Fire procedures
- Policies agreed by the company

More generally the Responsible Person will,

- Be aware of the basic requirements of the Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974 and any other relevant health and safety legislation and codes of practice or guidance
- Ensure the health, safety, and welfare of those using the premises
- Ensure safe working conditions
- Ensure safe working practices and procedures including those relating to the provision and use of machinery and other apparatus, so that all risks are controlled
- Consult with members of staff, including safety representatives, on health and safety issues
- Arrange systems of risk assessment to allow the identification of potential hazards
- Identify the training needs of staff and ensure that all members of staff who have identified training needs receive adequate and appropriate training and instruction in health and safety matters
- Discuss specific health and safety issues with the Trustees when required

## All Staff

New employees are given instruction in safe working practices

- Fire arrangements
- Regular risk assessments
- Appropriate protective clothing and equipment
- First aid
- Toxic, hazardous and highly flammable substances are correctly used, stored, and labelled

As part of staff's day-to-day responsibilities, they will ensure that:

- They are familiar with the Health and Safety policy.
- Ensure health and safety regulations, rules, routines, and procedures are being applied effectively
- Use the correct equipment and tools for the job and any protective equipment or safety devices which may be supplied

- Report any defects in the premises, equipment, and facilities which they observe to a Responsible Person
- Take an active interest in promoting health and safety and suggest ways of reducing risks

## Accident, Incident, and Ill-Health Recording, Reporting, and Investigation

Procedures that are to be followed when any employee, visitor or contractor has an accident, near miss or dangerous occurrence on the premises. Children's accidents and incidents are dealt with in the First Aid and Medication Policy. Employees who develop a work-related illness must also report via these procedures.

### Definitions:

- An accident is an unplanned event that causes injury to persons, damage to property or a combination of both
- A near miss is an unplanned event that does not cause injury or damage but could do so
- A work-related illness is illness that is contracted by an employee through the course of work because of activities carried out in association with the Pre-School

### Arrangements:

- All accidents resulting in personal injury must be recorded on an accident form on Family (A digital platform for Early Educators). Completed accident forms will be stored to comply with the requirements of GDPR
- Completed accident forms are reviewed regularly by the Health & Safety Officer to ascertain the nature of accidents that have occurred. This review will be in addition to any investigation of the circumstances surrounding each incident
- All near misses must also be reported to the pre-school manager as soon as possible so that action can be taken to investigate the causes and to prevent recurrence
- All injury related accidents that are either notified to the enforcing authority or where a serious injury has occurred, or could have occurred, will be considered for investigation by the responsible person
- Encourage all people using the premises and site to promote health and safety and comply with requirements and policies, acting on non-compliance as required
- Ensure that any defects in the premises, equipment or facilities that relate to or may affect health and safety are reported to the responsible person and made safe without delay
- Employees must report any incidents, hazards or defects and suggest ways and means of reducing risks
- Collate accident and incident information and, when necessary, carry out accident and incident investigations
- Monitor incidents and trends

## Reporting requirements

Certain accidents causing injury, both fatal and non-fatal, certain occupational diseases and certain dangerous occurrences are reportable to the Enforcing Authority under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

- Death
- A specified injury to an employee as detailed in regulation 4 as below:  
Fractures, other than to fingers, thumbs, and toes

#### Amputations

Any injury likely to lead to permanent loss of sight or reduction in sight

Any crush injury to the head or torso causing damage to the brain or internal organs

Serious burns (including scalding) which cover more than 10% of the body or causes significant damage to the eyes, respiratory system, or other vital organs

Any scalping requiring hospital treatment

Any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia

- Any other injury arising from working in an enclosed space which:  
leads to hypothermia or heat-induced illness  
requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours
- An injury to a non-employee where that person is taken directly to hospital for treatment because of their injury
- Any dangerous occurrence
- Over-seven-day incapacitation of a worker: Accidents must be reported where they result in an employee or self-employed person being away from work, or unable to perform their normal work duties, for more than seven consecutive days as the result of their injury. This seven-day period does not include the day of the accident but does include weekends and rest days. The report must be made within 15 days of the accident.

## Reporting

All incidents can be reported online but a telephone service is also provided for reporting fatal/specified incidents only - Incident Contact Centre on 0345 300 9923 (opening hours Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 5 pm).

Reporting online: Responsible persons should complete the appropriate online report form listed below. The form will then be submitted directly to the RIDDOR database. There is an option to download a copy for your records.

