

General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare

The provider must take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.



1. Safeguarding children

1.1 Children's rights and entitlements

Policy statement

The Ark Pre-school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare. We do this in the following ways:

- We promote children's rights to be strong, resilient and listened to.
- We create an environment in The Ark Pre-School that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
- We encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- We enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- We help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- We work with parents to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of safeguarding all our children.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.2 Inclusive practice	2.1 Respecting each other	3.2 Supporting every child	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

What it means to promote children's rights and entitlements to be '*strong, resilient and listened to*'.

To be **strong** means to be:

- **secure** in their foremost attachment relationships where they are loved and cared for, by at least one person who is able to offer consistent, positive and unconditional regard and who can be relied on;
- **safe and valued** as individuals in their families and in relationships beyond the family, such as day care or school;
- **self assured** and form a positive sense of themselves – including all aspects of their identity and heritage;
- **included equally and belong** in early years settings and in community life;
- **confident in abilities** and **proud** of their achievements;
- **progressing optimally** in all aspects of their development and learning;
- **to be part of a peer group** in which to learn to negotiate, develop social skills and identity as global citizens, respecting the rights of others in a diverse world; and
- **to participate and be able to represent themselves** in aspects of service delivery that affects them as well as aspects of key decisions that affect their lives.

To be **resilient** means to:

- **be sure** of their self worth and dignity;
- be able to be **assertive** and state their needs effectively;
- be able to **overcome** difficulties and problems;
- **be positive** in their outlook on life;
- be able to **cope** with challenge and change;
- have a **sense of justice** towards self and others;
- develop a **sense of responsibility** towards self and others; and
- be able to **represent** themselves and others in key decision making processes.

To be **listened to** means:

- adults who are close to children recognise their need and **right to express and communicate** their thoughts, feelings and ideas;
- adults who are close to children are able to **tune in** to their verbal, sign and body language in order to understand and interpret what is being expressed and communicated;
- adults who are close to children are able to **respond appropriately and, when required, act upon their understanding** of what children express and communicate; and
- adults **respect children's rights** and **facilitate children's participation and representation** in imaginative and child centred ways in all aspects of core services.

1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

Policy statement

The Ark Pre-School will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our safeguarding policy is based on the three key commitments of the Pre-school Learning Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy. We also comply with Berkshire Child Protection Procedures. We work closely with members of the Early Years team at Bracknell Forest Borough Council, and where necessary we seek their advice and guidance on safeguarding matters (see contact details for key people at the bottom of this policy section).

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments of the Ark Pre-School Safeguarding Children Policy.

Key commitment 1

The Ark Pre-School is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

Staff and volunteers

- Our designated person (a member of staff) who champions and co-ordinates safeguarding issues is:

HEATHER SINCLAIR – Manager.

Our deputy safeguarding officer is **ANNA FORBES – Deputy Manager**

- Our designated officer (a committee member) who oversees this work is:

SARAH WEBB – CHAIR

- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- We ensure that the manager and the chair of management committee have a confidential termly review of safeguarding issues.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Disclosure & Barring Service before posts can be confirmed.
- The manager keeps a record of all DBS disclosure numbers and the date of issue for all staff and committee members.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- All staff attend annual appraisals and have an informal discussion to review this 6 months later to continually assess that they meet the responsibilities outlined in their job description (see policy 5.2 for further information), including those of safeguarding.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- All visitors to the setting must sign in the visitors book, and declare that they have read the health and safety information and Bracknell Forest 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' information. Whilst on site they must wear a visitors badge.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Consent is obtained from parents for using these photographs for any publicity, e.g. our website.

Key commitment 2

The Ark Pre-School is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children such as through internet abuse and Female Genital Mutilation that may affect or may have affected children and young people using our provision.

- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or maybe victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- We actively protect children and teach them to value British Values by recognising and valuing the universal uniqueness of all individuals and we are mindful to instil learning and resilience to protect children against the development of extremist and radicalised thinking and behaviour.
- Where we believe a child in our care or known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedure for reporting child protection concerns to MASH as set out on the Cue Card. We would follow advice given by MASH as to the timelines to follow.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the manager, who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation.
NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
 - does not question the child;
 - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
 - the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
 - the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
 - the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
 - the names of any other person present at the time.
 - These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
 - Where the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board.

Making a referral to the local authority social care team

- We work within the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board guidelines.
- We also follow Bracknell Forest Borough Council safeguarding procedures and policies and display the local 'Working Together to Protect Children and Young People' cue card in The Ark hall, and on our notice board outside the hall, on our website, and in the visitor book, to give clear information for all staff, parents and visitors.
- Any enquiries or referrals will be made to the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) on 01344 352005 or at MASH@bracknell-forest.gov.uk. A screening team of staff from partner agencies sitting in the MASH will analyse these contacts and jointly decide whether the contact goes into the MASH information sharing process. The guide for professionals which gives further details on the referral process through MASH, and contact details, will be kept in The Ark hall, on the door of the storage cupboard.
- We keep a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (March 2015) and follow the detailed guidelines given.

- All members of staff follow the procedures for recording and reporting.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.
- We inform parents where we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

Liaison with other agencies

- Where necessary, we will complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) form with the parent, to assess the needs of the child and the family, and to indicate which other agencies need to be involved. Our safeguarding officer or manager will have attended CAF training for this purpose.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff.
- Contact details for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.
- If a referral is to be made to the local authority social care department, we act within Bracknell Forest's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working, on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's social care department to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. These notifications must be made as soon as is reasonably practical, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management committee and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chairperson will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Independent Barring Board of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Key commitment 3

The Ark Pre-school is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- Staff will attend safeguarding training as a priority, as part of their induction; we aim to do this within the first three months of starting their position. As part of induction, staff must familiarise themselves with all policies at The Ark Pre-school, including Safeguarding policies, and Bracknell Forest Safeguarding policies and procedures. For full Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board Procedures Manual see: <http://www.proceduresonline.com/berks/bracknell/>
- All staff must regularly attend courses on safeguarding matters, including information sharing, and must attend Universal Safeguarding training every 3 years. The Manager and Deputy attend Targeted Safeguarding training every 2 years. The administrator maintains training records for all staff and these are reviewed to ascertain needs for further training. The manager will review staff knowledge of safeguarding, and where necessary will arrange further training. Safeguarding is also discussed at annual appraisals.
- The manager will provide regular safeguarding information and guidance to staff members and will put safeguarding on the agenda at all staff meetings.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.
- We review policies and procedures at least annually, or as needs arise to review, and staff are given copies to ensure they are aware of any changes. All staff annually sign to confirm that they have read the procedures.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be *strong, resilient and listened to* and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board.

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.

- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board.

Review of Safeguarding policy and procedures

- All procedures are reviewed on an ongoing basis, but they are formally reviewed and adopted on an annual basis at the AGM of The Ark Pre-school.
- We ask all staff and parents to sign on an annual basis to confirm they have read and agree to our policies and procedures.
- All staff and parents are informed when updates are made to policies and procedures, and updated versions are published on our website for them to access. Alternatively a copy can be viewed on-site, or signed out to take away to read.
- In order to evaluate our own safeguarding policies and procedures, we also use the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Toolkit and complete the audit to ensure that we adopt all areas of their safeguarding procedures. This is in addition to the Self-Evaluation Form, which is issued by Ofsted.
- We also review all complaints on a termly basis and ensure that actions have been completed and resolutions achieved.

1.2a Bruising Protocol for children who are not independently mobile.

Berkshire Child Protection Procedure.

1. Introduction and Context

Accidental bruising/ suspicious marks on non-independently mobile infants is rare and should therefore always warrant further investigation. The younger the child, the greater the risk that bruising is non-accidental. There is a substantial and well-founded research base on the significance of bruising in children (www.core-info.cf.ac.uk/bruising).

Bruising is the most common presenting feature of physical abuse in children. Recent Serious Case Reviews and individual child protection cases across Berkshire have indicated that staff and volunteers have sometimes underestimated or not recognised the potential for physical abuse, of the presence of bruising or suspicious marks in children who are not independently mobile (i.e. those not yet crawling, cruising or walking independently or confined by disability).

As a result there have been a number of cases where bruised children have suffered significant abuse that might have been prevented if action had been taken at an earlier stage.

