

Policies that are Implemented and Practised at Elmstead Nursery

This section of the prospectus informs you of the policies at Elmstead Nursery. They have been written to offer the best possible experiences for the children and families in the group. They are regularly reviewed and comments and suggestions from parents are always welcome.

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Settling in to the Nursery – Policy and Practice

We want children to feel safe and happy in the absence of their parents, to recognise other adults as a source of authority, help and friendship and be able to share with their parents afterwards the new learning experiences enjoyed in the Nursery.

In order to accomplish this, we will:

- Encourage parents to visit the Nursery with their children during the weeks before an admission is planned.
- Introduce flexible admission procedures, if appropriate, to meet the needs of individual families and children.
- Make clear to families from the outset that they will be supported in the Nursery for as long as it takes to settle their child there.
- Reassure parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling into the Nursery.
- Introduce new children into the group on a staggered basis.
- Encourage parents, where appropriate, to separate from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences.

Children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious and unhappy. Our settling procedures aim to help the children to feel comfortable in the Nursery, to benefit from what it has to offer, and to be confident that their parents will return at the end of the session/day.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Health and Hygiene – Policy and Practice

Our Nursery promotes a healthy lifestyle and a high standard of hygiene in its day-to-day work with children and adults. This is achieved in the following ways:

Health

Food

- All snacks provided will be nutritious and pay due attention to children's particular dietary requirements.

- When cooking with children as an activity, the adults will provide healthy, wholesome food, promoting and extending the children's understanding of a healthy diet.

Outdoor play

- Children will have the opportunity to play in the fresh air throughout the year in the Nursery's own outside play area.

Illness

- Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they have any infection, and to inform the Nursery as to the nature of the infection so that the Nursery can alert other parents, and make careful observations of any child who seems unwell.
- Parents are asked not to bring into the Nursery any child who has been vomiting, for at least 24 hours after the last attack, and any child who has had diarrhoea for at least 48 hours after the last attack.
- If the children of Nursery staff are unwell, the children will not accompany their parents/carers to work in the Nursery.
- Cuts or open sores, whether on adults or children, will be covered with a dressing.
- If a child is on prescribed medication the following procedures will be followed:
 - If possible, the child's parents will administer medicine. If not, then medication must be clearly labelled with child's name, dosage and any instructions. Where local regulations require it, guidance will be sought from Social Services before people other than parents agree to administer medicines.
 - Written information will be obtained from the parent, giving clear instructions about the dosage, administration of the medication and permission for a member of staff to administer it.
 - All medications will be kept in a lockable cupboard/filing cabinet or in the fridge in the Nursery kitchen, which is inaccessible to the children.
 - A medication book will be available to log in: name of child receiving medication; times that the medication should be administered; date and time when medication is administered; together with the signature of the person who has administered each dose.
- With regard to the administration of life saving medication such as insulin/adrenalin injections or the use of nebulisers, the position will be clarified by reference to the Nursery's insurance company.
- The Nursery will ensure that the first aid equipment is kept clean, replenished and replaced as necessary. Sterile items will be kept sealed in their packages until needed.

The Nursery will do its best to provide a safe and secure environment. However, accidents do occur. The details will be recorded in the Accident book. Parents will be informed at the end of the session and asked to sign the book.

The majority of Nursery staff hold a current First Aid Certificate.

The Nursery is obliged to maintain a Pre-sustained Injuries Book. This records any injuries that a child receives away from the Nursery along with the cause and circumstances and must be signed by the parent/carer.

Information sources

- Parents will have the opportunity to discuss health issues with Nursery staff and will have access to information available to the Nursery.
- The Nursery will maintain links with health visitors and gather health information and advice from the local health authority information services and/or other health agencies.

Hygiene

To prevent the spread of all infection, adults in the group will ensure that the following good practices are observed:

Personal hygiene

- Hands washed after using the toilet.
- Children with pierced ears not allowed to try on, or share each other's earrings.
- A large box of tissues available and children encouraged to blow and wipe their noses when necessary. Soiled tissues disposed of hygienically.
- Children encouraged to shield their mouths when coughing.
- The use of paper towels, which are disposed of appropriately.
- Hygiene rules relating to bodily fluids are followed with particular care and all staff and volunteers are aware of how infections, including HIV infection, can be transmitted.

Cleaning and clearing

- Any spills of blood, vomit or excrement are wiped up and flushed away down the toilet. Rubber gloves always used when cleaning up spills of bodily fluids. Floors and other affected surfaces disinfected using chlorine or iodine bleached diluted according to the manufacturer's instructions. Fabrics contaminated with body fluids thoroughly washed in hot water.
- Spare laundered pants, and other clothing are available in case of accidents and polythene bags available in which to wrap soiled garments.

