

HEATHCOT PRESCHOOL LTD



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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This Employee Handbook outlines the terms, conditions, policies and expectations for all employees at Heathcot Preschool Ltd. It provides guidance on staff responsibilities, professional conduct, safeguarding duties, and workplace procedures to support the safe and effective running of the setting.

This handbook works alongside the setting's full Policies and Procedures Booklet, which contains detailed operational and safeguarding procedures.

All staff are required to read, understand and comply with the contents of this handbook and the main policy booklet at all times.

Copies are available from management upon request.

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1. Introduction

Welcome to Heathcot Preschool Ltd

Heathcot Preschool Ltd is located in the Coppice and Werneth area of Oldham and serves the local community by supporting young children to learn and develop safely through play.

Established in September 1999, the setting has grown from a small provision into a well-established early year setting providing high-quality care and education. Over the years, Heathcot has developed significantly, including extending opening hours to operate five days a week during term time, increasing staffing levels, and welcoming more children into the setting.

We provide a welcoming, happy and safe environment where children can learn, play and develop through meaningful experiences. We currently care for children aged 0 to 5 years, supporting their development in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Contact Information

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Ofsted Registration Number: EY301004

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About this Handbook

This Employee Handbook has been developed to provide you with clear information about the setting's employment policies, procedures, and expectations.

It is important that you read this Handbook carefully, as it works alongside your Contract of Employment to outline the main terms and conditions of your employment.

The Handbook covers a wide range of subjects relating to your role. In the event of any inconsistency between this Handbook and your Contract of Employment, the terms of your Contract will take precedence.

If you have any questions, or if any part of this Handbook is unclear, you should raise this with your manager or a member of the Management team as soon as possible.

You are expected to read, understand and comply with the contents of this Handbook before confirming your acceptance.

In addition to this Employee Handbook, all staff are required to read, understand and adhere to the setting's full Policies and Procedures Booklet. These policies outline the statutory and operational requirements of the setting, including safeguarding, health and safety, and data protection.

The Policies and Procedures Booklet is available within the setting and must be followed at all times. Failure to comply with these policies may result in disciplinary action.

About Heathcot Preschool

Heathcot Preschool Ltd is located in the Coppice and Werneth area of Oldham and serves the local community by providing high-quality early years education in a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment.

Established in September 1999, the setting has grown significantly from its early beginnings. We are committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive environment where children can learn, play and develop through meaningful experiences.

The setting operates five days a week during term time and offers a range of sessions to meet the needs of families. We care for children from 0 to 5 years, supporting their development through play-based learning in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

Our Mission

At Heathcot Preschool Ltd, we strive to provide a secure, caring and stimulating environment where all children can reach their full potential. We aim to ensure that parents and carers feel confident, supported and fully involved in their child's early learning journey.

Our Aims

We aim to:

- Provide a warm, safe, caring and stimulating environment for all children
 - Deliver high-quality care and education for children aged 0 to 5 years
 - Work in partnership with parents and carers to support children's learning and development
 - Promote equality, inclusion and respect for diversity in all aspects of our practice
-

Management and Governance

Heathcot Preschool Ltd is a registered charity and is overseen by a voluntary Management Committee. The committee is made up of parents, past parents and members of the local community, ensuring that the setting remains responsive to the needs of the families it serves.

The Management Committee is responsible for:

- Overseeing the financial management of the setting
- Employing and supporting staff
- Ensuring the setting operates in line with its policies and procedures
- Supporting high-quality provision and partnership working with parents and professionals

The Manager is responsible for the day-to-day running of the setting and works alongside the committee to ensure that the needs of the children remain central to all decisions.

The setting is registered with Ofsted to care for up to 40 children per session.

For any queries relating to governance, the Management Committee can be contacted via the setting.

Management Committee

The Management Committee consists of the following members:

Name	Role
Yasmin Toor	Chairperson and Company Director
Sher Baz	Treasurer and Company Director
Javid Iqbal	Committee Member, Company Director and Secretary

The Management Committee is responsible for:

- Managing the setting's finances
- Employing and supporting staff
- Ensuring the setting operates in line with its policies and procedures
- Supporting high-quality provision and partnership working with parents and professionals

Management Committee can be contacted by telephone on 0161 284 8497 or by email management@heathcotpreschool.co.uk.

2. Employment Framework

Employment Terms and Expectations

This section outlines the general expectations and conditions that apply to all employees of Heathcot Preschool Ltd. These should be read in conjunction with your individual Contract of Employment.

Contract of Employment

All employees will receive a Contract of Employment which sets out the specific terms and conditions relating to their role, including hours of work, rate of pay and notice periods.

In the event of any inconsistency between this Handbook and your Contract of Employment, the terms of your Contract will take precedence.

Standards of Conduct

As an employee, you are expected to maintain high standards of professionalism at all times. This includes:

- Acting in the best interests of the children at all times
- Demonstrating a positive and professional attitude
- Treating children, parents, colleagues and visitors with respect
- Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries
- Following all policies and procedures of the setting

Failure to meet these expectations may result in disciplinary action.

Compliance with Policies and Procedures

All employees are required to read, understand and comply with the setting's policies and procedures at all times. This includes those contained within this Handbook and the main Policies and Procedures Booklet.

You must ensure that your practice is in line with statutory requirements, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and any relevant guidance issued by Ofsted.

Professional Responsibility

You are expected to:

- Carry out your duties to the best of your ability
 - Take responsibility for your own performance and development
 - Participate in supervision, training and appraisal processes
 - Raise any concerns appropriately through the correct channels
 - Work as part of a team to support the smooth running of the setting
-

Changes to Employment

The setting reserves the right to make reasonable changes to your duties, working hours or place of work where necessary to meet the needs of the business. Where possible, you will be given reasonable notice of any changes.

Acceptance of Employment Terms

By accepting employment with Heathcot Preschool Ltd, you agree to comply with the terms outlined in your Contract of Employment, this Employee Handbook, and the setting's Policies and Procedures.

Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in formal action in line with the setting's disciplinary procedures.

Safer Recruitment, DBS and Staff Suitability

Purpose

This policy ensures that all staff working at Heathcot Preschool Ltd are suitable to work with children and that safer recruitment practices are followed in line with statutory requirements.

Pre-Employment Checks

All staff must undergo appropriate checks before starting employment, including:

- Enhanced DBS check
- Verification of identity
- Verification of qualifications
- Minimum 2 References (including most recent employer)
- Right to work in the UK
- Employment history and explanation of gaps

Employment is conditional upon satisfactory checks.

DBS Checks and Update Service

- All staff must hold a valid Enhanced DBS certificate
- Staff are required to subscribe to the DBS Update Service
- The setting will carry out regular status checks
- Staff are responsible for maintaining their subscription

Failure to maintain DBS status may affect continued employment.

Ongoing Suitability

Staff must:

- Remain suitable to work with children at all times
- Inform management immediately of any changes that may affect suitability

This includes:

- Police investigations, cautions or charges
- Changes in personal circumstances

- Any concerns relating to safeguarding
-

Disqualification by Association

Staff must disclose if they or anyone living in their household:

- Is on the DBS barred list
 - Has been convicted of relevant offences
 - Is disqualified from working with children
-

Failure to Disclose

Failure to disclose relevant information may result in disciplinary action and could lead to dismissal.

Compliance

All staff must follow this policy alongside safeguarding requirements and statutory guidance.