2. Definition of Terms used in this Procedure

Not independently mobile: a child who is not yet crawling, bottom shuffling, pulling to stand, cruising or walking independently; includes all children under the age of six months. It also includes children of any age who are immobile due to disability.

Bruising: blood in the soft tissues; producing a temporary, non-blanching discolouration of skin however faint or small with or without other skin abrasions or marks. Colouring may vary from yellow, through green, to brown, or purple.

3. Process

Bruising and unusual marks in immobile infants is rare and must always result in an immediate consultation with Children's Social Care.

A bruise will never be interpreted in isolation and will always be assessed in the context of medical and social history, developmental stage and explanation given. Children's Social Care and a lead medical professional will lead assessments.

All telephone referrals should be followed up in writing within 48 hours. Children's Social Care will co-ordinate multi-professional information sharing and assessment.

A bruise/ injury must always be assessed in the context of medical and social history, developmental stage and explanation given. Children's Social Care and local acute or community Paediatrician will determine whether bruising is consistent with the explanation provided or is indicative of non-accidental injury.

For Children's Social Care please contact:

- **Bracknell: 01344 352020** (9am to 5pm)

For Emergency Duty Team please contact:

Between 5pm and 9am, the Emergency Duty Team (which covers the whole of Berkshire can be contacted on 01344 786543.

4. Involving Parents or Carers

As far as possible, parents or carers will be included in the decision-making process, unless doing so would jeopardise information gathering (e.g. information could be destroyed) or if it would pose a further risk to the child.

In particular staff and volunteers will explain at an early stage why, in cases of bruising in not independently mobile children, additional concern, questioning and examination are required. The Local Safeguarding Children's Board will be producing a leaflet for parents/ carers.

If a parent or carer is uncooperative or refuses to take the child for further assessment, this will be reported immediately to Children's Social Care Services. If possible the child should be kept under supervision until steps can be taken to secure his/ her safety.

Bruising Protocol for Immobile Infants

Member of staff/ volunteer observes bruising or suspicious marks to a child who is not independently mobile.

(we have a responsibility for reporting bruising of young siblings of a child attending The Ark Pre-school)



Seek an explanation from the family and record their explanation (i.e. using their exact words)

Record what the bruising looks like



Always contact MASH or Children's Social Care for discussion and advice

MASH/ CSC to follow 'Health Bruising in Children who are not independently mobile: A Protocol for assessment, management and referral by Health Practitioners, & initiate multi-agency information gathering/ assessment



Follow Berkshire Child Protection Procedure

<http://berks.proceduresonline.com>

STEP UP contacts: (Sharing Thoughts Early Prevents Unnecessary Pain)

- MASH Team: 01344 352005
- Children's Social Care: 01344 352020
- Out of Hours emergency duty team: 01344 786543
- Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board: BFSB@bracknell-forest.gov.uk,
- Ofsted: 0300 123 1234 (Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD)

1.2b Promoting British Values and supporting the PREVENT STRATEGY

Policy statement

We will actively promote British Values amongst our children, much of which is included in the EYFS Framework within 'Understanding the World'.

We also take note of the government PREVENT Strategy and will be alert to anything which may cause concern, with regard to a child being exposed to any element of radicalisation.

Procedures

- We will provide appropriate training for staff. Part of this training will enable to identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation.
- We will ensure that our staff understand the risks so they can respond in an appropriate and proportionate way.
- We will liaise with multi-agencies to ensure that any child in our setting is kept safe, and will share information as required as part of this responsibility.
- We will be alert to changes in behaviour or aggressive/ intolerant vocabulary or behaviour from our children. (Children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views.)
- We will actively promote British Values amongst our children:
- By this we mean that we will be very clear about acceptable behaviour and boundaries that are in place, and consequences if bad choices are made.
- In order for children to develop a positive sense of themselves, staff will provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities.
- We will encourage children to respect each other, by encouraging sharing, listening to each other's views during group time and focused activities.
- Children will be given opportunities to talk about how they are feeling
- We will teach children about all faiths, cultures and traditions, and show that everyone from all backgrounds must be equally valued.
- Staff will promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example, sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.

If we have a concern:

- All information on how to deal with a concern is found on the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board Safeguarding Cue Card and the PREVENT Cue Card.
- We will follow the pre-school's normal safeguarding procedures, and we will work in partnership with our local safeguarding board for guidance and support. Staff will discuss concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer, and where deemed necessary, with children's social care.
- If deemed necessary, we will contact the local police force or dial 101 (the non-emergency number), to talk in confidence about any concerns, and gain access to support and advice.
- We may use The Department for Education's dedicated telephone helpline (020 7340 7264) to raise concerns relating to extremism directly. Concerns can also be raised by email to counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk.
- If a child is taken out of the country with no warning we will investigate the reason for this trip and if necessary will report it to the Local Authority and/ or the police.
- If a child is absent from the setting without a call to explain the reason, we will call parents to ask the reason. If no reason is given we will keep a log of any patterns emerging.
- If a child is absent for more than 2 weeks, we will contact the Local Authority.

1.3 Looked after children

Policy statement

Early years settings are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Definition of 'Looked after Children' (LAC): *Children and young people become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local*

authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has impact on their emotional well-being.

In The Ark Pre-School, we place emphasis on promoting *children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to*. Our policy and practice guidelines for looked after children are based on these two important concepts, *attachment and resilience*. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives as the basis for resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and are the basis in developing positive dispositions for learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

Principles

- The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.
- We offer places to two and a half year old children in exceptional circumstances who are in care. In such cases, the child should have been with the foster carer for at least two months and show signs of having formed a secure attachment to the carer and where the placement in the setting will last a minimum of three months.
- We offer places for funded three and four-year-olds who are in care to ensure they receive their entitlement to early education. We expect that a child will have been with a foster carer for a minimum of one month and has formed a secure attachment to the carer. We expect that the placement in the setting will last a minimum of six weeks.
- We will always offer 'stay and play' provision for a child who is two to five years old who is still settling with their foster carer, or who is only temporarily being looked after.
- Where a child who normally attends our setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer we will continue to offer the placement for the child.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.1 Child development 1.2 Inclusive practice 1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child 3.4 The wider context	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

Procedures

- The designated person for looked after children is the designated safeguarding officer.
- Every child is allocated a key person before they start and this is no different for a looked after child. The designated person ensures the key person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.
- The designated person and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child, and his or her family, and ensure appropriate information is gained and shared.
- The Ark Pre-school recognises the role of the local authority social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes, especially with regard to the birth parent's or foster carer's role in relation to the setting without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
- At the start of a placement there is a professionals meeting that will determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates the child's learning needs. This plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks and three months. Thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.

- The care plan needs to consider such issues for the child as:
 - the child's emotional needs and how they are to be met;
 - how any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed;
 - the child's sense of self, culture, language/s and identity – how this is to be supported;
 - the child's need for sociability and friendship;
 - the child's interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway; and
 - how any special needs will be supported.
- In addition the care plan will also consider:
 - how information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored;
 - what contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact. If this is to be the setting, when, where and what form the contact will take will be discussed and agreed;
 - what written reporting is required;
 - wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child's return home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in planning; and
 - with the social worker's agreement, and as part of the plan, the birth parent(s) should be involved in the setting's activities that include parents, such as outings, fun-days etc alongside the foster carer.

The settling-in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same as for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. It is even more important that the 'proximity' stage is followed until it is visible that the child has formed a relationship with his or her key person sufficient to act as a 'secure base' to allow the gradual separation from the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases, so time needs to be allowed for it to take place without causing further distress or anxiety to the child.

In the first two weeks after settling-in, the child's well-being is the focus of observation, their sociability and their ability to manage their feelings with or without support.

Further observations about communication, interests and abilities will be noted to firm a picture of the whole child in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage 6 areas of learning.

Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's file and discussed with the foster carer.

If the concerns are about the foster carer's treatment of the child, or if abuse is suspected, these are recorded in the child's file and reported to the child's social care worker according to the setting's safeguarding children procedure.

Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.

Transition to school will be handled sensitively and the designated person and or the child's key person will liaise with the school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the looked after child's birth parents.

