THE WOODLAND PRE-SCHOOL

The Guide and Scout Centre,
Coates Lane, Downley.
Bucks, HP13 5UX
Tel 01494 521953 (8.00am – 3.30pm)
www.thewoodlandpreschool.co.uk

Confidentiality Policy

The Woodland Pre-School's work with children and families will bring us into contact with confidential information. Confidential information is information of a sensitive nature, mainly given by parents, on the understanding it will not be shared with others.

We ensure that any confidential information given by parents is only used to enhance the welfare of their child whilst at Woodlands. We have record keeping systems in place that meet legal requirements; the way we store and share that information takes place within the framework of the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) and the Human Rights Act (1998).

To ensure that all those using and working in the pre-school can do so with confidence, we will:

- Check with parents whether information they are sharing with us is to be treated as confidential
- Check with parents whether information that we wish to share with them can be passed to their child's regular child-minder or responsible adult in their absence
- Ensure all parents are aware at the New Parents Meeting (or visit day if meeting not attended) that confidential records are kept on their child, e.g. observations, behaviour and welfare issues and also in the case of first aid reports
- Ensure Parents have access to the developmental files and records of their own children but will not have access to personal details about any other child
- Allow Parents access to personal records kept on their children on receipt of a written request (see Partnership with Parents Policy)
- Ensure Staff will not discuss individual children, other than for the purposes of curriculum planning / group management, with people other than the parent / carers of that child
- Ensure information given by parents /carers to the pre-school leader or key person will not be passed to other adults outside of the setting without permission e.g. to other professionals who may be involved with their child's education and welfare
- Ensure any concerns / evidence relating to a child's personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will only be shared with the child's key person / pre-school leader or where relevant within the group. The Safeguarding Policy will be referred to and implemented in such a case
- Ensure Students on courses leading to recognised qualifications in Early Years and Childcare who are observing in the pre-school and those on work experience will be advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it
- Ensure photographs of children will only be used in accordance with this policy and all visitors to the pre-school will be asked to respect this.
- Ensure all parents, carers and staff are aware of the Social Media section of our Confidentiality Policy and adhere to the guidelines given which promote the safe and sensible use of such means of communication

- Ensure issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, will remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions. These are the Trustees, Pre-School Leaders and Administrative Officer
- Ensure that staff are able to "whistle blow" without fear of reprisal or victimisation

Note, Woodlands cannot be held responsible for the passing on of information between parents and carers that has been learnt from other parents or carers. This includes information being posted on the Parents Facebook site (see below).

Social Media

Whilst the Pre-school recognises the benefits of Social Media sites as tools of communication, there also needs to be measures to safeguard and protect the children.

A previous committee set up a Facebook group called 'The Woodland Pre-school Parents Group' for the purpose of social networking for Parents of the Pre-school and for related parties such as past parents or family members etc. with an affiliation to the Pre-school.

The site is a private site, meaning to join you need to request permission and only an authorised administrator can grant you permission to join. Therefore, all potential members can be verified as genuine prior to allowing access to the site.

No content, including any reference, photographs, names etc. of children is permitted on the site and this is clearly stated on the home page. The site is monitored by the administrator to ensure that, should any content of this nature appear, it is immediately removed.

Staff are required to avoid any actions, comments or behaviours which bring the name of the pre-school into disrepute, or breaches their obligations under the confidentiality policy, and this extends to the use of the Woodland's or their own social network pages.

'The Woodland Pre-School, Downley' Facebook page and 'thewoodlandpreschool' Instagram page will solely be used for advertisement purposes and sharing appropriate information with the wider community. No identifying pictures of children/ /parents will ever be shared via social media. No reference to any child's/parent's name, picture or personal information will ever be shared via social media. The Lead Practitioner and the Setting Administrator will manage the site and its content.

Cameras, Mobile Phones and Recording Devices

At The Woodland Pre-school, we use photographic images and recordings to record children's progress and development during their time with us. We also occasionally use photographs for publicity and promotion. This section of the Confidentiality policy details the procedures we have in place to safeguard children and adults and to ensure that images are not misused.

The policy is based on the key principles of the right to privacy and safeguarding children. It covers still, video, electronic and mobile phone photographic images.