Working Hours, Pay, Holiday Entitlements

Working Hours

Employees are expected to work their full contractual hours each week in accordance with their Contract of Employment.

The setting operates Monday to Friday during term time (39 weeks per year). Working hours are based on the operational needs of the setting and will be outlined in your individual contract.

Full-time staff are typically required to work approximately 38.5 hours per week. Part-time staff will work agreed hours based on their role.

All staff are required to:

- Attend all scheduled shifts
- Attend staff meetings, training sessions and parents' evenings
- Work flexibly where reasonably required

Staff may occasionally be required to attend or work outside of their normal working hours, including **evenings or weekends**, for purposes such as:

- Staff meetings
- Training sessions
- Parent events
- Open days or setting events

Where possible, reasonable notice will be given.

Breaks

Employees who work **6 hours or more in a day** are entitled to a **30-minute lunch break**.

- Lunch breaks are **unpaid**
 - Breaks must be taken at a time agreed with management
 - Staff must ensure appropriate supervision of children is maintained at all times
-

Employees are entitled to rest breaks in line with their contract.

If full contractual hours are not worked, pay may be adjusted accordingly.

Pay

Employees will be paid in accordance with their Contract of Employment.

Heathcot Preschool Ltd operates an **annualised pay system**. This means:

- Total annual pay, including holiday entitlement, is calculated across the full year
- This total is divided into 12 equal monthly payments
- Staff receive a consistent monthly salary regardless of term-time working patterns

Any time taken off, including unpaid leave or unauthorised absence, will be deducted from the following month's salary.

Employees will receive payslips detailing pay and any deductions.

Holiday Entitlement

All employees are entitled to statutory paid annual leave of 5.6 weeks per year, calculated on a pro-rata basis for part-time staff.

As Heathcot Preschool Ltd operates on a term-time only basis:

- Holiday entitlement is incorporated into annualised pay
- Annual leave is not normally taken during term time

Staff must not book holidays during term time unless exceptional circumstances have been agreed in advance by management.

Overtime

From time to time, employees may be required to work additional hours to meet the needs of the setting.

Overtime will normally be:

- Paid at the employee's normal hourly rate, or
- Taken as time off in lieu, as agreed with management

The nature of early years provision requires flexibility, and staff are expected to support the smooth running of the setting where reasonably required.

Overpayments

If an overpayment of wages occurs, the setting reserves the right to recover the overpaid amount.

This may happen, for example, due to:

- Payroll errors
- Incorrect recording of hours or leave
- Changes to employment status

Where an overpayment has been identified:

- The employee will be informed as soon as possible
- The amount and reason for the overpayment will be explained
- A repayment plan may be agreed where appropriate

The setting reserves the right to make reasonable deductions from salary to recover overpayments, in line with employment legislation.

Review and Changes

The setting reserves the right to review working arrangements, including hours, pay structure and staffing patterns, to meet the needs of the business.

Where possible, reasonable notice will be given of any changes.

Requesting Leave

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures for requesting any type of leave from work, including annual leave, medical appointments, unpaid leave and other authorised absences.

Its aim is to ensure consistency, fairness and minimal disruption to the safe and effective running of the setting.

General Principles

All leave must be:

- Requested in advance wherever possible
- Approved by management before being taken
- Recorded in line with setting procedures

Unauthorised leave or failure to follow this procedure may result in disciplinary action.

Annual Leave

Heathcot Preschool Ltd operates on a **term-time only basis**, and annual leave is incorporated into staff pay.

Staff are **not permitted to take annual leave during term time**, unless exceptional circumstances have been agreed in advance by management.

Medical and Dental Appointments

Where possible, appointments must be arranged **outside of working hours**.

If this is not possible:

- Requests must be discussed and agreed with management in advance
- At least **48 hours' notice** should be given, where practicable
- Proof of appointment may be requested

Time taken for appointments during working hours is normally **unpaid**, unless otherwise agreed.

Emergency appointments will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Time Off for Dependants

Employees are entitled to take reasonable unpaid time off to deal with an emergency involving a dependant.

This includes situations such as:

- A child becoming unexpectedly ill
- Breakdown in childcare arrangements
- Urgent incidents at school or nursery

This leave is intended for **emergencies only** and not for planned events.

Further detail is outlined in the Attendance and Absence Management section.

Unpaid Leave

Requests for unpaid leave (outside of dependants leave) may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

All requests must:

- Be submitted in advance
- Clearly state the reason for the request
- Be approved by management

Approval is at the discretion of the setting and will depend on operational needs.

Cultural and Religious Leave

The setting recognises the importance of cultural and religious events.

Staff may request **one day of unpaid leave** to observe a significant cultural or religious occasion.

Requests must be made in advance and agreed by management.

Emergency Leave

In exceptional or unforeseen circumstances, emergency leave may be granted at the discretion of management.

Employees must inform management as soon as possible and follow reporting procedures.

Failure to Follow Procedure

Failure to request or obtain approval for leave, or misuse of leave, may result in disciplinary action.

Attendance and Absence Management

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures for reporting and managing staff absence at Heathcot Preschool Ltd, including sickness absence and time off for dependants.

Its aim is to ensure fairness, consistency, and minimal disruption to the safe and effective running of the setting.

Reporting Absence

If you are unable to attend work, you must:

- Notify management at least 2 hours before your scheduled start time
- Contact both named managers in line with setting procedures
- Provide a reason for absence and, where possible, an expected return date

If you are unable to report your absence yourself, you must arrange for someone to do so on your behalf.

All absences will be recorded and monitored for frequency, patterns and duration.

Sickness Absence

Any unplanned sickness absence will be followed up with a telephone call from management between 9:00am and 10:00am.

The purpose of this call is to:

- Confirm the reason for absence
 - Check your wellbeing
 - Discuss the expected return date
 - Identify any support or adjustments required
 - Record the discussion confidentially
-

Certification

- Absences of up to 7 calendar days may be self-certified
- Absences longer than 7 days require a fit note from a registered clinician
- Failure to provide appropriate certification may result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised

Monitoring Attendance

Attendance will be regularly monitored.

Where an employee has three separate short-term absences within a rolling three-month period, they will be invited to an informal discussion to:

- Identify any underlying issues
- Offer support or adjustments
- Promote improved attendance

This process is supportive in nature and not disciplinary. However, persistent or unexplained absence may lead to formal procedures.

Long-Term Absence

Absences lasting four weeks or more will be managed under the setting's long-term absence procedures.

This may include:

- Medical assessments
- Occupational health referrals
- Phased return-to-work arrangements

Time Off for Dependants

All employees have a statutory right to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off to deal with an emergency involving a dependant.

A dependant includes:

- A child, spouse, partner or civil partner
- A parent or close relative
- Any person who reasonably relies on you for care

This right applies from the first day of employment.

Time off for dependants is only permitted for genuine emergencies, such as:

- A child becoming suddenly ill or injured
- Unexpected breakdown in childcare arrangements
- Urgent or unforeseen incidents at school or nursery

If alternative childcare can be arranged on the same day, you are expected to return to work once arrangements are in place.

This leave does not cover foreseeable or planned events, such as:

- School holidays
 - Routine medical appointments
 - Known personal commitments
-

Duration and Review

Time taken off for sickness or dependants must be reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances.

Frequent or extended absence may result in a review meeting to discuss:

- Support options
- Reasonable adjustments
- Flexible working arrangements

All absences will be documented and reviewed to ensure fairness and consistency.