1.4 Confidentiality and client access to records

Policy statement

Definition: 'Confidential information is information that is not normally in the public domain or readily available from another source, it should have a degree of sensitivity and value and be subject to a duty of confidence. A duty of confidence arises when one person provides information to another in circumstances where it is reasonable to expect that the information will be held in confidence.'
(Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (DCSF 2008))

In The Ark Pre-school, staff and managers can be said to have a 'confidential relationship' with families. It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents and carers, while ensuring that they access high quality early years care and education in our setting. We aim to ensure that all parents and

carers can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children. There are record keeping systems in place that meet legal requirements; means of storing and sharing that information take place within the framework of the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	

Confidentiality procedures

- We always check whether parents regard the information they share with us to be regarded as confidential or not.
- Some parents sometimes share information about themselves with other parents as well as staff; the setting cannot be held responsible if information is shared beyond those parents whom the person has 'confided' in.
- Information shared between parents in a discussion or training group is usually bound by a shared agreement that the information is confidential to the group and not discussed outside of it.
- We inform parents when we need to record confidential information beyond the general personal information we keep (see our record keeping procedures 5.2) - for example with regard to any injuries, concerns or changes in relation to the child or the family, any discussions with parents on sensitive matters, any records we are obliged to keep regarding action taken in respect of child protection and any contact and correspondence with external agencies in relation to their child.
- We keep all hard copies of records in securely on-site at The Ark Pre-school and electronic files are password protected allowing only authorised people to access these files. (For further information, see our record keeping procedures policy 5.1 and 5.2).

Client access to records procedures

Parents may request access to any confidential records held on their child and family following the procedure below:

- Any request to see the child's personal file by a parent or person with parental responsibility must be made in writing to The Ark Pre-school manager.
- The Ark Pre-school manager informs the chairperson of the management committee and sends a written acknowledgement.
- The Ark Pre-school commits to providing access within 14 days, although this may be extended.
- The Ark Pre-school manager and chairperson of the management committee prepare the file for viewing.
- All third parties are written to, stating that a request for disclosure has been received and asking for their permission to disclose to the person requesting it. Copies of these letters are retained on file.
- 'Third parties' include all family members who may be referred to in the records.
- It also includes workers from any other agency, including social services, the health authority, etc. It is usual for agencies to refuse consent to disclose, preferring the individual to go directly to them.
- When all the consents/refusals to disclose have been received these are attached to the copy of the request letter.
- A photocopy of the complete file is taken.
- The Ark Pre-school manager and chairperson of the management committee go through the file and remove any information which a third party has refused consent to disclose. This is best done with a thick black marker, to score through every reference to the third party and information they have added to the file.
- What remains is the information recorded by the setting, detailing the work initiated and followed by them in relation to confidential matters. This is called the 'clean copy'.

- The 'clean copy' is photocopied for the parents who are then invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be gone through by The Ark Pre-school manager, so that it can be explained.
- Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file, especially where the parent has possible grounds for litigation against the setting or another (third party) agency.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the setting, which is to the safety and well-being of the child. Please see also our policy on child protection.

1.5 Information sharing

Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. A key factor identified in many serious case reviews (SCRs) has been a failure by practitioners to record information, to share it, to understand its significance and then take appropriate action.

Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children. (March 2015)

Policy statement

We recognise that parents have a right to know that information they share will be regarded as confidential as well as be informed about the circumstances, and reasons, when we are obliged to share information.

We are obliged to share confidential information without authorisation from the person who provided it or to whom it relates if it is in the public interest. That is when:

- it is to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult; or
- not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.
- The decision should never be made as an individual, but with the back-up of management committee officers. The three critical criteria are:
Where there is *evidence* that the child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm.
- Where there is *reasonable cause to believe* that a child may be suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm.
- To *prevent* significant harm arising to children and young people or serious harm to adults, including the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.2 Inclusive practice 1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	

Procedures

Our procedure is based on the 7 golden rules for information sharing as set out in *Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (DCSF 2008)*.

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
 - Our policy and procedures on information sharing provide guidance to appropriate sharing of information with external agencies.
2. Be open and honest. Explain to families how, when and why information will be shared about them and with whom. Seek consent to share information, unless it puts the child at risk or undermines a criminal investigation.
3. In The Ark Pre-school we ensure parents:
 - receive information about our information sharing policy when starting their child in the setting and they sign a form to say that they *understand* circumstances when information may be shared without their consent. This will only be when it is a matter of safeguarding a child or vulnerable adult. This is on our registration form;
 - have information about our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy;

- have information about the circumstances when information will be shared with external agencies, for example, with regard to any special needs the child may have or transition to school.
4. Seek advice when there are doubts about possible significant harm to a child or others.
 - The manager will contact children's social care for advice where they have doubts or are unsure.
 5. Share with consent where appropriate. Respect the wishes of children and parents not to consent to share confidential information. However, in the interests of the child, know when it is reasonable to override their wish.
 - Guidelines for consent are part of this procedure.
 6. The manager is conversant with this and is able to advise staff accordingly. Consider the safety and welfare of the child when making a decision about sharing information – if there are concerns regarding 'significant harm' the child's well being and safety is paramount.

In The Ark Pre-school we:

- record concerns and discuss these with the pre-school's *designated person* and/or *designated officer* from the management committee for child protection matters. Record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared and to whom; and
 - follow the procedures for reporting concerns and record keeping (See policy 5.2 Provider Records).
7. Information shared should be accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose it is being shared for, shared only with those who need to know and shared securely.
 - Our Child Protection procedure (1.2) and Record Keeping procedure (5.2) set out how and where information should be recorded and what information should be shared with another agency when making a referral.
 8. Reasons for decisions to share information, or not, are recorded.
 - Provision for this is set out in our Record Keeping procedure (5.2).

Consent

Parents have a right to be informed that their consent to share information will be sought in most cases, as well as the kinds of circumstances when their consent may not be sought, or their refusal to give consent may be overridden. We do this as follows:

- Our policies and procedures set out our responsibility regarding gaining consent to share information and when it may not be sought or overridden.
- We may cover this verbally when the child starts or include this in our prospectus.
- Parents sign a form at registration to say they understand this.
- Parents are asked to give written consent to share information about any additional needs their child may have, or to pass on child development summaries, to the next provider/school.
- Copies are given to parents of the forms they sign.

We consider the following questions when we need to share:

- Is there legitimate purpose to sharing the information?
- Does the information enable the person to be identified?
- Is the information confidential?
- If the information is confidential, do you have consent to share?
- Is there a statutory duty or court order to share information?
- If consent is refused, or there are good reasons not to seek consent, is there sufficient public interest to share information?
- If the decision is to share, are you sharing the right information in the right way?
- Have you properly recorded your decision?

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the setting, which is to the safety and well-being of the child.

1.6 Uncollected child

Policy statement

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session/day, The Ark Pre-school puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child. We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible.

We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe 1.4 Health and well-being	2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	

Procedures

- Parents of children starting at the setting are asked to provide the following specific information which is recorded on our Registration Form:
 - Home address and telephone number - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour or close relative.
 - Place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable).
 - Mobile telephone number (if applicable).
 - Names, addresses, telephone numbers and signatures of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting, for example a childminder or grandparent.
 - Who has parental responsibility for the child.
 - Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child.
- On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they inform us of how they can be contacted.
- On occasions when parents or the persons normally authorised to collect the child are not able to collect the child, they provide us with details of the person who will be collecting their child, and provide that person with the child's password so we can verify their identity when they come to collect.
- Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can begin to take back-up measures. We provide parents with our contact telephone number.
- We inform parents that we apply our child protection procedures in the event that their children are not collected from setting by an authorised adult within one hour after the setting has closed and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises.
- If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we follow the following procedures:
 - The child's file is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
 - If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work.
 - If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting – and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Registration Form – are contacted.
 - All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers.
 - The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in their file.
 - If no-one collects the child after one hour and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures for uncollected children.
- We contact the MASH Team (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) on:

01344 352005

- The child stays at setting in the care of two fully-vetted workers until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social care worker.
- Social Care will aim to find the parent or relative if they are unable to do so, the child will become looked after by the local authority.
- Under no circumstances do staff to go to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.
- Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.
- Ofsted may be informed:
0300 123 1231

1.7 Missing child

Policy statement

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises. Every attempt is made through carrying out the outings procedure and the exit/entrance procedure to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe 1.4 Health and well-being	2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	

Procedures

Child going missing on the premises

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the key person/staff alerts the manager.
- The manager will carry out a thorough search of the building and outside area.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- The manager talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
- Within 15 minutes of the child being reported as missing, the police will be contacted.
- The manager contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson, with the management committee carries out an investigation, and may come to the setting immediately.