- All surfaces cleaned daily with an appropriate cleaner.

Food

The Nursery will observe current legislation regarding food hygiene, registration and training.

In particular, each adult will:

- always wash hands under running water before handling food and after using the toilet.
- not be involved in preparation of food if suffering from any infections/contagious illness or skin trouble.
- not smoke on the premises.
- never cough or sneeze over food.
- use different cleaning cloths for kitchen and toilet areas.
- keep food covered and either refrigerated or piping hot.
- ensure waste is disposed of properly and out of reach of the children. Keep a lid on the dustbin and wash hands after using it.
- wash fresh fruits and vegetables thoroughly before use.

Any food or drink that requires heating will be heated immediately prior to serving and not left standing. No food or drink will be reheated.

Tea towels will be kept scrupulously clean and washed regularly.

All utensils will be kept clean and stored in a dust-free place, e.g. closed cupboard or drawer.

Cracked or chipped china will not be used.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Asthma Policy

Elmstead Nursery welcomes all children with Asthma.

We recognise that asthma is an important condition affecting many children.

Children with asthma will be encouraged and helped to participate fully in all activities.

We aim to ensure the environment is favourable to children with asthma.

We will endeavour to create an understanding amongst the other children that asthma can be serious.

When a child with asthma joins the Nursery, parents will be asked to complete a Health Care Plan. This provides details of symptoms, how to recognise when their symptoms are getting worse and how to help them to take their medicine. The emergency contact details of parents / carers are recorded here in case the child has an asthma attack.

Parents / carers will also be asked to sign a Parental Agreement for Elmstead Nursery to administer medicine. An agreement signed by the Nursery will then be issued. Below is a sample of the agreement:

Inhalers and spacers will be kept in a lockable filing cabinet in a named container.

To ensure the child's welfare in the event of an emergency, all staff are given guidance on what to do if a child has an asthma attack. This training is regularly updated.

If it is needed, the child will have immediate access to his / her inhaler, with adult supervision.

After the medicine has been administered, this will be recorded and the parent / carer asked to sign, showing they have been informed.

We will work with parents / carers of the children with asthma to ensure that their children are in a safe, caring environment.

We will promote action by parents and staff to actively support this policy at Nursery.

This policy was re-adopted at the Nursery Trustee's Meeting on 14th July 2009.

Safeguarding Children – Policy and Procedures

We intend to create in our Nursery an environment in which children are safe from abuse. In order to achieve this we will:

Exclude known abusers

It will be made clear to applicants for posts within the Nursery that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

All applicants for work within the Nursery, whether voluntary or paid, will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide at least one reference. All such references will be followed up. In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in their employment history, or who have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought.

All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the Nursery is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children. All staff will be required to undertake an enhanced CRB check.

Seek and supply training

We will seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the group to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

Prevent abuse by means of good practice

Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or with small groups. An adult who needs to take a child aside – for example, for time out behaviour, which needs improvement - will leave the door ajar.

Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

The layout of the playroom(s) will permit constant supervision of all children.

Allegations of abuse

Procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a staff member or volunteer: -

- The member of staff will be informed and interviewed regarding the alleged incident by the Nursery Teacher and the Headteacher.
- The allegations made will be noted along with a record of the interview.
- Ofsted will be informed
- The staff member will normally be suspended whilst investigations proceed.

Respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse

Changes in children's behaviour/appearance will be investigated.

Parents will normally be the first point of reference, though suspicions will also be referred as appropriate to the Social Services Department.

All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the member of staff/key person, the Nursery teacher and the management committee chair.

Keep records

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific and confidential record will be set up, quite separate from the usual on-going records of children's progress and development. The record will

include, in addition to the name, address and age of the child: timed and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation and where possible, the exact words spoken by the child; the dated name and signature of the recorder.

Such records will be kept in a separate file and will not be accessible to people in the Nursery other than the Nursery teacher, Chair and key person or other member of staff as appropriate.

Liase with other bodies

The Nursery operates in accordance with local authority guidelines and the procedures laid down in the SET handbook will be followed. Confidential records kept on children about whom the Nursery is anxious will be shared with the Social Services Department if the Nursery feels that inadequate explanations for changes in the child's condition have been provided.

If a report on a child is to be made to the authorities, the child's parents will be informed at the same time as the report is made.