Misuse of Policy

Any misuse of sickness absence or dependant leave may result in action under the setting's disciplinary procedures.

Punctuality

Purpose

Punctuality is essential in an early years setting to ensure:

- Children's safety and wellbeing
- Compliance with staffing ratios
- Smooth daily routines and continuity of care
- High standards of professional practice

This section outlines expectations for punctuality and how lateness will be managed.

Expected Standards

All staff are expected to:

- Arrive on site, prepared and ready to begin work at their contracted start time
- Support colleagues by maintaining staffing ratios and routines
- Demonstrate professionalism and reliability at all times

Punctuality is a key part of delivering high-quality practice.

Definition of Lateness

An employee will be considered late if they:

- Arrive after their contracted start time, or
 - Are not ready to begin work at their start time
-

Reporting Lateness

If you expect to be late, you must:

- Contact the Manager or Deputy as soon as possible and before your start time, where practicable
- Provide a reason for the lateness and an estimated time of arrival

Failure to report lateness may result in it being treated as unauthorised.

Recording and Monitoring

All instances of lateness will be:

- Recorded
- Monitored for patterns
- Reviewed where necessary

Records will be handled confidentially in line with data protection requirements.

Pay Deductions

Where lateness is unauthorised, the setting reserves the right to deduct pay for time not worked.

For payroll purposes:

- Where an employee arrives **5 minutes or more late**, pay may be deducted in **15-minute increments**
 - This reflects time not worked and is not a penalty
 - Deductions will not reduce pay below the National Minimum Wage
-

Managing Lateness

Occasional lateness will normally be addressed informally. However, repeated or persistent lateness may result in formal action under the setting's disciplinary procedures.

This may include:

- Informal discussion
 - Verbal warning
 - Written warning
 - Final written warning
 - Dismissal (as a last resort following a fair process)
-

Safeguarding Considerations

Due to the nature of early years provision:

- Lateness that impacts staffing ratios or children's safety will be treated seriously
 - Repeated lateness may be escalated more quickly where safeguarding is affected
-

Equality and Reasonable Adjustments

The setting will consider reasonable adjustments where lateness is linked to:

- A disability
- A health condition
- Other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

Employees are encouraged to discuss any concerns with management at the earliest opportunity.

3. Staff Conduct & Professional Standards

Code of Conduct and Professional Behaviour

Purpose

This policy outlines the standards of behaviour and professionalism expected of all employees at Heathcot Preschool Ltd.

It supports a safe, respectful and professional environment for children, staff, parents and visitors.

General Expectations

All employees are expected to:

- Act in the best interests of children at all times
 - Maintain high standards of honesty, integrity and professionalism
 - Treat all children, parents, colleagues and visitors with respect
 - Work cooperatively as part of a team
 - Follow all policies and procedures of the setting
 - Promote equality, inclusion and respect for diversity
-

Professional Behaviour

Employees must:

- Maintain a calm, positive and professional attitude
 - Communicate respectfully and appropriately at all times
 - Follow reasonable instructions from management
 - Avoid behaviour that may bring the setting into disrepute
-

Compliance with Policies

Employees are required to comply with all setting policies, including those relating to:

- Safeguarding and child protection
- Attendance and punctuality
- Use of mobile phones and personal devices

- Social media and online conduct
- Professional boundaries
- Health and safety

Full details of these expectations are outlined in the relevant sections of this handbook and the setting's Policies and Procedures Booklet.

Conduct Outside of Work

Employees must not engage in behaviour outside of work that could:

- Damage the reputation of the setting
 - Affect their suitability to work with children
 - Undermine professional relationships
-

Failure to Meet Standards

Failure to meet the standards outlined in this policy may result in action under the setting's disciplinary procedures.

Serious breaches, particularly those relating to safeguarding or professional conduct, may be treated as gross misconduct.

Dress Code and Personal Presentation

Purpose

This policy outlines the standards of dress and personal presentation expected of all employees and students at Heathcot Preschool Ltd.

Appropriate appearance is essential to ensure the safety of children, maintain hygiene standards, and promote a professional image of the setting.

General Expectations

All employees and students are expected to:

- Present a clean, neat and professional appearance at all times
 - Dress appropriately for working with young children
 - Ensure clothing allows safe and effective movement and interaction
 - Maintain good personal hygiene
-

Staff Uniform

Where a uniform is provided, it must be worn at all times during working hours.

Staff are required to wear the following as part of their uniform:

- Black trousers
- Black, flat and appropriate footwear
- Plain black headscarf (where applicable)

Staff are responsible for ensuring their uniform is:

- Clean and presentable
- Suitable for the demands of the role
- Worn appropriately and in line with setting expectations

Uniform must be worn in a way that promotes a professional image of the setting and supports safe and effective working with children.

Staff are responsible for:

- Washing and maintaining their uniform
- Replacing uniform items where necessary (unless otherwise agreed)
- Ensuring uniform is worn at the start and throughout their shift

Where uniform is not provided or additional items are required, staff must wear appropriate clothing in line with the setting's Dress Code and Personal Presentation policy.

Failure to wear the required uniform may result in staff being asked to rectify this immediately and may lead to further action if repeated.

Student Dress Code

Students and those on placement are required to wear **dark, plain clothing**, such as:

- Black
- Grey
- Brown

Clothing must be appropriate, practical and in line with the standards expected within the setting.

Clothing Standards

All clothing must be:

- Practical, comfortable and suitable for working with children
- Modest and appropriate for a professional environment
- Free from offensive or inappropriate slogans or images

The following are not permitted:

- Low-cut, strappy or revealing clothing
 - Clothing that exposes underwear, midriff or back
 - Ripped or excessively worn clothing
-

Footwear

- Footwear must be safe, secure and suitable for a childcare environment
 - High heels are not permitted (no more than one inch)
 - Shoes must allow staff to move safely and respond quickly to children's needs
-

Jewellery and Accessories

For health and safety reasons:

- Jewellery must be kept to a minimum
 - Only small stud earrings are permitted
 - Nose or lip rings and other visible piercings must be removed
 - Loose jewellery must not be worn
-

Hair, Nails and Personal Care

All staff and students must:

- Keep long hair tied back
- Keep fingernails clean and at a suitable length
- Not wear false nails or nail extensions
- Avoid nail polish where it may pose a hygiene risk

Make-up should be minimal and appropriate for a professional setting.

Health and Safety Requirements

Staff and students must follow any additional dress requirements where necessary for health and safety, including the use of protective clothing where provided.

Failure to Comply

Failure to meet the standards outlined in this policy may result in individuals being asked to rectify their appearance immediately and may lead to further action if repeated.

Use of Mobile Phones, Devices, Social Media and Online Conduct

Purpose

This policy outlines expectations for the use of mobile phones, personal devices and social media to ensure the safety of children, maintain confidentiality, and protect the professional reputation of Heathcot Preschool Ltd.

Use of Personal Mobile Phones and Devices

To safeguard children and maintain professional standards:

- Personal mobile phones must not be used during working hours
- Mobile phones must be switched off or on silent and stored securely in staff lockers
- Mobile phones may only be used during designated breaks and away from children

Staff must not:

- Use personal devices in areas where children are present
 - Take photographs or videos of children on personal devices
 - Access social media during working hours
-

Use of Setting Devices

Heathcot Preschool Ltd provides setting devices, such as tablets, for professional use.