Child going missing on an outing

This describes what to do when staff have taken a small group on an outing, leaving the manager and/or other staff back in the setting. If the manager has accompanied children on the outing, the procedures are adjusted accordingly.

What to do when a child goes missing from a whole setting outing may be a little different, as parents usually attend and are responsible for their own child.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated carer and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray. One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The manager is contacted immediately (if not on the outing) and the incident recorded.

- The manager contacts the police and reports the child as missing.
- The manager contacts the parent, who makes their way to the setting or outing venue as agreed with the manager. The setting is advised as the best place, as by the time the parent arrives, the child may have returned to the setting.
- Staff take the remaining children back to the setting.
- In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.
- The manager contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson, with the management committee carries out an investigation, and may come to the setting immediately.
- The manager, or a member of staff may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive.

The investigation

- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The setting leader together with the chairperson or representative from the management committee, speaks with the parent(s).
- The chairperson and management committee, carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.
- The key person/staff member writes an incident report detailing:
 - The date and time of the report.
 - What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child.
 - When the child was last seen in the group/outing.
 - What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing.
 - The time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Children's social care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements (see the Reporting of Accidents and Incidents policy); the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
- The insurance provider is informed.

Managing people

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. The manager needs to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the manager. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the manager and the other should be the chairperson of the management committee or representative. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.

- The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The chairperson will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

1.8 Supervision of children on outings and visits

Policy statement

Children benefit from being taken out of the setting to go on visits or trips to local parks or other suitable venues for activities which enhance their learning experiences. Staff in The Ark Pre-school ensure that there are procedures to keep children safe on outings; all staff and volunteers are aware of and follow the procedures below.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe 1.4 Health and well-being	2.2 Parents as partners	3.3 The learning environment	4.2 Active learning

Procedures

- Parents sign a general consent on registration for their children to be taken out as a part of the daily activities of the setting.
- This general consent details the venues used for daily activities.
- There is a risk assessment for each venue carried out, which is reviewed regularly.
- Parents are always asked to sign specific consent forms before major outings.
- A risk assessment is carried out before an outing takes place.
- All venue risk assessments are made available for parents to see.
- Named children are assigned to individual staff to ensure each child is individually supervised, to ensure no child goes astray, and that there is no unauthorised access to children.
- Staff take a mobile phone on outings, and supplies of tissues, wipes, pants etc as well as a mini first aid pack, snacks and water. The amount of equipment will vary and be consistent with the venue and the number of children as well as how long they will be out for.
- Staff take a list of children with them with contact numbers of parents/carers.

A minimum of two staff should accompany children on outings and a minimum of two should remain behind with the rest of the children.

1.9 Maintaining children's safety and security on premises

Policy statement

We maintain the highest possible security of our premises to ensure that each child is safely cared for during their time with us.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe	2.2 Parents as partners		

Procedures

Children's personal safety

- We ensure all employed staff have been checked for criminal records by an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- Adults do not normally supervise children on their own.
- All children are supervised by adults at all times.
- Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults are present.
- We carry out risk assessment to ensure children are not made vulnerable within any part of our premises, nor by any activity.
- If staff members are taking medication, which may affect their ability to care for children, they should seek medical advice. Providers must ensure that those staff members only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly.
- Staff medication on the premises must be securely stored, and out of reach of children, at all times.
- If a staff member is on medication on a long-term basis, a full risk assessment will be completed to assess the staff member's ability to complete all tasks required, and if any changes to their responsibilities will be required.

Security, and collection of children.

Systems are in place for the safe arrival and departure of children.

- Completion of the registration form will detail those adults who have parental responsibility and any other responsible adults (over 16 years) who are authorised to collect the child. This must be updated by the parents if there are any changes to these arrangements and staff must be kept informed.
- Parents who drop off must name any other adult who will be collecting their child at the end of session, and a secure password must be given by that named person upon collection.
- If any person arrives to collect a child and we have not been told of this arrangement by the parent/ carer, we will not release the child until we have spoken to a parent/ carer to gain their authorisation, and the collecting person gives the password. If required we will contact the police if an unknown person is suspected to be an intruder.
- If a known person arrives to collect a child but is not in a state which we deem suitable to care for a child (e.g. acting violently or under the influence of alcohol or other substances) then we will not release them. We will call another authorised person to come and collect the child.
- In the event of disputes between parents that have not been through the courts, we cannot prevent the child from being collected by one of the parents. The other parent will be contacted to inform them that their child has been collected. The child's best interests and welfare are of paramount importance and every effort will be made to avoid distressing scenes in front of the child.
- In the event that there is a court order in place to prevent access by a parent then we will adhere to this and place a copy on the child's file.
- Once parents/ carers greet their child, it becomes their responsibility to keep their child safe.
- The arrival and departure times of adults - staff, volunteers and visitors - are recorded.
- Our systems prevent unauthorised access to our premises.

- Our systems prevent children from leaving our premises unnoticed.
- The personal possessions of staff and volunteers are securely stored during sessions.

1.10 Making a complaint

Policy statement

The Ark Pre-school believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our setting and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the setting. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.2 Inclusive practice	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.2 Supporting every child 3.4 The wider context	

Procedures

All settings are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors. The 'summary log' will be reviewed termly by the Chair of the Management Committee, or as required.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with the manager.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the manager and the chair of the management committee.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a complaint form available in the Welcome pack and on our website.
- The pre-school stores written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the manager may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the manager meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the manager and the chair of the management committee. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the leader should have the support of the chairperson of the management committee present.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it.

- This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summary of points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting the parent and pre-school cannot reach agreement, an external mediator is invited to help to settle the complaint. This person should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
- Staff or volunteers within the Pre-school Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the pre-school personnel (manager and chair of the management committee) and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice s/he gives.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the manager and the chair of the management committee is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint.
- The mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.
- A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the setting's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
- The number to call Ofsted with regard to a complaint is:
0300 123 1234
- These details are displayed on our pre-school's notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board in our local authority.
- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the setting leader works with Ofsted or the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

- A record of complaints against our pre-school and/or the children and/or the adults working in our setting is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Summary Complaints Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

1.10a Whistle Blowing

Definition: Whistleblowing is raising a concern about malpractice within an organisation.

Policy statement

The Ark Pre-School is committed to delivering a high quality pre-school service. In line with that commitment we encourage employees and volunteers with serious concerns about any aspect of the pre-school's work to come forward and voice those concerns.

This policy provides individuals with protection from victimisation or punishment should they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice within the pre-school. This policy is not a substitution

or alternative to the pre-school's Grievance Procedure or Complaints Policy. It is intended to encourage individuals to be open and honest within the pre-school and feel that it is safe and acceptable to raise any concerns. These concerns may be about something that is:

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with any legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment
- Deliberate concealment of information about any of the above.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.2 Inclusive practice	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.2 Supporting every child 3.4 The wider context	

Procedures

- An employee or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise a concern should report the matter to the manager who will advise the employee or volunteer of the action she will take. Concerns should be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible.
- If an employee or volunteer feels the matter cannot be discussed with the manager, he or she should report it to the Chairperson of the management committee or directly to Ofsted.
- The Chairperson will decide, in consultation, where necessary with the Pre-school Learning Alliance or Ofsted, what action is to be taken. This may include whether the issue raised can be dealt with through the pre-school's own Grievance Procedure.
- Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible and the employee or volunteer will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of raising any genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice within the playgroup.

1.11 Valuing diversity and promoting equality

Policy statement

The Ark Pre-school will ensure that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children. We recognise that children and their families come from diverse backgrounds. All families have needs and values that arise from their social and economic, ethnic and cultural or religious backgrounds. Children grow up in diverse family structures that include two parent and one-parent families; some children have two parents of the same sex. Some children have close links with extended families of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins while others may be more removed from close kin or may live with other relatives or foster carers. Some children have needs that arise from disability or impairment or may have parents that are affected by disability or impairment.