The group will maintain ongoing contact with the registering authority, including names, addresses and telephone numbers of individual social workers, to ensure that it would be easy, in any emergency, for the Nursery and Social Services Department to work well together.

Records will also be kept of the local NSPCC contact, or other contact(s) as appropriate.

Support families

The Nursery will take every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff volunteers in the group.

Where abuse at home is suspected, the Nursery will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed.

Confidential records kept on a child will be shared with the child's parents.

With the proviso that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount, the Nursery will do all in its power to support and work with the child's family.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Admissions Policy

It is our intention to make our Nursery genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. In order to accomplish this, we will:

- Arrange our waiting list in order of date of birth. In the event of duplicate birth dates, these will be arranged in application registration order.
- Keep a place vacant, if this is financially viable, in order to accommodate emergency admissions.
- Describe the Nursery and its practices in terms which make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including childminders, and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups, with and without disabilities.
- Make our equal opportunities policy widely known.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

The Policy for Confidentiality

The Nursery's work with children and families will sometimes bring us into contact with confidential information.

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

- Parents will have ready access to the files and records of their own children but will not have access to information about any other child.
- Staff will not discuss individual children, other than for purposes of curriculum planning/group management, with people other than the parents/carers of that child.
- Information given by parents/carers to the Nursery teacher or key person will not be passed on to other adults without permission.
- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, will remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personal decisions.
- Any anxieties/evidence relating to a child's personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will not be shared within the group except with the child's key person/Nursery teacher and chair/owner.
- Students on Pre-school Learning Alliance or other recognised courses observing in the Nursery will be advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.

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

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Photograph Policy

From time to time, photographs will be taken of the children who attend Nursery, and used for various purposes.

- When their child first attends Nursery, parents are asked to sign a form consenting to staff taking photographs of their child for our records.
- A photograph will be taken to put on the child's pouch in the entrance area. No name will be displayed with it. This will be given to the parent on leaving the Nursery.
- Photographs will be taken and stored in the child's individual assessment record sheets as evidence they have attained a stage of development. These will be passed on to the Class R teacher if the child attends Elmstead Primary School, or given to parents if they attend another school.
- Photographs will be taken of some activities, or at certain events, and displayed in the Nursery for parents and children to see.
- Photographs of certain activities will be taken as evidence for Ofsted inspections.
- If the Nursery is holding an event to which parents are invited, parents will be asked for their written consent to agree to others taking photographs.
- If a photographer from a local newspaper attends an event, parental consent will always be requested before any photograph is used in an external publication.
- Digital images and negatives will be stored at the Nursery and will not be given to anyone other than the parents/carers of the child.

This policy was adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

The Behaviour Management Policy

We believe that children and adults flourish best in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement. The Nursery Teacher, Sandra Davison, is responsible for behaviour management issues.

In order to achieve this:

- Rules governing the conduct of the group and the behaviour of the children will be discussed and agreed within the Nursery and explained to all newcomers, both

children and adults.

- All adults in the Nursery will ensure that the rules are applied consistently, so that children have the security of knowing what to expect and can build up useful habits of behaviour.
- All adults will try to provide a positive model for the children with regard to friendliness, care and courtesy.
- Adults in the Nursery will praise and endorse desirable behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We will take positive steps to avoid a situation in which children receive adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.
- Children who misbehave will be given one-to-one adult support in seeing what is wrong and work towards a better pattern.
- Where appropriate this might be achieved by a period of “time out” with an adult.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes will be made clear immediately, but by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- In any case of misbehaviour, it will always be made clear to the child or children in question that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unwelcome.
- Adults will not shout, or raise their voices in a threatening way.
- Adults in the Nursery will make themselves aware of, and respect, a range of cultural expectations regarding interactions between people.
- Any behaviour problems will be handled in a developmentally appropriate fashion, respecting individual children’s level of understanding and maturity.
- Recurring problems will be tackled by the Nursery, in partnership with the child’s parents, using objective observation records to establish an understanding of the cause.
- Adults will be aware that some kinds of behaviour may arise from a child’s special needs.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Intervention and Physical Restraint – Policy and Practice

In the unlikely event that the above behaviour management policy failed, and a child's behaviour requires physical intervention, the procedure outlined below would be implemented.

- Whatever the incident, physical punishments or the threat of them, are not used.
- When possible, adults will aim to distract and re-direct the child's attention.
- Adults will not use any form of physical intervention, e.g. holding, unless it is necessary to prevent personal injury to the child, other children, an adult or serious damage to property.