These devices:

- Are internet-restricted and monitored
- Must only be used for work-related purposes
- Are used to access systems such as learning journals, registers and other authorised applications

Staff must:

- Use setting devices appropriately and only for their intended purpose
 - Ensure devices are kept secure and used in line with data protection requirements
 - Not access unauthorised websites or applications
-

Photography and Recording

- Photographs or recordings of children may only be taken using authorised setting devices

- Parental consent must always be in place
- Images must be stored and used in line with the setting's data protection procedures

Unauthorised photography or recording may result in disciplinary action.

Social Media and Online Conduct

The setting recognises employees' right to a private life; however, staff must ensure their online behaviour does not impact their professional role.

Employees must:

- Not post content that could damage the reputation of the setting
- Not share confidential information about children, families or staff
- Not discuss work-related matters on personal social media accounts
- Maintain professional boundaries online at all times

Staff must not:

- Add or accept parents/carers on personal social media accounts
 - Share images or information relating to children or the setting
 - Post inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory content
-

Monitoring and Compliance

The setting reserves the right to investigate any concerns regarding misuse of mobile phones, devices or social media.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Professional Boundaries with Children and Parents

Purpose

This policy outlines the expectations for maintaining appropriate professional boundaries with children and parents/carers to ensure safe, respectful and professional relationships at all times.

General Principles

All staff must:

- Maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries
 - Act in the best interests of children at all times
 - Ensure relationships with families remain professional
 - Avoid situations that could be misinterpreted or lead to concerns
-

Boundaries with Children

Staff must:

- Provide safe, appropriate and professional care at all times
- Use appropriate physical contact in line with safeguarding guidance
- Treat all children equally and avoid favouritism
- Maintain appropriate language, tone and behaviour

Staff must not:

- Engage in rough, inappropriate or intrusive play
 - Use inappropriate language or behaviour
 - Form overly familiar or dependent relationships with children
-

Boundaries with Parents and Carers

Staff must:

- Maintain professional relationships at all times
- Communicate respectfully and appropriately
- Follow setting procedures when sharing information

Staff must not:

- Form personal or social relationships that impact professionalism
 - Share personal contact details (e.g. phone numbers or social media)
 - Discuss other children, families or staff
-

Gifts and Favouritism

- Staff must not show preferential treatment to any child or family
 - Staff must not accept individual or personal gifts from parents or carers.
 - Parents and carers may offer gifts intended for the staff team as a whole (e.g. shared items), which can be accepted on behalf of the setting.
 - Any gifts received must be shared fairly amongst the team and must not result in preferential treatment.
 - Staff must ensure that accepting any gift does not influence, or appear to influence, their professional judgement or relationships.
 - All gifts offered should be declared to management in line with setting procedures.
-

Outside of Work Contact

Staff must not have contact with children or families outside of work unless formally authorised as part of their role.

Concerns and Reporting

Any concerns regarding professional boundaries must be reported immediately in line with safeguarding procedures.

Failure to Maintain Boundaries

Failure to maintain appropriate professional boundaries may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, may be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Staff Performance at Work Policy

Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out the standards of performance expected of all staff and explains how concerns about performance will be managed. It applies to all employees, including permanent, temporary, part-time and agency staff.

At Heathcot Preschool Ltd, consistently high standards of practice are essential to ensure:

- Children's safety and wellbeing
- High-quality learning and development
- Compliance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and safeguarding requirements

This policy aims to support staff in meeting expectations while providing a clear and fair process where performance falls below the required standard.

Expected Standards of Performance

All staff are expected to demonstrate the following:

Professional Practice

- Follow the EYFS, safeguarding policies and procedures at all times
- Demonstrate consistently good early years practice
- Meet role-specific responsibilities outlined in job descriptions

Safeguarding and Welfare

- Act in the best interests of children at all times
- Follow safeguarding procedures immediately and correctly
- Maintain appropriate supervision, ratios and care routines

Behaviour and Conduct

- Act professionally with children, colleagues, parents and visitors
- Follow all relevant policies, including behaviour management and inclusion
- Maintain confidentiality and appropriate professional boundaries

Teaching and Care

- Provide high-quality interactions and support children's learning
- Use routines and transitions effectively
- Respond to children's needs appropriately and consistently

Failure to meet these standards may be treated as a performance issue and/or a conduct issue, depending on the circumstances.

Identifying Performance Concerns

Performance concerns may be identified through:

- Day-to-day observations
- Supervision or appraisal
- Feedback from parents or colleagues
- Safeguarding or quality audits
- External feedback (e.g. local authority or Ofsted)

Concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- Inconsistent or poor practice
 - Failure to follow policies or routines
 - Weak safeguarding awareness
 - Poor interactions with children
 - Repeated errors despite guidance
-

Informal Support and Early Intervention

Where performance concerns are identified, these will normally be addressed informally in the first instance, unless the issue is serious.

This may include:

- A supportive discussion to clarify expectations
- Additional training or coaching
- Increased supervision or mentoring
- Clear guidance on required improvements

The aim at this stage is to support improvement.

Formal Performance Management Process

If performance does not improve, or concerns are ongoing, the matter may progress to a formal process.

Stage 1 – Formal Performance Improvement Meeting

- Performance concerns will be explained clearly
- Expectations and required improvements will be set
- A review period will be agreed
- Support and training will be identified
- The discussion will be confirmed in writing

Stage 2 – Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

If there is insufficient improvement:

- A written Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) may be issued
- This will outline areas of concern, required standards, support provided, review dates and expectations

Stage 3 – Formal Action

If performance remains unsatisfactory:

- Formal action may be taken in line with the setting's procedures

Serious or Immediate Concerns

Some issues may require immediate escalation and may not follow the informal stages.

These include:

- Safeguarding failures
- Serious breaches of EYFS requirements
- Actions that place children at risk
- Repeated failure to follow clear instructions

These concerns may be addressed under the setting's disciplinary procedures.

Support, Training and Adjustments

The setting will:

- Provide appropriate support and training
- Consider reasonable adjustments where appropriate
- Take into account health conditions or disabilities in line with the Equality Act 2010

Staff are expected to engage fully with any support offered.

Possible Outcomes

Outcomes of the performance management process may include:

- Improvement and return to normal supervision
- Extension of support or review period
- Formal action in line with setting procedures
- Redeployment (where appropriate)
- Dismissal as a last resort following a fair process

Rights of Employees

Employees have the right to:

- Be informed of concerns clearly
- Respond to feedback
- Be accompanied at formal meetings
- Appeal formal decisions

Link to Other Procedures

Any formal action taken as a result of performance concerns will be managed in line with the setting's Capability and Disciplinary Procedures, which are outlined elsewhere in this handbook.

Confidentiality

Purpose

This policy outlines the responsibility of all staff to maintain confidentiality in relation to children, families, colleagues and the setting.

Maintaining confidentiality is essential to protect individuals' privacy and to ensure compliance with data protection and safeguarding requirements.

General Principles

All staff must:

- Treat all information as confidential unless authorised to share it
 - Respect the privacy of children, families and colleagues
 - Follow the setting's data protection and information sharing procedures
-

Sharing Information

Information must only be shared:

- On a need-to-know basis
- With authorised individuals
- In line with safeguarding and legal requirements

Confidential information must not be shared:

- With other parents or unauthorised individuals
 - Outside of the setting
 - Through personal devices or social media
-

Use of Information

Staff must:

- Ensure records are accurate, secure and handled appropriately
 - Not remove confidential information from the setting unless authorised
 - Use setting systems (e.g. learning journals, registers) appropriately
-

Conversations and Conduct

Staff must:

- Avoid discussing confidential matters in public or inappropriate areas
 - Ensure conversations cannot be overheard where possible
 - Maintain confidentiality both within and outside of working hours
-

Safeguarding Exception

Confidentiality must never prevent staff from sharing concerns about a child's safety.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, information must be shared in line with the setting's safeguarding procedures.