Some children come from families who experience social exclusion or severe hardship; some have to face discrimination and prejudice because of their ethnicity, the languages they speak, their religious or belief background, their gender or their impairment.

We understand that these factors affect the well being of children and can impact on their learning and attainment.

The Ark Pre-school is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families. We aim to:

- provide a secure and accessible environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are considered and valued;

- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles and diverse family structures, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people;
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity;
- challenge and eliminate discriminatory actions;
- make inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities of the setting; and
- foster good relations between all communities.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.2 Inclusive practice 1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners 2.3 Supporting learning 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child 3.4 The wider context	4.4 Areas of learning and development

Procedures

Admissions

Our setting is open to all members of the community.

- We advertise our service widely.
- We reflect the diversity of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
- We provide information in as many languages as possible.
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy.
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of a protected characteristic as defined by the Equalities Act 2010. These are:
 - disability;
 - race;
 - gender reassignment;
 - religion or belief;
 - sex;
 - sexual orientation;
 - age;
 - pregnancy and maternity; and
 - marriage and civil partnership.
- We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our setting for reason relating to disability.
- We ensure wherever possible that we have a balanced intake of boys and girls in the setting.
- We develop an action plan to ensure that people with impairments can participate successfully in the services offered by the setting and in the curriculum offered.
- We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents whether by:
 - direct discrimination – someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic e.g. preventing families of some racial groups from using the service;
 - indirect discrimination - someone is affected unfavourably by a general policy e.g. children must only speak English in the setting;

- association – discriminating against someone who is associated with a person with a protected characteristic e.g. behaving unfavourably to someone who is married to a person from a different cultural background; or
 - perception – discrimination on the basis that it is thought someone has a protected characteristic e.g. assuming someone is gay because of their mannerism or how they speak.
- Displaying of openly discriminatory and possibly offensive materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner.

Employment

- Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
- Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all.
- We may use the exemption clauses in relevant legislation to enable the service to best meet the needs of the community.
- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Disclosure & Barring Service. This ensures fairness in the selection process.
- All job descriptions include a commitment to promoting equality and recognising and respecting diversity as part of their specifications.
- We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.

Training

- Within the induction period, a staff member will familiarise themselves with all policies and procedures, especially those on Safeguarding, both from The Ark Pre-school and Bracknell Forest.
- All staff will be trained in Level 2 Safeguarding training. We aim to do this within 3 months of the staff member commencing their post, as per our induction procedure.
- We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which enable all children to flourish.
- We ensure that staff are confident and fully trained in administering relevant medicines and performing invasive care procedures when these are required. There will always be a staff on-site with a valid paediatric first aid qualification. We endeavour to have at least two staff members on site trained in paediatric first aid.
- We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for promoting equality, valuing diversity and inclusion.

Curriculum

The curriculum offered in the setting encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

Our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. If access to the settings is found to treat disabled children or adults less favourably then we make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled children and adults. We do this by:

- making children feel valued and good about themselves and others;
- ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
- undertaking an access audit to establish if the setting is accessible to all children;
- making adjustments to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairments;
- making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities, e.g. recognising the different learning styles of girls and boys;
- positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources;
- avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of books or other visual materials;

- celebrating a wide range of festivals;
- creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
- differentiating the curriculum to meet children's special educational needs;
- helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable;
- ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities;
- ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning; and
- ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages.

Valuing diversity in families

- We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families.
- We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life to the setting.
- We encourage mothers, fathers and other carers to take part in the life of the setting and to contribute fully.
- For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion.
- We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means and offer information regarding sources of financial support.
- We take positive action to encourage disadvantaged and under-represented groups to use the setting.

Food

- We work in partnership with parents to ensure that dietary requirements of children that arise from their medical, religious or cultural needs are met.
- We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them.

Meetings

- Meetings are arranged to ensure that all parents and carers who wish to may be involved in the running of the setting.
- Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways - written, verbal and in translation - to ensure that all parents and carers have information about and access to the meetings.

Monitoring and reviewing

- To ensure our policies and procedures remain effective we will monitor and review them annually to ensure our strategies meets the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and valuing diversity.
- We provide a complaints procedure and a complaints summary record for parents to see.

1.12 Supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities

Policy statement

The Ark Pre-school provides an environment in which all children, including those with special educational needs, are supported to reach their full potential.

- We have regard for the DfES Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014).
- We ensure our provision is inclusive to all children with special educational needs.
- We support parents and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- We identify the specific needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities and meet those needs through a range of SEND strategies.

- We work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting individual children's needs.
- We monitor and review our policy, practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.1 Child development 1.2 Inclusive practice 1.4 Health and well-being	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners 2.3 Supporting learning 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child 3.3 The learning environment 3.4 The wider context	4.1 Play and exploration 4.2 Active learning 4.3 Creativity and critical thinking

Procedures

- We designate a member of staff to be the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and give his/her name to parents. Our SENCO is

LAURA ROTHWELL

- We ensure that the provision for children with special educational needs is the responsibility of all members of the setting.
- We ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity.
- We use the graduated response system for identifying, assessing and responding to children's special educational needs.
- We work closely with parents of children with special educational needs to create and maintain a positive partnership.
- We ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education.
- We provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
- We liaise with other professionals involved with children with special educational needs and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools.
- We provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum for all children with special educational needs.
- We use a system of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing individual educational plans (IEPs) for children with special educational needs.
- We ensure that children with special educational needs are appropriately involved at all stages of the graduated response, taking into account their levels of ability.
- We have systems in place for supporting children during Early Years Action, Early Years Action Plus, Statutory Assessment and the Statementing process.
- We use a system for keeping records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with special educational needs.
- We provide resources (human and financial) to implement our Special Educational Needs Policy.
- We provide in-service training for parents, practitioners and volunteers.
- We raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer, e.g. Makaton trained staff.
- We ensure the effectiveness of our special educational needs provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. Individual Education Plan reviews, staff and management meetings, parental and external agency's views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually.
- We provide a complaints procedure.
- We monitor and review our policy annually.

1.13 Achieving positive behaviour

Policy statement

The Ark Pre-school believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

Children need to learn to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. This is a developmental task that requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example. The principles that underpin how we achieve positive and considerate behaviour exist within the programme for promoting personal, social and emotional development.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.1 Child development 1.2 Inclusive practice 1.3 Keeping safe	2.2 Parents as partners 2.3 Supporting learning	3.2 Supporting every child 3.3 The learning environment	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

Procedures

We have named people who are responsible for our programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour. These named people are **Heather Sinclair** (Manager), and **Laura Rothwell** (SENCO).

We require all staff to:

- keep up-to-date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support;
- access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development
- check that all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour. We keep a record of staff attendance at this training.
- We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of - and respect - those used by members of the setting.
- We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
- We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the setting's behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.
- We expect all members of our setting - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.
- We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person. We work with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour

- We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable, and supporting children to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.
- We ensure that there are enough popular toys and resources and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns.

- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
- When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.
- We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with these.
- We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children.
- We use physical restraint, such as holding, only to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property.
- Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of our manager and are recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parent is informed on the same day.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's inconsiderate behaviour.

Children under three years

- When children under three behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those for older children.
- We recognise that very young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.
- Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.
- If tantrums, biting or fighting are frequent, we try to find out the underlying cause - such as a change or upheaval at home, or frequent change of carers. Sometimes a child has not settled in well and the behaviour may be the result of 'separation anxiety'.
- We focus on ensuring a child's attachment figure in the setting, their key person, is building a strong relationship to provide security to the child.

Rough and tumble play, hurtful behaviour and bullying

Our procedure has been updated to provide additional focus on these kinds of inconsiderate behaviours.

Rough and tumble play and fantasy aggression

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using strategies as above.

- We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or aggressive.
- We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.
- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently dramatic strategies, blowing up, shooting etc., and that themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies' and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.