- Report of an injury
- Report of a dangerous occurrence
- Report of a case of disease

The completed report form must be kept with other accident records and documents on the accident investigation. Forms are kept advising the insurers of a potential claim and to present to the Enforcing Authority in the event of an investigation. Records are to be kept for 6 years from the date of the incident.

## Disabled Persons including children with Special Education Needs (SEN)

Little Acorns will give full and proper consideration to the needs of disabled employees, children, and visitors. To achieve this, we will:

- Treat all disabled employees, children and visitors with respect and dignity, both in the provision of a safe working environment and in equal access to our facilities
  - Ensure that risk assessments are undertaken of the special needs of the disabled and carry out reasonable adjustments to the premises and/or employment arrangements
  - Encourage employees with special needs to suggest any premises or task improvements to their line managers
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- Discipline any employees found treating their disabled colleagues with less than the expected standards of respect and dignity
  - In an emergency evacuation, ensure suitable plans are in place which will assist disabled people to leave the premises swiftly

Risk assessment of children with Special Education Needs will, if reasonably practical, take place before the child starts the setting as well as when planning educational visits off site, purchasing new facilities or resources and when a significant change in the child's needs occurs. Children may be unable to recognise everyday hazards, communicate distress, or move round independently

### Drugs and alcohol

Staff must not drink alcohol on the premises. Any member of staff who is found consuming alcohol on the premises or is found to be intoxicated at work will face disciplinary action on the grounds of gross misconduct under the Disciplinary procedure.

The possession, use or distribution of drugs for non-medical purposes on the premises is strictly forbidden and a gross misconduct offence. Any prescribed drugs being taken that may affect the ability to perform work should be discussed with the Manager. All personal medication must be stored in a secure location and kept out of the reach of children. Failure to keep employee's personal medication out of children's reach is a gross misconduct offence.

### Educational visits

Our aim is to ensure that the safety of children, employees and others is managed to minimise risk as far as practicable during off-site visits and outings. To achieve its objective to ensure safety the organisation will guarantee that:

- all visits are planned
- risk assessments are completed, where appropriate
- all employees are briefed prior to each visit
- emergency arrangements are established for all visits
- the ratio of adults to children is appropriate and proportionate to the needs of the visit

- parents are notified of all visits and consent is obtained from parents for all visits
- arrangements are made for children with medical or special needs
- safety during visits is monitored and reviewed

## Electricity

All reasonable steps will be taken to secure the health and safety of employees, children and others who use, operate, or maintain electrical equipment. To ensure this objective the organisation will:

- Ensure electrical installations and equipment are installed in accordance with the Wiring Regulations (BS 7671) published by the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET)
- Arrange for the annual inspection and testing of portable electrical equipment.
- Inspect and test second-hand electrical equipment lent to, or borrowed by, the organisation
- Ensure employees and contractors who carry out electrical work are competent to do so
- Maintain detailed records

Employees must:

- Visually check electrical equipment for damage before use
- Report any defects found to the manager
- Not use defective electrical equipment
- Not carry out any repair to any electrical item unless qualified to do so
- Switch off non-essential equipment from the mains when left unattended for long periods
- Not bring any electrical item onto the premises until it has been tested and a record of such a test filed
- Not leave electric cables in such a position that they will cause a tripping hazard or be subject to mechanical damage
- Never run extension leads under carpets or through doorways
- Not daisy-chain extension leads to make a longer one
- If employees are in any doubt whether a piece of equipment is safe then it should be labelled 'out of use' and withdrawn until it has been tested and declared fit for use by a qualified person

## Fire

All reasonable steps will be taken to prevent a fire occurring. In the event of fire, the safety of life will override all other considerations, such as saving property and extinguishing the fire.

The key actions required to ensure fire safety is effectively managed are as follows and are to be actioned by the Responsible Person at each site:

Organise the completion of an annual fire risk assessment

- Arrange for fire safety checks to be completed and recorded for the following: Fire evacuations, fire alarm tests, extinguisher checks and emergency lighting tests
- Instruct new employees or visitors on the evacuation procedures
- Develop personal evacuation plans for people with disabilities and special needs
- Service the fire alarm and emergency lighting as appropriate

Staff are aware of the following:

- What to do on discovering a fire
  - How to raise the alarm
  - What to do upon hearing the fire alarm
  - The arrangements for calling the fire and rescue service
  - The evacuation procedures for everyone in the premises (including young children or mobility impaired persons) to reach an assembly point at a place of total safety
  - The location and, when appropriate, the use of firefighting equipment
  - The location of escape routes
  - How to open all emergency exit doors
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- The importance of keeping fire doors closed to prevent the spread of fire, heat, and smoke
  - The safe use of and risks from storing or working with highly flammable and explosive substances
  - The importance of general fire safety, which includes good housekeeping