Failure to Maintain Confidentiality

Any breach of confidentiality may result in disciplinary action and may be treated as gross misconduct in serious cases.

4. Safeguarding

Safeguarding Responsibilities of Staff

Purpose

This policy outlines the safeguarding responsibilities of all staff at Heathcot Preschool Ltd.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All staff must remain vigilant and act immediately if they have any concerns.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Act in the best interests of children at all times
- Be alert to signs of abuse, neglect or harm
- Follow safeguarding procedures without delay
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- Attend safeguarding training and keep knowledge up to date

Safeguarding must take priority at all times.

Awareness of Risk

Staff must be aware that safeguarding concerns may arise from:

- Changes in a child's behaviour or presentation
- Injuries or marks
- Disclosures made by a child
- Concerns about adults working with children

All concerns must be taken seriously.

Duty to Act

Staff must never:

- Ignore concerns
- Delay reporting
- Assume someone else will act

Failure to act may place a child at risk.

Compliance

All staff are required to read and follow the setting's full Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Failure to Follow Responsibilities

Failure to meet safeguarding responsibilities may result in disciplinary action and may be treated as gross misconduct.

Reporting Concerns

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns within Heathcot Preschool Ltd.

Immediate Action

If you have a concern about a child, you must:

- Record the concern clearly, factually and without delay
- Report it immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Staff must not:

- Investigate concerns themselves
 - Delay reporting
 - Promise confidentiality to a child
-

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

Concerns must be reported to:

- Nipa (SENCo / DSL)
- Husna (Deputy Manager / DSL)
- Nusrat Javid (Manager / DSL)

If a concern involves a DSL, it must be reported to another DSL or escalated appropriately.

Recording Concerns

All concerns must include:

- Nature of the concern
- Date, time and location
- What was observed or said
- Any action taken

Records must be clear, accurate and signed.

External Reporting

Where required, concerns may be referred to external agencies such as:

- Children's Social Care (MASH)
 - Ofsted
 - Police
 - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (*where there are concerns about an individual's suitability to work with children*)
 - Health and Safety Executive (HSE) (*where incidents meet reporting requirements*)
 - Other relevant safeguarding or regulatory agencies
-

Confidentiality

Information must only be shared with those who need to know.

Confidentiality must never prevent reporting a safeguarding concern.

Failure to Report

Failure to report concerns may result in disciplinary action and may be treated as a serious safeguarding breach.

Whistleblowing Policy

Policy Statement

We are committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all children in our care. In line with EYFS requirements, we have established this Whistleblowing Policy so that staff, volunteers and students can raise concerns about poor, unsafe or unethical practices without fear of retaliation.

This policy ensures our setting maintains transparency, accountability and high safeguarding standards.

Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, students and contractors. It covers:

- Concerns about child safety or welfare
 - Poor or unsafe practices
 - Misconduct or breaches of statutory requirements
 - Illegal acts, fraud or health and safety risks
-

Definition of Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the reporting of concerns about wrongdoing or risks within the organisation.

Examples include:

- Safeguarding failures or possible abuse
 - Unsafe childcare practices
 - Unfit behaviour by staff
 - Breaches of EYFS or regulatory compliance
 - Criminal activity or serious misconduct
-

Reporting Procedures

Internal Reporting

- Raise concerns with your line manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- If the concern involves them, escalate to senior leadership or the management committee

- You may be asked to provide written details, which will be handled sensitively

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs):

- Nipa
 - Husna
 - Nusrat Javid
-

External Reporting (if internal reporting is not appropriate)**Concerns may be reported directly to:**

- Ofsted (Registration No: 301004)
 - NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285
 - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Colette Morris – Tel: 0161 770 8870
 - Where appropriate, concerns may also be referred to other safeguarding or regulatory bodies.
-

Protection for Whistleblowers

Anyone raising a genuine concern will not be penalised.

Retaliation or victimisation will not be tolerated.

Malicious or deliberately false allegations may result in disciplinary action.

Procedure After a Concern is Raised

- Acknowledge the concern
 - Assess whether it is whistleblowing, safeguarding or a grievance
 - Conduct an investigation if appropriate
 - Keep the individual informed where possible
 - Make referrals to external authorities if required
-

Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated confidentially and shared only with those who need to know.

We will protect the whistleblower's identity wherever possible, although this cannot be guaranteed where legal or safeguarding obligations apply.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff must understand this policy and their duty to report concerns.

The DSL and leadership team are responsible for responding to concerns and coordinating investigations.

The management body monitors implementation and ensures appropriate training.

Management Committee Contact

Concerns may also be escalated to the Management Committee:

- Yasmin Toor – Chairperson
- Sher Baz – Treasurer
- Javid Iqbal – Committee Member & Secretary

Contact via:

Phone: 0161 770 5284

Email: management@heathcotpreschool.co.uk

5. Health, Safety & Wellbeing

Staff Responsibilities for Health and Safety

Purpose

This policy outlines the responsibilities of all staff in maintaining a safe and healthy environment for children, colleagues and visitors.

General Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others
 - Follow all health and safety procedures and instructions
 - Work in a safe and responsible manner at all times
 - Use equipment safely and as instructed
-

Reporting Hazards

Staff must:

- Report any hazards, risks or concerns immediately to management
 - Take appropriate action to reduce risk where safe to do so
 - Ensure any issues are recorded in line with setting procedures
-

Compliance

All staff are required to read and follow the setting's full Health and Safety Policy.

Failure to Comply

Failure to follow health and safety responsibilities may result in disciplinary action.

Accident Reporting

Purpose

This policy outlines the responsibilities of staff in reporting accidents and incidents within the setting.

Immediate Action

If an accident occurs, staff must:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of those involved
 - Inform a qualified first aider immediately
 - Notify management as soon as possible
-

Recording Accidents

Staff must ensure:

- All accidents are recorded accurately and promptly
 - Details include what happened, when and where
 - Records are completed in line with setting procedures
-

Follow-Up

Staff must:

- Report any ongoing concerns following an accident
 - Cooperate with any investigation if required
-

Compliance

All staff must follow the setting's accident reporting procedures at all times.

Failure to Report

Failure to report or record an accident may result in disciplinary action.

Fire Safety Awareness

Purpose

This policy outlines staff responsibilities in relation to fire safety within the setting.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Be familiar with fire evacuation procedures
 - Know the location of fire exits and assembly points
 - Ensure fire exits and routes are kept clear at all times
-

In the Event of a Fire

Staff must:

- Raise the alarm immediately
 - Evacuate the building using the nearest safe exit
 - Follow the setting's fire evacuation procedure
 - Not delay evacuation
-

Fire Equipment

Staff must:

- Only use fire equipment if trained and safe to do so
 - Not attempt to tackle a fire unless it is safe
-

Training and Awareness

Staff must:

- Participate in fire drills
 - Follow instructions given during training
-

Failure to Comply

Failure to follow fire safety procedures may result in disciplinary action.

Smoking and E-Cigarette Policy

Purpose

This policy ensures a safe, healthy and smoke-free environment for children, staff and visitors.

