Health and Safety Policy

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Aims

Nightingale Cottage aims to:

- Provide and maintain a safe and healthy environment for children, staff, volunteers and visitors.
- Take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of everyone attending the provision.
- Establish and maintain safe working procedures for staff, children, volunteers and visitors.
- Maintain clear procedures for emergencies.
- Ensure that premises, outdoor environments and equipment are maintained safely and inspected regularly.
- Promote safe and responsible behaviour during all activities, including outdoor learning and off-site visits.

Health and Safety Lead

The nominated Health and Safety Lead is Francesca Paul, who is responsible for:

- Implementing and reviewing this policy.
- Ensuring appropriate staffing levels and supervision ratios are maintained according to the needs, ages and activities of the children attending.
- Ensuring buildings, outdoor spaces and premises are safe and regularly inspected.
- Ensuring appropriate evacuation procedures are in place for fire and other emergencies.
- Ensuring risk assessments are completed, monitored and reviewed regularly.
- Ensuring accidents, incidents and health and safety concerns are recorded and responded to appropriately.
- Ensuring appropriate first aid provision is available during sessions and visits.
- Ensuring relevant equipment, including the portable LPG heater and carbon monoxide alarm, is checked and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and applicable safety requirements.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are carried out for activities, environments and outings where appropriate and are reviewed regularly.

Particular consideration is given to:

- Outdoor learning environments.
- Uneven ground and seasonal hazards.
- Weather conditions and sun exposure.
- Animals and wildlife.
- Use of tools and equipment.
- Portable gas heating and carbon monoxide risks.
- Off-site visits and woodland walks.
- Individual medical needs and relevant behavioural or supervision considerations.

- Reasonable adjustments and additional control measures where necessary to support children safely.

Risk assessments are reviewed following significant changes, new activities, changes in staffing or children's needs, and accidents, incidents or near misses.

Fire Safety

Fire risks are minimised through careful management of the environment. Smoking and vaping are prohibited, electrical equipment is checked regularly, and children do not access cooking facilities or flammable substances.

The portable LPG heater is managed in accordance with the separate controls set out in this policy and the risk assessment. Combustible materials are kept away from the heater, the protective guard remains in place, and exit routes are kept clear.

Smoke alarms are tested regularly. Appropriate fire safety equipment is maintained and accessible.

In the event of a fire or emergency evacuation, children and adults will leave the affected area immediately and assemble at the designated meeting point specified in the risk assessment:

- **Wooden classroom:** Oak tree.
- **Greenhouse:** Toilet area.
- **Woodland:** Pre-agreed meeting point identified at the start of the session.

All children and adults will be accounted for. Children will periodically practise evacuation procedures so they are familiar with how to leave the premises safely.

Gas Heater and Carbon Monoxide Safety

Nightingale Cottage uses a portable LPG gas heater designed for indoor use in the wooden classroom. The heater is surrounded by a protective guard to reduce the risk of accidental contact with hot surfaces.

The following precautions apply:

- The heater is used strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, including ventilation and clearance requirements.
- Adequate ventilation is maintained whenever the heater is in use. Ventilation openings must never be obstructed.
- The correct LPG cylinder and compatible connections are used.
- The heater, cylinder, hose, connections and protective guard are checked for visible damage before use.
- Children are supervised around the heater and must not touch, move or interfere with the appliance, guard or gas cylinder.
- Combustible materials are kept away from the heater, and the heater must not obstruct access or exit routes.
- The heater is never left operating in an unattended classroom and is switched off when no longer required.
- The heater is not used if damage, a suspected gas leak, abnormal operation or another safety concern is identified.
- Appropriate professional inspection and maintenance are arranged in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and applicable requirements.

Carbon monoxide alarm

An Ei Electronics Ei208 carbon monoxide alarm is installed in the wooden classroom.

The following checks and maintenance arrangements apply:

- The alarm is checked visually before each session to ensure it is present, undamaged and showing its normal operating indication.
- The test button is used weekly, following the manufacturer's instructions. It should be held until the alarm sounds, which may take up to five seconds.
- The alarm must not be relied upon if it fails to respond as expected or indicates a fault.
- The AudioLINK+ app is used periodically to retrieve an Alarm Status Report. Reports are reviewed and retained as part of the maintenance record.
- Any fault, abnormal reading or end-of-life indication is investigated promptly. The complete alarm is replaced when required by the manufacturer.
- AudioLINK+ provides additional information from the alarm; it does not replace the test button, safe appliance operation, adequate ventilation or professional maintenance.

Suspected gas leak or carbon monoxide exposure

If a gas leak is suspected or the carbon monoxide alarm sounds:

- Everyone must leave the classroom immediately and move to a safe location. If carbon monoxide exposure is suspected, move into fresh air.
- Do not re-enter the classroom to investigate, retrieve belongings or attempt repairs.
- If a gas leak is suspected, avoid flames and operating electrical switches. Follow the LPG supplier's emergency instructions and contact the appropriate emergency service. Call 999 if there is immediate danger.
- If the carbon monoxide alarm sounds, do not re-enter until the area has been confirmed safe.
- If anyone has symptoms that could indicate carbon monoxide exposure, seek urgent medical assistance and explain the suspected exposure.
- The heater must not be used again until the cause has been investigated and it has been confirmed safe.
- The incident and any action taken must be recorded, and the risk assessment reviewed before the classroom returns to use.

First Aid

At least one adult with appropriate first aid training will be on site at all times and always during off-site visits.