## First Aid

Little Acorns is committed to providing sufficient provision for first aid to deal with injuries that arise at work or because of our activities. To achieve this objective the organisation will:

- Appoint and train a suitable number of first aid personnel and ensure that a suitably qualified person is always on site
- Provide and maintain suitable and sufficient first aid facilities including first aid boxes
- Provide any additional first aid training that may be required to deal with specific first aid hazards

First Aid Boxes are clearly marked, and their location will be made known to all staff on induction. Travel first aid boxes will be kept for use on outings. First aid boxes will contain enough suitable first aid materials and nothing else. A list of required contents can be found in the box. First aid does not include the administration of medicines and thus first aid boxes must NOT contain drugs of any kind including aspirin, paracetamol, antiseptic creams etc. First aid boxes are located near to hand washing facilities. All first aid boxes will be checked regularly and maintained by the Health & Safety Officer. Items should not be used after expiry date shown on packaging. Suitable protective clothing and equipment such as disposable gloves (e.g., vinyl or powder free, low protein latex CE marked) will be provided. Small quantities of contaminated waste (soiled or used first aid dressings) can be safely disposed of via the usual refuse collection arrangements. Waste should be double bagged in plastic and sealed by knotting.

Responsible Persons at each site will retain records of:

- Certification of training for all first aiders and refresher periods
- Any specialised instruction received by first-aiders or staff (e.g., Epi-pens)
- First aid cases treated

Injuries to the head need to be treated with particular care. Any evidence of the following symptoms may indicate a serious injury, and immediate medical assistance is required. According to NHS advice <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/severe-head-injury/symptoms> of a severe head injury can include:

- unconsciousness – where a person has collapsed and is unresponsive, even for a brief period
  - concussion – a sudden but short-lived loss of mental function that occurs after a blow or another injury to the head; a person with concussion may have a glazed look or appear confused, but won't necessarily be unconscious
  - fits or seizures
  - difficulty speaking or staying awake
  - problems with the senses – such as hearing loss or double vision
  - repeated episodes of vomiting
  - blood or clear fluid coming from the ears or nose
  - memory loss (amnesia)
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- sudden swelling or bruising around both eyes and behind the ear
  - difficulty with walking or co-ordination

It is important that spillages of blood, faeces, vomit, or other body fluids are dealt with immediately as they pose a risk of transmission of infection. Disease protective clothing should be worn when dealing with the spillage such as gloves. Cuts and abrasions on any areas of the skin should be covered with a waterproof dressing.

Hard surfaces e.g., floor tiles and impervious tabletops should be cleaned with a neutral detergent and hot water if there are spills or splashes of blood.

When cleaning soft surfaces and fabrics e.g., carpets and sofas remove the spillage as far as possible using absorbent paper towels then clean with a fresh solution of neutral detergent and water. Carpets and upholstery can then be cleaned using cleaner of choice, steam cleaning may be considered.

Contaminated gloves, aprons, paper towels, etc should be carefully disposed of into a leak proof plastic bag, securely tied and placed immediately into the bin.

## Hazardous Substances (COSHH)

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure all exposure of employees and children to substances hazardous to health is prevented or at least controlled to within statutory limits. Substances hazardous to health as defined by the COSHH regulations are substances classified as very toxic, toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant. These can be identified by their warning label and carry the pictograms.



Bleach and disinfectants should be stored, handled, and used in accordance with COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health, 2002) Regulations and the manufacturer's instructions.

Exposure to substances hazardous to health should either be prevented altogether, substituted with a less harmful substance, or (where it is not reasonably practicable) adequately controlled. Employees have a duty to make full and proper use of all control measures identified as required in the risk assessment.

## Legionnaires' Disease

Suitable precautions are taken to prevent or control the risk of exposure to legionella. Legionellosis is the collective name given to the pneumonia-like illness caused by legionella bacteria. This includes the most serious legionnaires' disease, as well as the similar but less serious conditions of Pontiac fever and Lochgoilhead fever. Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia, and everyone is susceptible to infection.

Some people are at higher risk, including:

- people over 45 years of age
- smokers and heavy drinkers
- people suffering from chronic respiratory or kidney disease
- anyone with an impaired immune system.