Policy Statement

Smoking and the use of e-cigarettes are not permitted:

- Inside the setting
 - Within outdoor areas of the premises
 - In view of children
-

Staff Responsibilities

Staff must:

- Not smoke during working hours unless on an authorised break
 - Leave the premises to smoke
 - Take steps to minimise odour and maintain hygiene
-

Vehicles

Smoking is not permitted in any vehicle used for work purposes.

Failure to Comply

Failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Drugs and Alcohol Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines Heathcot Preschool Ltd's expectations regarding drugs and alcohol to ensure children, staff, parents and visitors are kept safe at all times.

Staff working in an early years setting must be fit, alert and able to carry out their duties safely and responsibly.

Policy Statement

Staff must not attend work, remain at work, or carry out duties while under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or any medication that affects their ability to work safely.

Any behaviour that places children, colleagues or the setting at risk will be treated seriously.

Alcohol

Staff must not:

- Drink alcohol during working hours
 - Attend work under the influence of alcohol
 - Return to work after consuming alcohol during a break
 - Bring alcohol onto the premises unless authorised for a specific event and stored safely by management
-

Drugs and Controlled Substances

Staff must not:

- Use, possess, supply or be under the influence of illegal drugs on the premises
- Attend work under the influence of illegal drugs or controlled substances
- Bring illegal drugs or unauthorised substances onto the premises

Any such incident may be treated as gross misconduct and may result in dismissal.

Medication

Staff who are taking prescribed or over-the-counter medication must inform management if the medication may affect their ability to:

- Supervise children safely
- Drive or operate equipment
- Remain alert and responsive
- Carry out their duties effectively

Staff do not need to disclose private medical details unless relevant to their ability to work safely.

Management will treat any information shared confidentially and may consider adjustments where appropriate.

Fitness to Work

If management has reasonable concerns that a member of staff may be unfit for work due to alcohol, drugs or medication, the employee may be:

- Removed from direct work with children
- Sent home where appropriate
- Asked to attend a meeting to discuss concerns
- Managed under the disciplinary procedure where necessary

The safety and wellbeing of children will always be the priority.

Support

Heathcot Preschool Ltd recognises that drug or alcohol dependency may be a health issue.

Staff are encouraged to seek support at the earliest opportunity and speak to management if they need help. Where appropriate, the setting may signpost staff to external support services.

However, seeking support does not remove the need for staff to remain fit for work and follow this policy.

Confidentiality

Any information shared by staff about drug, alcohol or medication concerns will be handled sensitively and confidentially, unless there is a safeguarding, health and safety, or legal reason to share information.

Failure to Comply

Failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Serious breaches, including attending work under the influence, possessing illegal substances on site, or placing children at risk, may be treated as gross misconduct.

Stress and Wellbeing

Purpose

This policy outlines the setting's commitment to supporting staff wellbeing and managing work-related stress.

Setting Commitment

Heathcot Preschool Ltd aims to:

- Provide a supportive working environment
 - Identify and reduce workplace stress where possible
 - Promote positive wellbeing for all staff
-

Staff Responsibilities

Staff are expected to:

- Inform management if they are experiencing stress or excessive pressure
 - Seek support where needed
 - Follow safe working practices
-

Support

Where concerns are raised, the setting may:

- Offer support through supervision
 - Discuss workload or adjustments
 - Consider reasonable adjustments where appropriate
-

Confidentiality

All wellbeing concerns will be handled sensitively and confidentially.

Staff Personal Safety

Purpose

This policy outlines expectations for maintaining staff personal safety while at work.

General Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others
 - Follow all safety procedures and guidance
 - Report any concerns about personal safety to management
-

Risk Awareness

Staff must:

- Be aware of potential risks within the setting
 - Follow guidance for safe working practices
 - Avoid situations that may place them at risk
-

Support from Management

The setting will:

- Provide guidance and training where appropriate
 - Address any reported concerns
 - Take reasonable steps to reduce risks
-

Reporting Concerns

Any concerns relating to personal safety must be reported immediately.

6. Equality, Inclusion & Workplace Behaviour

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Purpose

Heathcot Preschool Ltd is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion within the workplace and ensuring all individuals are treated fairly and with respect.

General Principles

The setting will:

- Treat all staff, children and families fairly and without discrimination
 - Promote equality of opportunity in all areas of employment
 - Value and respect diversity
 - Work within current equality legislation
-

Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Treat others with dignity and respect
 - Not discriminate against others on any grounds
 - Promote inclusive practice within the setting
 - Challenge inappropriate behaviour where appropriate
-

Protected Characteristics

The setting recognises that discrimination can occur based on protected characteristics, including:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race

- Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
-

Failure to Comply

Any form of discrimination may result in disciplinary action.

Dignity at Work (Bullying and Harassment)

Purpose

This policy aims to ensure that all staff are treated with dignity and respect and that bullying and harassment are not tolerated.

Statement

Heathcot Preschool Ltd is committed to providing a working environment free from bullying, harassment and victimisation.

Definition

Bullying and harassment may include:

- Offensive, intimidating or insulting behaviour
 - Spreading rumours or undermining colleagues
 - Excluding individuals deliberately
 - Misuse of power or authority
 - Offensive comments related to protected characteristics
-

Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Treat others with respect and professionalism
 - Avoid behaviour that could be perceived as bullying or harassment
 - Report concerns appropriately
-

Reporting Concerns

Staff who experience or witness bullying or harassment should:

- Raise concerns with management
 - Follow the grievance procedure if necessary
-

Failure to Comply

Bullying or harassment may result in disciplinary action.

Anti-Bribery and Professional Integrity

Purpose

This policy outlines expectations regarding honesty, integrity and compliance with anti-bribery legislation.

Statement

Heathcot Preschool Ltd requires all staff to act with honesty and integrity and not to offer, give, request or accept bribes.

Definition

A bribe is any financial or other advantage offered or received to influence behaviour improperly.

Staff Responsibilities

Staff must not:

- Offer or accept bribes or improper incentives
 - Use their position for personal gain
 - Engage in any activity that could be seen as corrupt or unethical
-

Gifts and Hospitality

- Gifts should not be accepted if they could influence professional judgement
 - Any gifts offered by parents must be declared to management
-

Failure to Comply

Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action and may be treated as gross misconduct.

7. Training, Development & Performance

Induction and Probation

Purpose

This policy outlines the induction and probation process for all new employees to ensure they are supported to understand their role and meet expected standards.

Induction

All new employees will receive an induction which will include:

- An introduction to the setting and its policies and procedures
- Safeguarding, health and safety and key responsibilities
- Expectations of the role and daily routines
- Guidance on working practices and systems

Induction is designed to support staff to settle into their role and understand expectations.

Probation Period

Most employees will be subject to a probation period, as outlined in their Contract of Employment.

During this period:

- Performance and suitability for the role will be assessed
 - Support, guidance and feedback will be provided
 - Regular reviews may take place
-

Outcomes of Probation

At the end of the probation period:

- Employment may be confirmed
- The probation period may be extended
- Employment may be terminated if standards are not met

Employees have the right to be informed of any concerns and to respond.

Supervision and Appraisal

Purpose

This policy outlines the process for supervision and appraisal at Heathcot Preschool Ltd. It ensures staff are supported to perform their role effectively, maintain high standards of practice, and continue to develop professionally.

Supervision

Supervision provides a structured opportunity for staff and managers to discuss performance, wellbeing and professional development.