The good practice outlined below is intended to protect our children. In addition, we have a duty under Human Rights legislation and the Data Protection Act 2018 to respect the right to privacy of people in photographs.

Recording Devices such as Cameras, Video/DVD Recorders and Camera Phones/iPads

The Leaders are permitted to carry mobile phones for emergencies when taking the children off site and the Pre-School has iPads to take images for specific* purposes only.

*Photographs are displayed in all children's online learning journals, occasionally on promotional leaflets and the pre-school website, on display boards and in some forms of art/craftwork such as Christmas cards. Children whose photos appear on publicity/promotional material or our website will NOT be named.

Parents/guardians are given written and verbal explanations of the pre-school's policy and sign detailed permission forms giving consent where agreed prior to their child joining Woodlands. If parents/carers do not give permission for their child/children to be photographed, all staff will be informed so that all reasonable steps can be taken to ensure that the child is not included in any photographs.

We hold photo sessions twice a year and all visiting professional photographers hold enhanced DBS clearance and will be supervised at all times.

Staff will be sensitive when photographing children avoiding situations/images likely to cause distress, upset or embarrassment. Photographs will never be taken in the toilet area. Staff must report any concerns relating to any inappropriate or intrusive photography and remember their duty of care and challenge any inappropriate behaviour or language before reporting to the leader(s) on duty.

Prior to special events such as Sports Days, concerts, parties etc the leader again emphasises that all pictures and recordings are for personal/family use only. Images must not be posted on the internet or social media sites unless specific consent has been given to the 'poster' by parents/carers of any other children whose image appears in said pictures, films etc. (We know there are friendship groups within Woodlands who allow each other to post group photographs on social networking sites.)

Mobile Phones

Staff members, volunteers, helpers and visitors based in the Acorn room are requested to leave mobile phones in the kitchen when the pre-school is operating and while children are on the premises.

Staff members, volunteers, helpers and visitors based in the Beechnut room are requested to leave all personal belongings including mobile phones on the end high windowsill in the Beechnut room when the pre-school is operating and while children are on the premises.

Staff and volunteer helpers should not use their mobile phones to check or reply to personal messages, social media, emails etc during session time. However, they may make or receive emergency calls with permission from the leader or deputy in an area where children are not present, such as the kitchen. The lower part of the stable door which separates the kitchen from the main room is to be kept closed at all times when children are present.

Visitors and parent-helpers are asked not to use their phones on our premises where the children are present i.e. in the two main halls, entrance foyer, outside areas, on trips/walks etc but to take/make calls, if required, away from the children e.g. in the kitchen or outside the building and always inform a member of staff before doing so.

Volunteers and helpers on outings, trips etc are requested to refrain from taking photographs with any device. We also ask that mobile phones are only used in emergencies and that the leader is made aware when someone needs to use a mobile phone.

When walks/trips are undertaken away from the building, designated staff members will carry a mobile phone for emergency use.

Under no circumstances will mobile phones be used by staff to take identifying photographs of children.

Smart Watches

Smart watches that can only receive information can be worn without needing to be in 'flight' mode. For smart watches that can also send information they will need to be in 'flight' mode during session time for safeguarding reasons. Smart watches that can take photographs should not be worn during the session when children are present.

Procedures:

The setting Leader or designated outing Leader will be responsible for ensuring all relevant parties are aware of this policy.

Helpers and volunteers will be given a copy of guidance outlining this policy in shortened form and explaining our expectations of their role during the session or outing.

If after being notified, an incident occurs whereby a person is using a device inappropriately, staff will inform the Leader who will speak to the person concerned to inform them of the policy and ask for the device not to be used.

If that person then ignores this request, the Leader will ask them to leave the premises or group.

The Leader will then complete an incident report including the date, location, time, person's name (if known) and nature of the incident and any children involved.

For any incidents where the Leader believes a case of misuse or abuse may potentially occur (or has occurred) they will contact the Police and other relevant bodies such as First Response and Ofsted.

The relevant parts of this policy will be addressed with all new parents at the new parents' induction pack.

This policy (Confidentiality) has been adopted by the Woodland Pre-School

On (date) March 2025_____

To be reviewed on (date) March 2026_____