- We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

Hurtful behaviour

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child, especially if their emotions are high at the time, but it is not helpful to label this behaviour as 'bullying'. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without cognisance of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

- We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them.
- We will help them manage these feelings as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.
- We understand that self-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that take place when triggers activate responses of anger or fear.
- Therefore we help this process by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour. By helping the child to return to a normal state, we are helping the brain to develop the physiological response system that will help the child be able to manage his or her own feelings.
- We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child's rage as that will have the opposite effect.
- Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them through holding and cuddling. Verbal children will also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we offer them an explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.
- We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they experience. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. "Adam took your car, didn't he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn't like it when he took it, did you? Did it make you feel angry? Is that why you hit him?" Older children will be able to verbalise their feelings better, talking through themselves the feelings that motivated the behaviour.
- We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings. "When you hit Adam, it hurt him and he didn't like that and it made him cry."
- We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. "I can see you are feeling better now and Adam isn't crying any more. Let's see if we can be friends and find another car, so you can both play with one."
- We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing and turn-taking develop. In order for both the biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.
- We support social skills through modelling behaviour, through activities, drama and stories. We build self-esteem and confidence in children, recognising their emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.
- We help a child to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we do not force children to say sorry, but encourage this where it is clear that they are genuinely sorry and wish to show this to the person they have hurt.
- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons for very young children to engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are that:
 - they do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs – this may be in the home and it may also be in the setting;
 - their parent, or carer in the setting, does not have skills in responding appropriately, and consequently negative patterns are developing where hurtful behaviour is the only response the child has to express feelings of anger;

- the child may have insufficient language, or mastery of English, to express him or herself and may feel frustrated;
- the child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse;
- the child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
- Where this does not work, we use the Code of Practice to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to a Behaviour Support Team where necessary.

Bullying

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. It is characterised by intent to hurt, often planned, and accompanied by an awareness of the impact of the bullying behaviour.

A child who is bullying has reached a stage of cognitive development where he or she is able to plan to carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress in another.

If a child bullies another child or children:

- We show the children who have been bullied that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them;
- We intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child or children;
- We explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is not acceptable;
- We give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied;
- We help the child who has done the bullying to recognise the impact of their actions;
- We make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practise and reflect on considerate behaviour;
- We do not label children who bully as 'bullies';
- We recognise that children who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves, or be subject to abuse or other circumstance causing them to express their anger in negative ways towards others;
- We recognise that children who bully are often unable to empathise with others and for this reason we do not insist that they say sorry unless it is clear that they feel genuine remorse for what they have done. Empty apologies are just as hurtful to the bullied child as the original behaviour;
- We discuss what has happened with the parents of the child who did the bullying and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour; and
- We share what has happened with the parents of the child who has been bullied, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

1.14 Animals in the setting

Policy statement

Children learn about the natural world, its animals and other living creatures, as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. This may include contact with animals, or other living creatures, either in the pre-school or on visits. We aim to ensure that this is in accordance with sensible hygiene and safety controls.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.4 Health and well-being	2.3 Supporting learning	3.3 The learning environment	4.1 Play and exploration 4.4 Knowledge and understanding of the world

Procedures

Animals visiting The Ark Pre-school

- Animals or creatures which are brought in by visitors are the responsibility of the owner.
- The owner will be asked to show a risk assessment, detailing how the animal or creature is to be handled and how any safety or hygiene issues will be addressed.
- Children are taught correct handling and care of the animal or creature and are supervised.
- Children wash their hands after handling the animal or creature and do not have contact with animal soil or soiled bedding.

Visits to farms

- Before a visit to a farm a risk assessment is carried out - this may take account of safety factors listed in the farm's own risk assessment which should be viewed.
- The outings procedure is followed.
- Children wash their hands after contact with animals.
- Outdoor footwear worn to visit farms are cleaned of mud and debris and should not be worn indoors.

1.15 Administering medicines

Policy statement

While it is not our policy to care for sick children, who should be at home until they are well enough to return to the setting, we will agree to administer medication as part of maintaining their health and well-being or when they are recovering from an illness.

In many cases, it is possible for children's GP's to prescribe medicine that can be taken at home in the morning and evening. As far as possible, administering medicines will only be done where it would be detrimental to the child's health if not given in the setting. If a child has not had a medication before, it is advised that the parent keeps the child at home for the first 48 hours to ensure no adverse effect as well as to give time for the medication to take effect.

These procedures are written in line with current guidance in 'Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years Settings'; the manager is responsible for ensuring all staff understand and follow these procedures.

The key person is responsible for the correct administration of medication to children for whom they are the key person. This includes ensuring that parent consent forms have been completed, that medicines are stored correctly and that records are kept according to procedures. In the absence of the key person, the manager is responsible for the overseeing of administering medication.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.4 Health and well-being	2.2 Parents as partners 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child	

Procedures

- Children taking prescribed medication must be well enough to attend the setting.
- Prescribed medication must be in-date and prescribed for the current condition.
- Children's medicines are stored in their original containers, are clearly labelled and are inaccessible to the children.
- Parents give prior written permission for the administration of medication. The staff receiving the medication must ask the parent to sign a consent form stating the following information. No medication may be given without these details being provided:
 - full name of child and date of birth;
 - name of medication and strength;
 - who prescribed it;
 - dosage to be given in the setting;

- how the medication should be stored and expiry date;
- any possible side effects that may be expected should be noted; and
- signature, printed name of parent and date.

The manager is responsible for receiving any medication, ensuring all medication forms are filled in fully and correctly and that the medication is stored correctly. They ensure that the child's keyworker is fully aware of any medical needs of a key child.

- The administration is recorded accurately each time it is given and is signed by staff. Parents sign the record book to acknowledge the administration of a medicine. The medication record book records:
 - name of child;
 - name and strength of medication;
 - the date and time of dose;
 - dose given and method; and is
 - signed by key person/manager; and is verified by parent signature at the end of the day.

Storage of medicines

- All medication is stored safely in a locked cupboard or refrigerated. Where the cupboard or refrigerator is not used solely for storing medicines, they are kept in a marked plastic box.
- The child's key person is responsible for ensuring medicine is handed back at the end of the day to the parent.
- For some conditions, medication may be kept in the setting. Key persons check that any medication held to administer as and when required, or on a regular basis, is in date and returns any out-of-date medication back to the parent.

Medicines are stored in the top drawer of the filing cabinet.

- If the administration of prescribed medication requires medical knowledge, individual training is provided for the relevant member of staff by a health professional.
- If rectal diazepam is given another member of staff must be present and co-signs the record book.
- No child may self-administer. Where children are capable of understanding when they need medication, for example with asthma, they should be encouraged to tell their key person what they need. However, this does not replace staff vigilance in knowing and responding when a child requires medication.

Children who have long term medical conditions and who may require ongoing medication

- A risk assessment is carried out for each child with long-term medical conditions that require ongoing medication. This is the responsibility of the manager alongside the key person. Other medical or social care personnel may need to be involved in the risk assessment.
- Parents will also contribute to a risk assessment. They should be shown around the setting, understand the routines and activities and point out anything which they think may be a risk factor for their child.
- For some medical conditions key staff will need to have training in a basic understanding of the condition as well as how the medication is to be administered correctly. The training needs for staff is part of the risk assessment.
- The risk assessment includes vigorous activities and any other pre-school activity that may give cause for concern regarding an individual child's health needs.
- The risk assessment includes arrangements for taking medicines on outings and the child's GP's advice is sought if necessary where there are concerns.
- A health care plan for the child is drawn up with the parent; outlining the key person's role and what information must be shared with other staff who care for the child.
- The health care plan should include the measures to be taken in an emergency.
- The health care plan is reviewed every six months or more if necessary. This includes reviewing the medication, e.g. changes to the medication or the dosage, any side effects noted etc.
- Parents receive a copy of the health care plan and each contributor, including the parent, signs it.

Managing medicines on trips and outings

- If children are going on outings, staff accompanying the children must include the key person for the child with a risk assessment, or another member of staff who is fully informed about the child's needs and/or medication.
- Medication for a child is kept with a staff member at all times, and is clearly labelled with the child's name and name of the medication. We will also take a copy of the consent form, and on our return will complete the record for administration of medication.
- If a child on medication has to be taken to hospital, the child's medication is taken with them, by a staff member, and is clearly labelled with the child's name, and name of the medication. The staff member will also take a copy of the consent form signed by the parent.
- As a precaution, children should not eat when travelling in vehicles
- This procedure is read alongside the outings procedure.