Water systems that have the right environmental conditions could potentially be a source for legionella bacteria growth. Carrying out a risk assessment is a legal requirement and helps establish any potential risks and implement measures to either eliminate or control risks. The responsible person is responsible for ensuring the risk assessment is carried out, they may conduct this themselves or this can be delegated to someone with the necessary skills to conduct a risk assessment. This should include:

- Any potential risk sources (including stagnant water if Pre-School is closed for long periods)
- Any controls currently in place to control risks
- Monitoring, inspection, and maintenance procedures
- Records of the monitoring results, inspection and checks carried out
- Review dates

If the risks are insignificant and are being properly managed to comply with the law, the risk assessment is complete, and no further action is required. The risk assessment should be reviewed annually in case anything changes.

## Home Visits

Little Acorns offers home visits to all children prior to starting at the provision as they are a great way to build relationships with families and aid the settling-in process. Additional home visits may be offered to targeted children to gather additional information and to enhance learning opportunities. We use a Home Visit Risk Assessment for each visit to minimise risk to staff. The risk assessment considers potential risks arising from home visits. In particular:

- Home visits should be completed by two company employees together
- Employees should always inform the person in charge if there are any changes to arrangements or timings
- Each completed home visit must be reported to the person in charge and the employees must check back in physically or verbally on completion of the visit
- If an employee fails to return to work (or reach home) at the designated time, the person in charge should attempt to make contact. If contact cannot be made, after a period of one hour the police should be alerted
- Any accidents that occur during home visits must be recorded without undue delay

If an employee is concerned about a child's wellbeing or safety during a home visit, they must discuss the situation immediately with one of the Pre-Schools Designated Safeguarding Leads or Manager.

## Lone Working

Lone working relates to any individual who spends some or all their working hours working alone without direct supervision and who does not have someone close at hand to assist them in the case of an incident. Lone working increases the health and safety risks to individuals because they may not be able to summon assistance in the event of an incident and any delay in receiving attention may increase the consequences of any injury.

People falling into this category includes:

- Anyone working during or outside normal hours on their own
- Employees who open or close the building on their own
- Employees working during holidays

Some activities should not be carried out by people working alone including, working at height on ladders, use of high-risk chemicals and use of high-risk machinery. Anyone working alone must have access to a telephone and ensure that a relative or colleague is aware of their whereabouts. All lone workers, for reasons of security, health, and safety, should lock themselves in the building. Staff must not place themselves in danger by challenging intruders or vandals but should call the police for assistance.

## Securing the premises

When the last person leaves the building, they must make sure it is secure. This includes the closing of all fire doors, locking back doors, making sure all windows are closed and setting the alarm. When the first person arrives in the morning, they must make a quick examination

of the exterior of the building to make sure that there are no signs of a break-in or of anyone having been in the building. If in any doubt, they should contact the Police.

## Manual Handling

Manual Handling refers to the transporting or supporting of any load by hand or by bodily force including lifting, putting down, carrying, pushing or pulling. A load can include a person or animal as well as inanimate objects.

Typical manual handling tasks in the Pre-School are:

- Moving tables and chairs
- Putting out equipment
- Receiving and putting away deliveries
- Moving large items of furniture
- Picking up children
- Receiving and moving items such as boxes of paper or files/archive boxes
- Carrying laptops & files

To prevent injuries and long-term ill-health from manual handling the organisation will ensure that activities which involve manual handling are eliminated, so far as is reasonably practicable. Where it is not practical the organisation will carry out an assessment to determine what control measures are required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

To implement this policy, we will ensure that:

- There is no lifting, wherever possible, in relation to the handling of children aged three years old and older
- A risk assessment of children with special needs will be done before they attend
- Adequate information and training are provided to persons carrying out manual handling activities
- Any injuries or incidents relating to manual handling will be investigated
- Employees are properly supervised by peers and managers and challenged when breaches in policy are evident
- Where relevant, employees undertaking manual handling activities are suitably screened for reasons of health and safety, before doing the work
- Special arrangements are made for individuals with health conditions which could be adversely affected by manual handling operations
- No employee will be required to lift any item that they do not feel confident of doing without risking personal injury.

There may be occasions when a child with medical needs requires assistance in moving. While the basics outlined above still apply, there are other considerations.