Supervision meetings will take place termly and may include discussion of:

- Key children and their development
- Work performance and expectations
- Workload and responsibilities
- Training and development needs
- Wellbeing and support
- Any concerns or issues within the setting

Both the employee and manager are responsible for:

- Preparing for supervision meetings
- Engaging in open and professional discussion
- Following up on agreed actions

Supervision aims to:

- Support staff to carry out their role effectively
 - Identify concerns at an early stage
 - Promote continuous improvement
-

Appraisal

Appraisal provides a formal opportunity to review performance over a longer period and plan future development.

Appraisals will normally take place annually and will:

- Review performance and achievements
- Identify strengths and areas for development

- Set clear objectives
- Identify training and development needs

Progress towards objectives may be reviewed throughout the year during supervision meetings.

Staff Responsibilities

Staff are expected to:

- Engage fully in supervision and appraisal
 - Reflect on their performance
 - Work towards agreed objectives
 - Take an active role in their development
-

Support and Development

The setting will:

- Provide appropriate support and guidance
 - Offer training and development opportunities
 - Consider reasonable adjustments where appropriate
-

Confidentiality

Supervision and appraisal discussions will be treated confidentially where appropriate.

Link to Performance Management

Concerns identified through supervision or appraisal may be addressed in line with the setting's performance, capability or disciplinary procedures.

Mandatory and Required Training

Purpose

This policy outlines the training requirements for all staff at Heathcot Preschool Ltd to ensure they are competent, confident and able to carry out their roles safely and effectively.

Training supports safeguarding, promotes high-quality practice, and ensures compliance with statutory requirements.

Mandatory Training (All Staff)

All staff are required to complete and maintain the following training:

- Safeguarding / Child Protection
 - Health and Safety
 - Fire Safety Awareness and Evacuation Procedures
 - Understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
 - Paediatric First Aid (*where required for role and ratios*)
-

Required Training (Role and Practice Based)

Depending on role and responsibilities, staff may also be required to complete:

- Prevent Duty / British Values
 - Food Hygiene (*where food is handled*)
 - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND awareness)*
 - Behaviour Management
 - Data Protection / GDPR
-

Role-Specific Training

Additional training is required for certain roles:

- **Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs):** Advanced safeguarding training
 - **SENCo:** SEND Code of Practice and ongoing development
 - **First Aiders:** Full Paediatric First Aid qualification (renewed every 3 years)
 - **Management:** Leadership, safeguarding and compliance training
-

Fire Safety Training

All staff must:

- Receive fire safety awareness training as part of induction
- Understand evacuation procedures, exits and assembly points
- Participate in regular fire drills
- Know their role in the event of an emergency

Fire safety knowledge must be refreshed regularly through training, briefings or drills.

Training Renewal and Updates

- Safeguarding training should be refreshed regularly (recommended every 1–3 years)
 - Paediatric First Aid must be renewed every 3 years
 - Other training must be updated as required or identified through supervision and appraisal
-

Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Attend required training
 - Keep training up to date
 - Apply learning in practice
 - Inform management of any upcoming expiry dates
-

Management Responsibilities

The setting will:

- Monitor staff training and expiry dates
 - Provide access to appropriate training
 - Identify training needs through supervision and appraisal
 - Ensure sufficient trained staff are available at all times
-

Compliance

Failure to complete required training may:

- Affect suitability for the role
- Result in further action where necessary

Training is recorded and monitored to ensure compliance and support high-quality practice.

8. IT, Data Protection & Communication

Data Protection and Confidentiality

Purpose

This policy outlines staff responsibilities for handling personal and sensitive information in line with data protection requirements.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Handle personal data securely and confidentially
 - Only access information necessary for their role
 - Follow the setting's data protection procedures at all times
 - Ensure records are accurate and up to date
-

Use of Information

Staff must:

- Use setting systems appropriately (e.g. learning journals, registers)
 - Not share information with unauthorised individuals
 - Not remove confidential information from the setting unless authorised
-

Security

Staff must:

- Keep devices and records secure
 - Log out of systems when not in use
 - Report any data breaches or concerns immediately
-

Compliance

All staff must comply with relevant data protection legislation and the setting's full Data Protection Policy.

Failure to Comply

Failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Email, Internet and IT Use

Purpose

This policy outlines acceptable use of email, internet and IT systems within the setting.

Acceptable Use

Staff must:

- Use IT systems for work-related purposes only
 - Communicate professionally when using email
 - Follow setting procedures when using online systems
-

Restrictions

Staff must not:

- Use IT systems for personal use during working hours without permission
 - Access inappropriate or unauthorised websites
 - Share confidential information via insecure methods
-

Professional Conduct

All communication must:

- Be appropriate and professional
 - Reflect the values of the setting
 - Maintain confidentiality at all times
-

Monitoring

Use of IT systems may be monitored to ensure compliance.

Failure to Comply

Misuse of IT systems may result in disciplinary action.

CCTV Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

Heathcot Pre-School Ltd operates CCTV to support the safeguarding, safety and security of children, staff, parents and visitors.

CCTV is used to:

- Promote a safe and secure environment
- Support safeguarding and incident investigation
- Maintain high standards of care and practice
- Deter inappropriate behaviour and criminal activity

Use of CCTV is lawful, proportionate and necessary, and respects individuals' privacy.

This policy complies with:

- Data Protection Act 2018
 - UK GDPR
 - Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
 - Information Commissioner's Office guidance
-

CCTV Locations

Cameras are installed in:

- Entrances
- Playrooms
- Messy room
- Kitchen
- Office
- Outdoor area

No cameras are installed in toilets or changing areas.

System Operation

- CCTV operates 24 hours a day
- Uses Ring cameras (audio and visual recording)
- Recordings are retained for 30 days then automatically deleted

Cameras are:

- Clearly visible
 - Supported by signage throughout the setting
-

Purpose and Use

CCTV supports:

- Safeguarding and child protection
- Incident investigation
- Staff training and quality assurance
- Premises security

It is not used for intrusive or unjustified staff monitoring.

Data Control and Access

The Manager and Director act as Data Controllers and are responsible for:

- System use
- Access control
- Data protection compliance

Access to footage is:

- Restricted to authorised staff only
- Only permitted for valid reasons (e.g. safeguarding, incidents)

Parents

- No automatic access to footage
 - Requests must be made in writing
 - May be refused to protect confidentiality and safeguarding
-

Storage and Retention

- Footage is:
 - Securely stored
 - Password protected
 - Access restricted

- Retained for 30 days only, unless required for investigation
-

Disclosure

Footage is only shared:

- Where legally required
- With authorised agencies (e.g. police, safeguarding)

All disclosures:

- Must be authorised
 - Are recorded with justification
-

GDPR Privacy Notice (CCTV)

Purpose and Lawful Basis

CCTV data is processed to:

- Safeguard children and adults
- Maintain a secure environment
- Support investigations

Lawful basis:

- Legitimate interests (safety and security)
 - Legal obligation (safeguarding duties)
 - Vital interests (where a child may be at risk)
-

Data Collected

CCTV may record:

- Images
- Audio (where applicable)

Only communal areas are monitored.

Access and Sharing

Access is limited to authorised personnel.

Footage may be shared:

- With police or safeguarding agencies
- Where legally required

All access and sharing is:

- Controlled
 - Recorded
 - Justified
-

Retention

- Stored securely
 - Deleted automatically after 30 days
 - Retained longer only if required
-

Individual Rights

Individuals may:

- Request access to their data
- Raise concerns about data use

Requests must be made in writing.