Where physical intervention is appropriate, this will be achieved with the minimum force and for the minimum time.

Any such incident is recorded and the parents/carers informed of the incident on the day.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Safety – Policy and Practice

The safety of young children is of paramount importance. In order to ensure the safety of both children and adults, the Nursery will ensure that:

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- All children are supervised by adults at all times and will always be within sight of an adult.
- A book is available at each session for the reporting of any accident/incident.
- Regular safety monitoring will include checking of the accident and incident record.
- All adults are aware of the system(s) in operation for children's arrivals and departures and an adult will be at the door during these periods.
- Children will leave the group only with authorised adults.
- Safety checks on premises, both outdoors and indoors, are made before every day/session.
- Outdoor space is securely fenced.

- Equipment is checked regularly and any dangerous items repaired/discarded.
- The layout and space ratios allow children and adults to move safely and freely between activities.
- Fire doors are never obstructed.
- Fires/heaters/electric points/wires and leads are adequately guarded.
- All dangerous materials, including medicines and cleaning materials, are stored out of reach in the office and kitchen area.
- Children do not have unsupervised access to kitchens, cookers or any cupboards storing hazardous materials including matches.
- Adults do not walk about with hot drinks or place hot drinks within reach of children.
- Fire drills are held once a term.
- A register of both adults and children is completed as people arrive so that a complete record of all those present is available in any emergency.
- There is no smoking in the Nursery and in the Main School.
- A correctly stocked first aid box is available at all times.
- Fire extinguishers are checked annually and staff know how to use them.
- Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults are present.
- Large equipment is erected with care and checked regularly.
- Activities such as cooking, woodwork and energetic play receive close and constant supervision.
- On outings, the adult:child ratio will be at least one to two.
- If a small group goes out, there will be sufficient adults to maintain appropriate ratios for staff and children remaining on the premises.
- Children who are sleeping are checked regularly.
- Equipment offered to children is developmentally appropriate, recognising that materials suitable for an older child may pose a risk to younger/less mature children.
- Internal safety gates/barriers are used as necessary.

- The premises are checked before locking up at the end of the day/session.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Intruder Policy

Elmstead Nursery believes that the safety of the children and staff in our setting is of paramount importance. We make every effort to keep our setting secure from intruders.

The aim of this policy is to inform practitioners and parent/carers of the procedures to take in the event of an intruder being identified on the premises. All practitioners must be aware that it is their priority to maintain the safety of any children in their care as well as their own safety and to protect the Nursery's environment and equipment.

- An intruder is an individual who has not followed established visitor procedures and may or may not be a safety hazard to the Nursery. This policy provides a means of dealing with either situation.
- Any member of staff who observes an individual on the Nursery premises who appears suspicious or out-of-place should approach the individual (if safe to do so), ask for their name and purpose, or should ask the Nursery Teacher for assistance.
- The staff member approaching the suspicious individual must determine if the person poses a safety hazard or just needs to be made aware of the Nursery visitors' procedures.
- Whilst determining the status of the visitor, every effort must be made to ensure children in our care are safe, feeling secure and, where possible, continuing to be engaged in their current activities. If need be, children must be given reassurances as to their own and others' safety and well being.

Procedure A: Visitor with legitimate business but no pass

- Identify the person and determine their purpose or need for being in the setting.
- Escort the person to the Nursery Teacher and check them in as a visitor. Ensure they are aware of the Nursery's procedures for visitors for future reference.
- If safety issues do not permit you to leave your post, wait until a member of staff can come to you.
- Review security to determine how the intruder gained entry.

Procedure B: Intruder who may pose a safety hazard

- Politely greet the intruder, identify yourself and ask the purpose of the visit to the Nursery.
- Ask a colleague to observe your approach to the intruder.
- Explain that all visitors must report to the Nursery Teacher and escort the person to her.

- Depending on the circumstances and the demeanour of the intruder, the Nursery Teacher will decide if it is appropriate to call the police and will make every effort to do so herself to report the incident. The Head Teacher of Elmstead Primary School should also be informed.
- If the intruder appears agitated, irrational or refuses to leave the building in a peaceful manner, endeavour to calm the person by talking in a low reassuring voice whilst also trying to gain the attention of another staff member to call the police.
- If the police are called and the individual leaves or attempts to leave prior to the police arriving, do not attempt to physically detain or restrain the person. Contact the police to inform the responding officers that the individual has left the building, the direction and means of transport. Inform the school.
- If the individual stays until the police arrive, inform the officers what has happened that led to the individual being with you so they can establish probable cause for arrest for trespassing. Whilst still in the presence of the police, ask the person not to return to the Nursery.
- Review security immediately
- Record the incident and action as soon as possible.