The move should be explained to the child so that they can actively participate in it. Whenever a child with physical disabilities needs regular support in standard moves such as from a wheelchair to toilet, then a full risk assessment must be written up. Clear instructions covering each activity should be included, so that all staff members who are involved in the task may move the person safely and in the same manner. Any ancillary equipment such as

hoists, etc. must be used in the correct manner and staff must have received appropriate training in the use of the equipment. The risk assessment should consider both routine manual handling and emergency situations when manual-handling procedures may have to be adapted (e.g., evacuation in the event of a fire). The risk assessment will help inform the procedures for that child's needs and all procedures should be developed in consultation with the child, the parents/carers and advice from medical professionals.

Wherever possible employees must avoid lifting children. The environment has been designed to provide alternatives to lifting children, for example the use of steps on nappy changing units so children can climb up to the changing space independently. Employees should kneel to comfort an upset child to avoid a lift. However, there will be times when lifting is unavoidable, and the following guidelines are to be applied to lift as safely as possible:

- Place feet apart in a striding position
- keep the breastbone elevated
- bend the knees
- brace their stomach muscles
- hold child close to their body (lift children with one arm under their buttocks and the other arm under their backs, with the child facing them)
- move their feet not their spine to stand up
- prepare to move in a forward direction.

Twisting whilst lifting, stretching over, and lifting (lean close and raise the child as close as possible to their body instead) and carrying children on a hip should be avoided.

## New and Expectant Mothers

We recognise that the general precautions taken to protect the health and safety of the workforce may not in all cases protect new and expectant mothers and there may be occasions when, due to their condition, different and/or additional measures will be necessary. To implement effective measures for new and expectant mothers we will ensure that:

- Employees are encouraged to inform their manager of their condition at the earliest possible opportunity
- A risk assessment is carried out by the manager for all work activities undertaken by new and expectant mothers, these are updated periodically through the pregnancy, and associated records and documentation maintained
- Necessary control measures identified by the risk assessment are implemented, followed, monitored, reviewed and, if necessary, revised
- New and expectant mothers are informed of any risks to them and/or their child and the controls measures taken to protect them
- Any adverse incidents are immediately reported and investigated
- Provision is made to support new and expectant mothers who need to take time off work for medical reasons associated with their condition
- Where risks cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level then consideration will be given to adjusting working conditions and/or hours or if necessary.

## Mental Health

Little Acorns is committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of its employees and to promoting a positive working environment. We recognise that work-related stress is a serious issue in the education sector and that it can have a negative effect on the mental and physical health and wellbeing of its staff. We will therefore take all reasonable action to combat work-related stress through the development and adoption of good-working practices. We recognise our duty under the Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of employees. This includes taking reasonable steps to prevent them from suffering stress-related illness because of their work. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines work-related stress as “an adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure” or to other types of demand placed on them at work. It is a problem that is clearly linked to factors such as:

- Excessive work demands
- Overwork
- Lack of control over work
- Bullying and harassment
- Lack of support from colleagues and managers
- Lack of adequate training
- Unclear job roles or job role conflict
- Change

According to the HSE, stress can have several negative effects on an individual, including:

- Fatigue
- Anxiety and depression
- Low self-esteem
- Adverse effects on performance
- Problem sleeping
- Other health problems, such as migraine, raised blood pressure, increased alcohol use
- Physical and emotional exhaustion can be caused by severe or prolonged stress.

These problems can be revealed in the following ways:

- High levels of absenteeism and staff sickness
- Increased staff turnover
- Low staff morale
- Increased number of accidents and mistakes
- High levels of conflict

Little Acorns accepts the key message of the HSE, that employers can take effective action to prevent work-related stress and that this will benefit both staff and employer. To combat work-related stress, therefore:

- A positive workplace culture will be encouraged where staff wellbeing is prioritised and both staff and managers develop an increased awareness and understanding of stress at work issues
- Support will be provided for employees who are experiencing work-related stress to enable them to remain in work wherever possible or support them in returning to work
- When a manager perceives stress to be a potential problem for a member of staff (commonly during or as a follow-up to a period of sickness), the manager should talk to the member of staff in strict confidence and see if they require additional support
- Managers should take all reasonable actions to support members of staff — typical long-term support might include a temporary or permanent change of job role, adjustment in workload, a tapered return to work, etc

All employees have access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), delivered by Health Assured – the UK and Ireland’s leading wellbeing provider.

Reviews of the effectiveness of current measures taken to reduce workplace stress will take place and new control measures introduced wherever necessary to eliminate stress or reduce the risks from stress to acceptable levels. Regular consultation will be held with staff to assess levels of staff wellbeing and identify if stress is an issue of concern for individual staff or in the organisation in general. Management will regularly monitor and review sickness absence rates to look for trends that could indicate stress as a contributory cause.

