

Lone Working Policy



Policy Statement

Early Years Day Nursery Uxbridge is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of both children and staff at all times. The nursery operates a strict approach to lone working in order to prevent staff from being placed in vulnerable situations and to ensure that children are always appropriately supervised.

The nursery aims to minimise lone working wherever possible. During normal operating hours, children will not be left alone with a single member of staff, and appropriate staff-to-child ratios will always be maintained in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements. The safety, supervision and safeguarding of children remain the priority at all times.

While there may be limited circumstances where a member of staff is briefly working without direct supervision, such situations will be carefully managed, risk assessed where required and must never compromise the safety or wellbeing of children or staff.

Definition of Lone Working

Lone working refers to any situation where a member of staff is working without close or direct supervision. This may include opening or closing the nursery, working in a room or area without immediate support, working outside normal hours, or attending meetings or duties away from the nursery.

CCTV Monitoring

The nursery operates a CCTV system throughout all rooms and communal areas as an additional safeguarding measure to support the safety and wellbeing of children and staff. CCTV provides an additional level of oversight and reassurance; however, it does not replace the need for appropriate supervision, staff ratios or safeguarding practices at any time.

General Principles

Lone working will be avoided wherever possible. At least two members of staff will be present on the premises at all times during operating hours, and a senior member of staff, including a Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, will always be available.

Staff must adhere to EYFS ratio requirements at all times and must ensure that children are never left unsupervised. The safety and wellbeing of children must remain the primary consideration in all situations.

Working Within the Nursery

Staff are required to communicate clearly with colleagues regarding their movements and must inform others if they are leaving a room, even for a short period of time. Wherever possible, appropriate cover should be arranged before doing so.

Children must never be left unsupervised. Where staff are working in adjoining rooms, visibility should be maintained at all times, for example by keeping doors open or using stairgates or other safe barriers to support supervision.

Intimate Care and Safeguarding

Children who require intimate care must be treated with dignity, privacy and respect at all times. Lone working during intimate care should be avoided wherever possible. Where this is not feasible, staff must ensure that the area is not fully isolated and that there is visual or audible access to other staff members.

Individual work with children must not take place in rooms or areas where there is no external visibility. All staff must remain mindful of safeguarding responsibilities and ensure that they do not place themselves or children in vulnerable situations.

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Communication and Awareness

Effective communication between staff is essential. All staff must remain aware of who is present within the nursery at all times and must keep colleagues informed of their location and activities. Any concerns must be raised immediately with a senior member of staff.

Opening, Closing and Off-Site Working

Staff responsible for opening or closing the nursery must ensure that the premises are safe and secure. Wherever possible, staff should not undertake these duties alone. Where lone working is unavoidable, appropriate risk assessments must be in place.

Staff attending off-site meetings or working away from the nursery must inform management of their location, maintain communication where required and continue to follow all safeguarding procedures.

Risk Assessment and Training

Any situation involving lone working must be risk assessed, with consideration given to potential hazards, the level of risk, and the control measures in place. Staff must only undertake lone working where it is considered safe to do so.

All staff must be appropriately trained and competent to carry out their role, including safeguarding training, paediatric first aid where required, and a clear understanding of nursery policies and procedures.

Responsibilities

The nursery management team is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented, monitored and reviewed. Staff are responsible for following this policy at all times, reporting any concerns, and ensuring that children remain safe, supervised and supported.