Procedure C: Intruder who is armed or otherwise poses a safety threat

- Alert all staff members and the Head Teacher of the school.
- Contact the police as soon as possible to report the incident. Give the operator all the information regarding the location of the intruder, a physical and clothing description and the weapon(s) involved. Advise the operator what you are doing to ensure the safety of the children and staff members. Remain on the line until the operator advises you to hang up. Monitor the location of the intruder until the police arrive.
- When confronting an intruder, take another member of staff with you. Ask a third member of staff who is not involved to contact the Nursery Teacher or school Head Teacher. Determine who will initiate contact with the intruder and who will be the back-up person. Both staff members should break off contact and leave when it is safe to do so. Attempt to direct the intruder away from areas occupied by the children. Use casual conversation or body language to calmly direct the situation. If the intruder refuses to cooperate, do not escalate the situation. If the intruder shows a weapon, assure him/her that it is not necessary for him/her to consider using it. Back away slowly with both hands up and palms facing the intruder and leave the area.
- Remain calm. Do not attempt to disarm the person.
- Once the police officers arrive, provide them with the following information: Location of intruder. Description of intruder. Any known weapons. Any statements made by the intruder.
- Be prepared to keep media, parents and other community members out of the Nursery. The police will secure the building. Contact the Pre-school Learning Alliance press office at national Centre if help is needed with a press statement.
- All other staff members and official visitors should remain in their designated area with the children unless otherwise directed by the police, reassuring and engaging the children as appropriate.

In any event, there will be a thorough investigation of the incident, and a report will be made by all staff involved.

Parents and Ofsted will be informed of the incident and the subsequent investigation, with due regard to both data protection and confidentiality policies.

This policy was adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Lost Children Policy

Our Nursery aims to provide a safe and secure environment for the children, whereby it is virtually impossible for a child to go missing from the premises. There is one high outside gate, which is lockable by padlock. There are three smaller gates leading out of the outside play area, which are bolted and cannot be accessed by the children.

If a child were to go missing the following action would be taken:

A thorough search of the Nursery and outside play area would be undertaken.

- This would be followed by a search of the school, whilst alerting the Headteacher.
- The police would be contacted if the child was still missing, at the same time as informing the parents/carers.
- A search would then be launched of the area surrounding the school.
- When the incident has been resolved a thorough investigation would be carried out to ascertain how it actually happened. Every effort would then be made to prevent any repetition.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Uncollected Children Policy

Our Nursery aims to provide a safe and secure environment for the children, whereby a child is looked after in the event that he/she is not collected at the end of a session.

If a child is not collected at the appropriate time the following guidelines are adhered to:

- Parents/carers are encouraged to collect their children promptly at the end of each session, to avoid undue anxiety for the child.
- If a child has not been collected, after 15 minutes, staff will contact the parents/carers by telephone to ascertain a reason for the delay.

If no contact can be made, after 30 minutes, the Headteacher will be informed.

- After one hour, Social Services will be informed and advice sought as to how best to proceed. There could be any number of reasons why they have been left, but the important rule for the school is to safeguard the child until they can be handed over.
- Two members of staff will remain with the child until they have been collected.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Selecting Equipment/Toys – Policy and Practice

The toys and equipment in the Nursery provide opportunities for children, with adult help, to develop new skills and concepts in the course of their play and exploration. The equipment we provide:

- Is appropriate for the ages and stages of the children.
- Offers challenges to developing physical, social, personal and intellectual skills.
- Features positive images of people, both male and female, from a range of ethnic and cultural groups, with and without disabilities.
- Includes a range of raw materials which can be used in a variety of ways and encourages an open-ended approach to creativity and problem-solving.
- Will enable children, with adult support, to develop individual potential and move towards required learning outcomes.
- Conforms to all relevant safety regulations and is sound and well made.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

The Policy for Parental Involvement at the Nursery

Parents are the first educators of their young children. The aim of the Nursery is to support their essential work, not to supplant them. We will:

- Make all new parents aware of the group's systems and policies.
- Encourage parents on an individual basis to play an active part in the management of the group.