1.16 Managing children with allergies, or who are sick or infectious

(Including reporting notifiable diseases)

Policy statement

We provide care for healthy children and promote health through identifying allergies and preventing contact with the allergenic substance and through preventing cross infection of viruses and bacterial infections.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.2 Inclusive practice 1.4 Health and well-being	2.2 Parents as partners 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child	

Procedures for children with allergies

- When parents start their children at the Ark Pre-School they are asked if their child suffers from any known allergies. This is recorded on the registration form. The parents also complete an Individual Health Care form, and a copy is given to the parents.
- If a child has an allergy, a risk assessment form is completed to detail the following:
 - The allergen (i.e. the substance, material or living creature the child is allergic to such as nuts, eggs, bee stings, cats etc).
 - The nature of the allergic reactions e.g. anaphylactic shock reaction, including rash, reddening of skin, swelling, breathing problems etc.
 - What to do in case of allergic reactions, any medication used and how it is to be used (e.g. EpiPen).
 - Control measures – such as how the child can be prevented from contact with the allergen.
 - Review date.
- This form is kept in the child's personal file and a copy is displayed where staff can see it.
- Parents train staff in how to administer special medication in the event of an allergic reaction.
- Generally, no nuts or nut products are used within the setting.
- Parents are made aware that we are a nut-free setting, and no nut or nut products should be brought into the setting.

Insurance requirements for children with allergies and disabilities

- The insurance will automatically include children with any disability or allergy but certain procedures must be strictly adhered to as set out below. The insurance cover for The Ark Pre-school also provides cover for children suffering life threatening conditions, or requiring invasive treatments, providing staff have relevant training in administration of the medication or treatment.

Oral Medication

- Oral medications (included asthma inhalers) must be prescribed by a GP or have manufacturer's instructions clearly written on them.
- The group must be provided with clear written instructions on how to administer such medication.
- All risk assessment procedures need to be adhered to for the correct storage and administration of the medication.
- The group must have the parents or guardians prior written consent. This consent must be kept on file. It is not necessary to forward copy documents to your insurance provider.

Life saving medication & invasive treatments

Adrenaline injections (Epipens) for anaphylactic shock reactions (caused by allergies to nuts, eggs etc) or invasive treatments such as rectal administration of Diazepam (for epilepsy).

- The setting must have:
 - written consent from the parent or guardian allowing staff to administer medication; and
 - any staff administering the medication must have received training in the administration of such medication by the child's GP, a district nurse, children's nurse specialist or a community paediatric nurse.
 - Key person for special needs children - children requiring help with tubes to help them with everyday living e.g. breathing apparatus, to take nourishment, colostomy bags etc.
 - Prior written consent from the child's parent or guardian to give treatment and/or medication prescribed by the child's GP.
 - Key person to have the relevant medical training/experience, which may include those who have received appropriate instructions from parents or guardians, or who have qualifications.

If you are unsure about any aspect, contact Ansvar Insurance on 01323 737541 or ansvar.insurance@ansvar.co.uk.

Procedures for children who are sick or infectious

- If children appear unwell during the day – have a temperature, sickness, diarrhoea or pains, particularly in the head or stomach – the manager calls the parents and asks them to collect the child, or send a known carer to collect on their behalf.
- If a child has a temperature, they are kept cool, by removing top clothing, sponging their heads with cool water, but kept away from draughts.
- Temperature is taken using a 'fever scan' kept near to the first aid box.
- In extreme cases of emergency the child should be taken to the nearest hospital and the parent informed.
- Parents are asked to take their child to the doctor before returning them to nursery; the nursery can refuse admittance to children who have a temperature, sickness and diarrhoea or a contagious infection or disease.
- Where children have been prescribed antibiotics, parents are asked to keep them at home for 48 hours before returning to the setting.
- After diarrhoea/ vomiting, parents are asked to keep children home for 48 hours from when they had their last episode of diarrhoea/ vomiting.
- The setting has a list of excludable diseases and current exclusion times. The full list is obtainable from:

http://www.hpa.org.uk/webc/HPAwebFile/HPAweb_C/1274087715902

and includes common childhood illnesses such as measles.

Reporting of 'notifiable diseases'

- If a child or adult is diagnosed suffering from a notifiable disease under the Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988, the GP will report this to the Health Protection Agency.
- When the setting becomes aware, or is formally informed of a notifiable disease, the manager contacts the **Health Protection Unit** on **01189 497050** and **Ofsted** on **0300 123 1231**, and acts on any advice given by the Health Protection Agency.

HIV/AIDS/Hepatitis procedure

- HIV virus, like other viruses such as Hepatitis, (A, B and C) are spread through body fluids. Hygiene precautions for dealing with body fluids are the same for all children and adults.
- Single use vinyl gloves and aprons are worn when changing children’s nappies, pants and clothing that are soiled with blood, urine, faeces or vomit.
- Protective rubber gloves are used for cleaning/slucing clothing after changing.
- Soiled clothing is double bagged for parents to collect.
- Spills of blood, urine, faeces or vomit are cleared using mild disinfectant solution and mops; cloths used are disposed of with the clinical waste.
- Tables and other furniture, furnishings or toys affected by blood, urine, faeces or vomit are cleaned using a disinfectant.

Nits and head lice

- Nits and head lice are not an excludable condition, although in exceptional cases a parent may be asked to keep the child away until the infestation has cleared.
- On identifying cases of head lice, all parents are informed and asked to treat their child and all the family if they are found to have head lice.

1.17 Nappy changing

Policy statement

No child is excluded from participating in the Ark Pre-School who may, for any reason, not yet be toilet trained and who may still be wearing nappies or equivalent. We work with parents towards toilet training, unless there are medical or other developmental reasons why this may not be appropriate at the time.

We make necessary adjustments to our bathroom provision and hygiene practice in order to accommodate children who are not yet toilet trained.

We see toilet training as a self-care skill that children have the opportunity to learn with the full support and non-judgemental concern of adults.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.2 Inclusive practice 1.4 Health and well-being	2.2 Parents as partners 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child	

Procedures

- Staff members have a list of personalised changing times for the young children in their care who are in nappies or ‘pull-ups’.
- Young children from two years should wear ‘pull ups’ or other types of trainer pants as soon as they are comfortable with this and their parents agree.
- All staff undertake the changing of young children.

- Changing areas are warm and there are safe areas to lay young children if they need to have their bottoms cleaned.
- Each young child will bring a named bag, which will be kept on their peg, with enough supply of nappies, wipes and nappy bags for the session.
- Gloves are put on before changing starts and the areas are prepared. Paper towel is put down on the changing mat freshly for each child.
- All staff are familiar with the hygiene procedures and carry these out when changing nappies.
- In addition, staff members ensure that nappy changing is relaxed and a time to promote independence in young children.
- Young children are encouraged to take an interest in using the toilet; they may just want to sit on it and talk to a friend who is also using the toilet.
- They should be encouraged to wash their hands and have soap and towels to hand. They should be allowed time for some play as they explore the water and the soap.
- Staff members are gentle when changing; they avoid pulling faces and making negative comment about 'nappy contents'.
- Staff members do not make inappropriate comments about young children's genitals when changing their nappies
- Older children access the toilet when they have the need to and are encouraged to be independent.
- Nappies and 'pull ups' are disposed of hygienically. The nappy or pull up is bagged and put in the bin. Cloth nappies, trainer pants and ordinary pants that have been wet or soiled are double bagged for the parent to take home.
- NB If young children are left in wet or soiled nappies/'pull ups' in the setting this may constitute neglect and will be a disciplinary matter. Settings have a 'duty of care' towards children's personal needs.
- A log is kept of all nappy changes, including which staff member changed the nappy and the time and date of the change.

1.18 No-smoking

Policy statement

We comply with health and safety regulations and the Welfare Requirements of the EYFS in making our setting a no-smoking environment - both indoor and outdoor.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.4 Health and well-being	2.1 Respecting each other	3.2 Supporting every child	

Procedures

- All staff, parents and volunteers are made aware of our no-smoking policy.
- The no-smoking policy is stated in our information brochure for parents.
- We actively encourage no smoking by having information for parents and staff about where to get help to stop smoking if they are seeking this information.
- Staff who smoke do not do so during working hours. Unless on a break and off the premises.