Complaints

Concerns should be raised with the Manager.

You may also contact:

- Information Commissioner's Office
-

Monitoring and Review

- CCTV use is reviewed annually
- Includes:
 - Purpose
 - Location
 - Privacy impact
 - Data handling

Limitations

- CCTV supports safeguarding but does not replace supervision
- It may not capture all incidents

Monitoring of IT and Communications

Purpose

This policy outlines how the setting monitors the use of its IT systems to ensure security, compliance and appropriate use.

Monitoring

The setting reserves the right to monitor:

- Emails and electronic communications
- Use of IT systems and devices
- Data stored on systems

Monitoring is carried out to:

- Protect children and staff
 - Ensure compliance with policies
 - Maintain system security
-

Staff Responsibilities

Staff must:

- Use systems appropriately
 - Be aware that communications may be monitored
 - Not expect privacy when using setting systems
-

Compliance

Monitoring will be carried out in line with legal and data protection requirements.

Failure to Comply

Misuse of systems may result in disciplinary action.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

Purpose

This policy outlines the safe use of display screen equipment (DSE), including computers and tablets, to reduce health risks.

Definition

Display screen equipment includes:

- Computers
 - Laptops
 - Tablets
 - Any screen-based devices used as part of work
-

Staff Responsibilities

Staff must:

- Use equipment safely and as instructed
 - Take regular breaks from screen use
 - Avoid prolonged periods of continuous screen work
 - Report any discomfort or issues
-

Safe Working Practices

Staff should:

- Sit comfortably with good posture
 - Position screens at an appropriate height
 - Ensure adequate lighting
 - Alternate screen work with other tasks where possible
-

Health and Wellbeing

Staff must report:

- Eye strain

- Back or neck discomfort
- Any health concerns linked to screen use

The setting will take reasonable steps to support staff where concerns are raised.

Support

The setting will:

- Provide guidance on safe use of equipment
 - Review working arrangements where needed
 - Make reasonable adjustments where appropriate
-

Compliance

All staff must follow safe working practices when using display screen equipment.

9. Employment Processes

Disciplinary Procedure

Purpose

This procedure sets out how concerns relating to conduct, behaviour or breaches of policy will be managed fairly, consistently and in line with the principles of the ACAS Code of Practice.

Scope

This procedure applies to all employees. It does not apply during probation where a simplified process may be used.

Principles

The setting will:

- Act promptly and fairly
 - Carry out necessary investigations
 - Inform employees of concerns in writing
 - Provide the opportunity to respond
 - Allow the right to be accompanied
 - Provide a right of appeal
-

Informal Stage

Minor concerns will normally be addressed through:

- Informal discussion
 - Guidance or coaching
 - Agreed actions and monitoring
-

Formal Procedure

1. Investigation

- An investigation will be carried out to establish the facts
- This may include witness statements and review of records

- Employees may be invited to an investigation meeting

2. Suspension (if required)

- In serious cases, suspension may be used
- This is a neutral act and not disciplinary action

3. Disciplinary Hearing

- The employee will receive written notice of the hearing
- Details of the allegation and evidence will be provided
- The employee has the right to be accompanied

4. Outcomes

Possible outcomes include:

- No action
- First written warning
- Final written warning
- Dismissal

Warnings will remain live for a specified period.

Gross Misconduct

Examples may include:

- Safeguarding breaches
- Dishonesty or fraud
- Serious misconduct or negligence
- Breach of confidentiality

Gross misconduct may result in summary dismissal.

Appeal

Employees have the right to appeal any formal decision in writing within a specified timeframe.

Capability Procedure

Purpose

This procedure applies where concerns relate to an employee's performance, skills or ability to carry out their role to the required standard.

Principles

The setting will:

- Support employees to improve performance
 - Provide clear expectations and feedback
 - Offer training and guidance
 - Allow reasonable time for improvement
-

Informal Stage

Initial concerns will normally be addressed through:

- Supervision and discussion
 - Additional support or training
 - Clear targets for improvement
-

Formal Capability Procedure

Stage 1 – Formal Meeting

- Concerns will be explained clearly
- Improvement targets will be set
- A review period will be agreed
- Support measures will be identified

Stage 2 – Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

- A structured plan may be implemented
- Progress will be monitored regularly

Stage 3 – Review

- If sufficient improvement is not made, further action may be taken
-

Outcomes

Possible outcomes include:

- Improvement and return to normal supervision
 - Extension of review period
 - Redeployment (where appropriate)
 - Dismissal as a last resort
-

Right to Be Accompanied and Appeal

Employees have the right to be accompanied at formal meetings and to appeal decisions.

Link to Other Procedures

Where concerns relate to conduct rather than capability, the disciplinary procedure may be applied.

Grievance Procedure

Purpose

This procedure allows employees to raise concerns about their work, working conditions or treatment.

Informal Stage

Employees are encouraged to:

- Raise concerns informally with their manager
 - Attempt to resolve issues at an early stage
-

Formal Procedure

1. Written Grievance

- The employee must submit the grievance in writing
- The grievance should outline the concern clearly

2. Grievance Meeting

- A meeting will be arranged to discuss the concern
- The employee has the right to be accompanied

3. Investigation

- The setting may investigate the issues raised
- Evidence may be gathered as appropriate

4. Outcome

- The employee will receive a written outcome
 - Any actions will be explained
-

Appeal

Employees have the right to appeal the outcome in writing.

Confidentiality

Grievances will be handled sensitively and confidentially.

Whistleblowing

Concerns about wrongdoing, unsafe practice or safeguarding issues must be raised in line with the setting's Whistleblowing Policy.

The full Whistleblowing Policy is outlined in the Safeguarding section of this handbook.

Redundancy Procedure

Purpose

This policy outlines the process to be followed in the event that redundancies become necessary.

Policy Statement

The setting will aim to avoid redundancies wherever possible. Where unavoidable, a fair and transparent process will be followed.

Consultation

Affected employees will be:

- Informed of the situation
 - Consulted regarding proposed changes
 - Given the opportunity to provide feedback
-

Selection

Where applicable, selection for redundancy will be based on fair and objective criteria.

Alternatives

The setting will consider:

- Suitable alternative roles
 - Adjustments to working arrangements
-

Entitlement

Eligible employees may receive redundancy pay in line with statutory requirements.

Resignations

Purpose

This policy outlines the process for employees who wish to leave their employment.

Process

Employees must:

- Submit their resignation in writing
 - Clearly state their intended final working day
 - Provide notice in line with their Contract of Employment
-

During Notice Period

Employees are expected to:

- Continue to perform their duties professionally
 - Support handover arrangements
 - Maintain confidentiality
-

Early Release

The setting may agree to:

- A reduced notice period
- Immediate termination with mutual agreement

Notice Periods

Purpose

This policy outlines expectations regarding notice periods when ending employment.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees must:

- Provide the required notice as stated in their contract
 - Work their notice period unless otherwise agreed
-

Setting Responsibilities

The setting may:

- Require employees to work their notice period
 - Offer payment in lieu of notice
 - Place employees on garden leave where appropriate
-

Failure to Work Notice

Failure to work the required notice period without agreement may:

- Result in loss of pay
 - Be considered a breach of contract
-

Final Arrangements

On leaving employment, employees must:

- Return all setting property
- Complete any required handover
- Maintain confidentiality