- Ensure that parents are informed about their child's progress.
- Ensure that all parents have opportunities to contribute from their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the group.
- Involve parents in shared record keeping about their own child, either formally or informally.
- Ensure that all parents are fully informed about meetings, conferences, workshops and training.
- Inform families about the times of meetings.
- Hold meetings in venues which are accessible and appropriate for all.
- Welcome the contributions of parents, whatever form these may take.
- Make known to all parents the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions.
- Provide opportunities for parents to learn about the Nursery Curriculum and about young children's learning, in the Nursery and at home.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Non-payment of fees Policy

On receiving an application for a child to attend Nursery, parents are informed of the costs involved and sign a contract to indicate they have read and understood our payment arrangements. Please see an example of this contract at the end of this document. Parents are asked to pay monthly in advance. If no payment has been received by the time the next invoice is raised, the following action will be taken.

- The outstanding amount from the previous month will be added as a reminder to the next invoice.
- If no payment is then received within a reasonable time, the Nursery Secretary/Bursar will follow this up with a verbal request.
- We will talk with the parent to agree a regular payment until the debt is paid.
- We will offer a weekly payment system if this is preferred.
- The outstanding debt will be itemised in a letter and the agreed payment system recorded.
- If no payments are received, a final letter will be sent requesting payment, advising that the Nursery solicitors will be involved if none is received.
- Each child's attendance at Nursery is conditional upon continued payment of any necessary fees.
- A younger sibling of a child will not be able to start at the Nursery if their parents have outstanding debt regarding their older child.

This policy was adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on

14th July 2009.

Complaints Procedures

As a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family and to provide a warm and caring environment within which all children can learn and develop as they play.

We believe children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time.

Making concerns known

A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the group's provision should first of all talk over any worries and anxieties with the Nursery Teacher.

If this does not have a satisfactory outcome within a couple of weeks, or if the problem reoccurs, the parent should put the concerns or complaint in writing and request a meeting with the Nursery Teacher or the Chair of the Trustees. Both parents and the teacher should have a friend or partner present if required and an agreed written record of the discussion should be made.

Most complaints should be able to be resolved informally or

If the matter is still not sorted out to the parent's satisfaction, the parent should again contact the Chair.

If parent and group cannot reach agreement, it might be helpful to invite an external mediator, one who is acceptable to both parties, to listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to clarify the situation. Staff or volunteers within the Pre-school Learning Alliance will be available to act as mediator if both parties wish it.

The mediator will help define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.

The mediator will keep all discussion confidential. S/he will meet with the group if requested and will keep an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice s/he has given.

The role of the registering authority

In some circumstances, it will be necessary to bring in Ofsted, (Office for Standards in Education), who have a duty to ensure laid down requirements are adhered to in order to encourage high standards. Ofsted would be involved if a child appeared to be at risk or where there seemed to be a possible breach of registration requirements. In

these cases, both parent and Nursery would be informed and Ofsted would ensure a proper investigation of the complaint followed by appropriate action.

Ofsted can be contacted at:

Ofsted
National Business Unit
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester, M2 7LA Tel no: 08456 404040

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interests of the Nursery and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Diet & Nutrition – Policy and Practice

The sharing of refreshments can play an important part in the social life of the Nursery as well as reinforcing children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating. The Nursery will ensure that:

- All snacks provided mid morning and mid afternoon are nutritious, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, additives and colourings.
- Children's medical and personal dietary requirements are respected. Parents of children who are on special diets are asked to provide as much information as possible about suitable foods and in some cases may be asked to provide the food themselves.
- Menus are planned and displayed in advance and food offered is fresh, wholesome and balanced, meeting nutritional guidelines. Recipes will be made available to parents.
- A tasty, varied diet is offered to ensure that children from all backgrounds encounter familiar tastes and that all children have the opportunity also to try unfamiliar foods.
- The dietary rules of religious groups and also of vegetarians/vegans are known and met in appropriate ways.
- Milk, water or well-diluted fruit drinks are offered at snack time. Milk provided is whole and pasteurised. Water is available at all times.
- Advice is given to parents about suitable food to bring from home in a lunch box.

- All dairy products are full fat.
- Parents are advised if their child is not eating well at snack or lunchtime.
- Staff sit with the children while they eat and provide a good role model for healthy eating.
- Withholding food is not used as a form of punishment
- Children are encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners and are given plenty of time to eat.
- Children are encouraged to play outside everyday, weather permitting. This ensures that they have an opportunity to be exposed to summer sunlight, which helps their bodies make vitamin D.
- Children, where appropriate, are allowed to make their own food choices. Children are encouraged to eat, or try, the day's snack. If a child dislikes the snack provided, an alternative is offered.
- Children are allowed to serve themselves and pour their own drinks.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

The Policy for Special Educational Needs

Our Nursery aims to have regard to the DfEE Code of Practice of the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs, and to provide a welcome, and appropriate learning opportunity, for all children.