1.18a No alcohol

Policy statement

We comply with health and safety regulations and the Welfare Requirements of the EYFS in making our setting a no alcohol environment - both indoor and outdoor.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development

Procedures

- All staff, parents and volunteers are made aware of our no alcohol policy.
- Consumption of alcohol is not permitted on site, nor may staff or volunteers be under the influence of alcohol during working hours because of the adverse effects they can have on efficiency, safety and conduct.
- A breach of this policy is likely to lead to disciplinary action.

1.19 Food and drink

Policy statement

The Ark Pre-School regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We promote healthy eating using resources and materials. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.4 Health and well-being	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child 3.4 The wider context	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our setting.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children with Allergies policy.)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record to signify that it is correct.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs - including any allergies - are up-to-date. Parents sign the up-dated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences as well as their parents' wishes.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
 - meat, fish and protein alternatives;
 - dairy foods;
 - grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and
 - fruit and vegetables.
- We attempt to allow children to try foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.

- Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy.
- We organise snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- We provide children with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- We encourage parents who provide food for packed lunches to include healthy and nutritious food and to be aware that these will not be refrigerated, and therefore should include ice-packs in warmer weather.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- For children who drink milk, we provide fresh semi-skimmed milk.
- All staff involved in preparing and handling food must receive training in food hygiene.
- We will notify Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises. Notification must be made as soon as is reasonably practical, but in any event within 14 days of the incident. A registered provider, who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement, commits an offence.

1.20 First aid

Policy statement

In the Ark Pre-School, staff are able to take action to apply first aid treatment in the event of an accident involving a child or adult. At least one member of staff with current first aid training is on the premises or on an outing at any one time. The first aid qualification includes first aid training for infants and young children.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe 1.4 Health and well-being	2.2 Parents as partners 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child 3.4 The wider context	

Procedures

The First Aid Kit

Our first aid kit complies with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 and contains the following items only:

- Triangular bandages (ideally at least one should be sterile) - x 4.
- Sterile dressings:
 - a) Small (formerly Medium No 8) - x 3.
 - b) Medium (formerly Large No 9) – HSE 1 - x 3.
 - c) Large (formerly Extra Large No 3) – HSE 2 - x 3.
- Composite pack containing 20 assorted (individually-wrapped) plasters 1.
- Sterile eye pads (with bandage or attachment) eg No 16 dressing 2.

- Container of 6 safety pins.
- Guidance card as recommended by HSE 1.

In addition to the first aid equipment, each box should be supplied with:

- 2 pairs of disposable plastic (PVC or vinyl) gloves.
- 1 plastic disposable apron.
- a children’s forehead ‘strip’ thermometer.
- The first aid box is easily accessible to adults and is kept out of the reach of children.
- No un-prescribed medication is given to children, parents or staff.
- If a child requires emergency medical attention, staff will call 999 to request an ambulance to come to The Ark site. They will then contact the child’s parents, or keep contacting emergency contacts in order of priority to inform them of the situation and ask that they come immediately to The Ark.
- If a child needs to be taken to hospital, and if a parent/ carer, or person nominated by a parent/ carer, is unable to arrive at The Ark to accompany the child, a member of staff will accompany them and stay with the child at the hospital until a parent/ carer arrives.

1.21 Photography Policy

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe	2.2 Parents as partners		

Policy Statement

This policy explains why we need to ask for parental/carer consent before we are able to take photographs of children during their time at the Ark Pre-School.

Generally photographs are a source of pleasure and pride. We believe that the taking and use of photographs can enhance the self-esteem of children and their families and therefore is something to be welcomed and appreciated. We may take photographs for a number of reasons whilst your child is with us, including:

- documenting and recording education activities
- recording their learning and development progress
- recording special events and achievements

We do however recognise that with the increased use of technologies, particularly digitally and online, the potential for misuse has become greater and we understand that this can give rise to concern. We will therefore endeavour to put effective safeguards in place to protect the children by minimising risk.

We are mindful of the fact that some families may have reasons why protecting a child’s identity is a matter of particular anxiety. If there are special circumstances which would affect a parent’s/carer’s position regarding consent, please let us know immediately in writing.

We include the safe use of cameras, mobile phones and all recording devices as one of our policies. To comply with the Data Protection Act 1988, we need your permission before we can photograph or make any recordings of your child.

This permission is valid for the period of time your child attends the Ark Pre-School. The consent will automatically expire after this time.

Procedures

- Permission given to use children’s photographs in our publicity or internal materials will be valid for the time your child attends The Ark Pre-school and a reasonable period afterwards. We will only use

photographs or recordings after your child leave to show the activities offered by the setting. Children will never be named.

- We will not use the personal details or full names (which means first name and surname) of any child or adult in a photographic image, on video/DVD, on our website or in any other printed publications
- We will not include personal addresses, emails or telephone numbers, on video, on our website, in our prospectus or in other printed publications
- If we use photographs of individual children then we will not use the name of that child in the accompanying text or photo caption
- We may use group photographs or footage with general labels, such as ‘making pictures of fireworks’
- We will only use images of children who are suitably dressed
- We will discuss the use of images with children in an age appropriate way to role model positive behaviour
- This consent can be withdrawn by a parent/carer at any time by informing the Ark Pre-School in writing

This policy also outlines why we should all think about using images safely and responsibly:

We all enjoy and treasure images of our family and friends; family events, holidays and events are moments we all like to capture in photos or on video. We now have the exciting dimension of adding our images and videos to our online social networks, such as Facebook, YouTube and many other websites. This means that we can easily share our photos and video with family and friends. Whilst this can be very useful to all of us, we must ensure we protect and safeguard all children and staff, including those who do not want to have their images stored online.

What should we all think about before posting any images or video online and are there any risks?

- Once posted and shared online any image or video can be copied and will stay online forever.
- Some children are at risk and MUST NOT have their image put online. Not all members of the community will know who they are.
- Some people do not want their images online for personal or religious reasons.
- Some children and staff may have a complex family background which means that sharing their image online can have unforeseen consequences.
- Therefore in order to keep all members of the Ark community safe we must all ‘Think Before We Post’ online.

At The Ark Pre-School we are happy for parents and carers to take photos and videos of events for personal use but request that these images are not distributed or put online. This is to protect all members of the Ark community.

1.22 Camera, Mobile Phone and Recording Devices Policy

Policy statement

The Ark Pre-School operates a camera, mobile phone and recording device policy to protect children, staff, and volunteers from allegations and maintain high standards of care within the Pre-school.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe	2.2 Parents as partners		

Procedures

- The Ark Pre-school does not allow the use of personal cameras, mobile telephones or any other recording devices by staff members or volunteers whilst on duty, whether within the setting or out on a trip.
- We do not allow parents to use mobile telephones within the area of the Ark playground or hall. We ask that any urgent calls are taken outside the building.

- All staff, volunteers, committee members, parents and visitors to the setting are required to leave any mobile phone and recording devices in the kitchen in bags. Staff should give the main pre-school telephone number as their emergency contact.
- All staff, volunteers, committee members, parents and visitors involved in any type of off-site trip are reminded not to post any photographs of children to social networking sites. The staff will take photographs for the purposes of pre-school records.
- Whilst staff are working and if their phone does ring, they need to inform the relevant member of staff to answer their phone. Staff are also not to use smart watches for any purpose other than in an emergency.
- Any member of staff who does not comply with this policy will be subject to the disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- Children will only be photographed or recorded by use of the camera/recording device, which belongs to the Ark pre-school and only if parental consent has been obtained.
- Devices used by staff in the setting are password protected so that children cannot use them.

Appendix

All these policies have reference and regard to the following governmental or statutory legislation, framework or guidelines. We regularly seek the most recent publication as we apply our policies and procedures.

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act, including UK General Data Protection Regulation (2018)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Medicines Act (1968)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations (1981)
- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs
- The Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2015)
- The Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006
- The Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2007
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- First Aid at Work: Your questions answered (HSE 2014)
- First Aid in Schools (DfEE 2014)
- *Safer Food, Better Business*
www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/hygleq/hyglegresources/sfbb/
- Health and Safety Regulation...A Short Guide (HSE 2003)
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

Further Guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)
- <https://bracknellforestsafeguarding.org.uk/>
- Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (September 2021)
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (July 2018)
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (December 2015)
- 'Social networking: a guide for teachers and professionals'
- 'Keeping young children safe online'

- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children. (March 2015)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

AGM of The Ark Pre-school

Held on

Date to be reviewed

July 2026

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)