## Outdoor Play Equipment

Children must always be supervised whilst using outdoor play equipment and the appropriate number of people required to supervise play areas must be determined for each location by the supervising staff. All staff should be familiar with the equipment, the rules for use and the ability of the children accessing the equipment.

A daily risk assessment is carried out on play equipment before children are allowed access to it. The equipment is checked regularly for defects which are then reported to the Responsible Person. Consideration must be given to weather conditions as some equipment may not be suitable during wet and icy conditions.

Suitable clothing and footwear should be worn by children and staff. Hazards can arise from unfastened coats, woollen gloves, scarves, ties, etc. Appropriate footwear must be worn as hazards can arise from slippery soles, open toed and sling back sandals, heels, and untied laces. An appropriate impact absorbing surface must be in place for fixed equipment with a fall height of 600mm. This cannot prevent accidents but may reduce the level of injury.

## Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a systematic examination of what, within our activities, can cause harm to people and it helps us determine if we are doing enough or if further actions are required to reduce the likelihood of injury or ill health. Our policy is to complete a risk assessment of all known and reasonably foreseeable health and safety hazards covering premises, people, equipment, and activities to control risks and to plan and prioritise the implementation of the identified control measures. It is the responsibility of the Responsible Person to ensure risk assessments are conducted. We will ensure that:

- Assessments are carried out and records are kept
- Control measures introduced are implemented and followed
- Employees are informed of the relevant results and provided with necessary training
- Any injuries or incidents lead to a review of relevant assessments
- Assessments are regularly monitored and reviewed

## Smoking

Exposure to second-hand smoke, also known as passive smoking, increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other illnesses. Ventilation or separating smokers and non-smokers within the same airspace does not stop potentially dangerous exposure. It is the policy of Little Acorns that its premises are smoke-free and that all employees have a right to work in a smoke-free environment. Smoking is prohibited throughout, including the use of all artificial smoking aids (electronic or otherwise) with no exceptions. In addition, and especially due to the health risks to children, employees, visitors, and parents are respectfully required to abstain from smoking when near or around the buildings or Pre-School grounds.

## Violence to Staff

Little Acorns recognises that in certain situations violent and aggressive behaviour towards staff may occur and therefore we will take all reasonable measures to protect staff from violence and aggression. We define violence and aggression as:

- Actual or threatened physical assaults on staff
- Psychological abuse
- Verbal abuse which includes shouting, swearing and gestures
- Threats against employees

To achieve this objective, we will:

- Ensure that premises are kept secure
- Inform all employees of the procedure following a violent or challenging behaviour incident
- Not tolerate violence or challenging behaviour towards our employees
- Support the employees involved in any incident
- Report the incident to the police and press charges if appropriate
- Keep records of all incidents of violence and aggression and review the control measures with a view to continually improve employee safety

The Visitors & Parents Acceptable Behaviour Policy includes further information regarding protecting employees from abuse, aggression, and violent behaviour from third parties outside of the organisation.

## Work at Height

Little Acorns will take all reasonable steps to provide a safe working environment for all employees who may be affected by work at height activities. The organisation will ensure that:

- All work activities that involve work at height are identified and assessed
- The need to undertake work at height will be eliminated whenever it is reasonably practicable to do so
- All work at height is properly planned and organised
- All employees required to use stepladders or ladders are competent
- Regular inspections of all stepladders and ladders are undertaken
- Any contractors on the property comply with this policy
- Ladders and stepladders are secured to prevent unauthorised use

Any activities involving work at height will be risk assessed, and findings recorded. This assessment should consider both the work to be done and the most appropriate access equipment to be used (not just what is available) to achieve a safe system of work.

## Training

Health and Safety training shall be incorporated within annual training programmes. Health and Safety training needs will, therefore, be identified and planned for in the same manner as other training needs:

- Training will be arranged for managers, to equip them with an understanding of the manager's responsibilities under this policy, and the role and purpose of the responsible person. (Usually IOSH training)
- Training will also be arranged for the responsible person to enable them to fulfil their role. (Usually IOSH training)
- All members of staff should receive training to acquaint them with the main provisions of the law and its practical implication, the main features of this policy and key safety rules. (Usually, awareness training provided by an external training organisation)

**Policy reviewed on: 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025**

**Reviewed by: Sandra Butler, Manager**

**Next Review Due: 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026**