- Children with special needs, like all other children, are admitted to the Nursery after consultation between parents, nursery teacher and key person.
- Our system of observation and record-keeping, which operates in conjunction with parents, enables us to monitor children's needs and progress on an individual basis.
- Our Key person system ensures that each adult is especially responsible for, and close to, a small group of children, so each child receives plenty of adult time and attention.
- If it is felt that a child's needs cannot be met in the Nursery without the support of a one-to-one worker, funding will be sought to employ one.
- We work in liaison with staff outside the group, including therapists, health visitors, psychologists, social workers and paediatricians, to meet children's specific needs.

- Our staff attend whenever possible in-service training on special needs arranged by the Pre-school Learning Alliance and other professional bodies.
- We have an appointed Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, Louise Herbert, who is responsible for the operation of the SEN policy.
- We believe in an inclusive approach for all children and we adhere to the Inclusion Development Programme adopted by Essex County Council.
- There is a full SEN policy held in the Nursery.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

CPOC Policy

This policy outlines the provision of CPOC Self-Help Club Activities, as delivered in their basic form, supporting all Nursery children prior to entering primary school. Our aim is to prepare children for entry to Class R, whilst identifying any weaknesses that might require further attention.

- We will deliver a series of CPOC activities to promote the development of skills in a variety of key areas of learning.
- Each activity has an expected outcome, in accordance with the guidelines and appropriate skills as identified in the CPOC training pack.
- The exercises will be provided through whole group and small group activities, and sometimes on a one-to-one basis.
- The children's achievements will be recorded on the Stepping Stones assessment program.

Staff will receive ongoing training, led by the Head Teacher.

The Nursery Teacher has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, in consultation with other members of staff. Close contact is maintained with the Class R Teacher and Head Teacher of the Primary School.

- A full CPOC Policy is held in the Nursery.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery, on 14th July 2009.

The Policy for Staffing and Employment

A high adult: child ratio is essential in providing good quality pre-school care.

In our Nursery:

We have at least one member of staff to eight children, and more if there are younger children present.

Our Key person System ensures each child and family has one particular staff member who takes a special interest in them.

Regular staff meetings provide opportunities for staff to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss the children's progress and any difficulties.

We work towards an equal opportunities employment policy, seeking to offer job opportunities equally to both women and men, with and without disabilities, from all religious, social, ethnic and cultural groups.

At least half our staff hold a qualification in Early Years Education.

Regular in-service training is available to all staff, both paid and volunteer members, through the Pre-school Learning Alliance and other professional bodies.

Our Nursery budget includes an allocation towards training costs.

We support the work of our staff by means of regular monitoring/appraisals.

We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

The Policy for Student Placement

We recognise that the quality and variety of work which goes on in the Nursery makes it an ideal place for students on work placement from school and college childcare courses as well as those on the Diploma in Pre-school Practice or Tutor Fieldworker courses.

Students are welcomed into the Nursery on the following conditions:

The needs of the children are paramount. Students will not be admitted in numbers which hinder the essential work of the Nursery.

Students must be confirmed by their tutor as being engaged in a bona fide childcare course, which provides necessary background understanding of the children's development and activities.

Students required to conduct child studies will obtain written permission from the parents of the child to be studied.

Any information gained by the students about the children, families or other adults in the Nursery must remain confidential.

Unless registered as fit persons, students will not have unrestricted access to children. A CRB check must be carried out for long-term students as soon as possible.

- Students are requested to follow the Nursery dress code, which stipulates that adults be tidy and smart (no jeans or trainers).
- For the benefit of all concerned, mature students whose children attend Nursery will not be able to attend on the same sessions as their child.
- The Nursery reserves the right to terminate a student placement at any time.

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Equal Opportunities Policy

As a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, Elmstead Nursery is committed to helping pre-schools provide equality of opportunity for all children and families. As a member of the Alliance, Elmstead Nursery works in accordance with all relevant legislation including:

- Disabled Persons Acts 1958, 1986
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986
- Children Act 1989
- Disability Act 2004
- Childcare Act 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998

We believe that the group's activities should be open to all children and families, and to all adults committed to their welfare. We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with, our Nursery have an equal chance to do so.

We have an appointed Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator, Sue Millist, who is responsible for the operation of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Employment

The Nursery will appoint the best person for each job and will treat fairly all applicants for jobs and all those appointed.