A stocked first aid kit will be available at all times, including during woodland walks and off-site activities.

Parents/carers will be informed of significant accidents, injuries or head bumps occurring during sessions.

Accidents and incidents will be recorded appropriately and reviewed where necessary to reduce future risks.

Please also see the First Aid Policy.

Off-site Visits

Occasionally, children may be taken on local walks or visits, including visits to nearby woodland areas. Permission for this is sought through the registration process.

When taking children off-site, Nightingale Cottage will ensure that:

- Appropriate risk assessments are completed.
- Adults are familiar with the route and environment.
- Visits are appropriately staffed and supervised.
- At least one first aider is present.
- An adult carries a mobile phone, first aid kit, emergency contact information and details of relevant medical needs.
- Children remain appropriately supervised at all times.

Outdoor Learning

A significant proportion of provision takes place outdoors. Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring children attend with appropriate clothing, footwear and weather protection, including sun protection where appropriate.

During periods of hot weather, children will have access to shade and drinking water, and strenuous activities may be reduced.

Activities may be adapted, postponed or cancelled in unsafe weather conditions.

Smoking and Vaping

Smoking and vaping are not permitted anywhere on the premises or during activities involving children.

Infection Prevention and Control

Nightingale Cottage follows relevant public health guidance in relation to infection prevention and control.

Parents/carers are asked not to send children to sessions if they are unwell and may be at risk of spreading infection to others.

Children should usually remain at home if they:

- Have a fever or high temperature.
- Are vomiting or have diarrhoea. Children should remain away for at least 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea.
- Are too unwell to participate comfortably in normal activities.
- Have a contagious illness for which exclusion is recommended by public health guidance.

Parents/carers should inform Nightingale Cottage if their child has a significant illness or infectious condition.

Good hygiene practices are encouraged where appropriate.

Handwashing

- Wash hands with liquid soap and warm water.
- Wash hands after using the toilet, before eating or handling food, after handling animals and after outdoor activities.
- Cover cuts and abrasions with waterproof dressings.

Respiratory Hygiene

- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue where possible.
- Dispose of tissues promptly.
- Wash hands after coughing, sneezing or wiping the nose.
- Encourage good respiratory hygiene amongst children.

Cleaning of the Environment

- Toys, resources and frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned regularly.
- Cleaning products and potentially hazardous substances will be stored securely and out of children's reach.
- Cleaning equipment will not be accessible to children.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment will be used where appropriate to reduce the spread of infection or when managing bodily fluids.

Cleaning Blood and Body Fluid Spillages

- Spillages will be cleaned promptly using appropriate protective equipment.
- Disposable paper towels will be used where possible.
- Suitable cleaning and disinfecting products will be used according to the manufacturer's guidance.
- Waste will be disposed of safely and hygienically.

Animals

Children may occasionally interact with animals as part of the provision.

To reduce risks:

- Hands must be washed after handling animals.
- Animal living areas will be kept clean and away from food preparation or eating areas.
- Animal waste will be disposed of appropriately.
- Children will be supervised around animals at all times.

Allergies and Medical Needs

Parents/carers must inform Nightingale Cottage of any allergies, medical conditions, dietary requirements or emergency medication needs before attendance.

Where necessary, individual healthcare arrangements or risk management procedures will be put in place.

Emergency medication, such as inhalers or adrenaline auto-injectors, must be clearly labelled and easily accessible to the responsible adult.

Administering Medication

Medication will only be administered where necessary for a child's health or wellbeing and with prior written parental consent.

All medication must:

- Be in date.
- Be in its original packaging.
- Include the original instruction leaflet where supplied.
- Be clearly labelled with the child's name where appropriate.

Medication will only be administered according to the instructions provided by the parent/carer or medical professional.

Medication will be stored safely and out of children's reach, while ensuring emergency medication remains quickly accessible.

A written record will be kept of any medication administered, including:

- The child's name.

- The medication given.
- The date and time.
- The dosage.
- Who administered it.
- Parent/carer consent.

Long-term medication arrangements may require supporting medical information.

Clothing

As much of the provision takes place outdoors, children are expected to attend in suitable clothing and footwear for the weather and activities planned.

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring children are appropriately dressed and have suitable sun protection where required.

Visitors and External Practitioners

Visitors and external practitioners are expected to follow Nightingale Cottage's health and safety procedures and safeguarding requirements.

Appropriate checks, insurance documentation and risk assessments will be obtained where necessary.

Children will remain appropriately supervised during activities led by external practitioners.

Security and Supervision

As an outdoor and home-based provision, absolute physical security cannot be guaranteed; however, reasonable measures are taken to maintain a safe environment.

Children are supervised at all times unless using the toilet independently. Children must inform an adult before leaving the main group.

Staff and volunteers will avoid situations where they are working alone with a child out of sight of others unless unavoidable and in line with safeguarding procedures.

Accident Reporting

Accidents and injuries will be recorded appropriately.

Parents/carers will be informed of significant accidents, injuries or incidents occurring during sessions.

Serious incidents will be reviewed to identify whether further safety measures or changes to risk assessments are required.

Please also see the First Aid Policy.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Health and safety concerns that may also relate to safeguarding will be managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Please also see the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are significant changes to the provision, relevant guidance, equipment or working practices.

Health and safety checks, equipment maintenance, carbon monoxide alarm tests, AudioLINK+ reports and relevant incidents will be recorded and retained as appropriate.

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