Commitment to implementing the group's Equal Opportunity Policy will form part of the contract for all workers.

Families

The Nursery recognises that many different types of family successfully love and care for children.

The Nursery offers a flexible payment system for families with differing means.

Festivals

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all the major events in the lives of the children and families in the Nursery, and in our society as a whole, and to welcome the diversity of backgrounds from which they come.

In order to achieve this, we aim to acknowledge a wide range of festivals especially those, which are celebrated in our area and/or by the families involved in the Nursery.

- Without indoctrination in any specific faith, children will be made aware of the festivals which are being celebrated by their own families or others, and will be introduced where appropriate to the stories behind the festivals.
- Before introducing a festival with which the adults in the Nursery are not themselves familiar, appropriate advice will be sought from people to whom that festival is a familiar one.
- Children and families who celebrate at home festivals with which the rest of the Nursery are both familiar will be invited to share their festival with the rest of the group, if they themselves wish to do so.
- Children will be encouraged to welcome a range of different festivals, together with the stories, celebrations and special food and clothing they involve, as part of the diversity of life.

The Curriculum

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Resources

These will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multi-racial society.

Materials will be selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and derogatory pictures or messages about any group of people.

Special Needs

The Nursery recognises the wide range of Special Needs of children and families in the community, and will consider what part it can play in meeting these needs.

Planning for Nursery meetings and events will take into account the needs of people with disabilities.

Discriminatory behaviour / remarks

These are unacceptable in the Nursery. Such remarks are unlawful and we are obliged to challenge and report discriminatory behaviour.

The response will aim to be sensitive to the feelings of the victim(s) and to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices.

Language

Information, written and spoken, will be clearly communicated in as many languages as necessary.

Bilingual / multilingual children and adults are an asset. They will be valued and their language recognised and respected in the Nursery.

Food

Medical, cultural and dietary needs will be met.

This Policy was re-adopted at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Nursery on 14th July 2009.

Race Equality Policy

Statement of Intent

Elmstead Nursery is committed to anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families. We respect and value the linguistic, cultural and religious diversity, which exists in the wider community. We are committed to challenging attitudes that promote racial discrimination, ensuring respect for all and preparing all children for life on a culturally diverse society.

Aim

|We aim to:

Ensure that all children and adults are encouraged and able to achieve their full potential

Respect and value difference between people

Prepare children for life in a diverse society

Acknowledge the existence of racism and take steps to prevent it

Endeavour to make our environment a place where everyone, irrespective of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, feels welcomed and valued

Improve our knowledge and understanding of beliefs and cultures

Access staff training when the opportunities arise

The legal framework for this policy is:

- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Children Act 1989
- Childcare Act 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998

Methods

Admissions

Our setting is open to all members of the community

- We welcome all families equally.
- We aim to support families for whom English is an additional language to access our provision.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
- If necessary, we would provide information in languages of our community.
- We do not discriminate against a child on racial grounds.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities, equality and diversity, English as an additional language and race equality policies.

Employment

Posts are advertised and all participants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.

The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Criminal Records Bureau. This ensures fairness in the selection process. All job descriptions include commitment to equality and diversity as part of their specifications.

We consider our ethnic make up of staff and the local community when we advertise vacancies.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop practises, which enable all children to flourish.
- We review our practises to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for Race Equality.

- We ensure that all staff have a basic understanding and knowledge of faiths and cultures to ensure everyone is catered for, including those of no faith.

General

We have a named member of staff responsible for race equality, Mrs Sue Millist.

We encourage parents to share skills with staff and children.

We handle questions about race and ethnic honestly, sensitively and openly.

We treat everyone with equal concern.

We provide a welcoming atmosphere with approachable staff.

We offer children a secure environment in which to explore their own culture and that of their peers.

We actively seek ways to counter the learning of negative attitudes and behaviour towards differences.

We check that our resources reflect cultural and ethnic diversity and do not promote negative stereotypes.

This policy was re-adopted at the Nursery’s Trustee’s Meeting on 14th July 2009.

Elmstead Nursery – Parental Contract

Name of child _____ **Date of birth** _____

Start Date _____

I have read, understood, and accepted the information, policies and procedures as written down in the Nursery Prospectus, subject to any necessary & reasonable amendments agreed by the Trustees. I agree to pay any necessary fees monthly in advance. I understand that my child’s place is conditional upon payment of fees and that they are payable when a child is absent for whatever reason. I agree to give half a term’s notice if I remove my child from the Nursery.

Name of parent/carer _____

Signature _____

Date _____