



Pre-School & Nursery Class Polices

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At the United Reformed Church Pre-School & Nursery Class policies are reviewed annually by all staff. Reviews have taken place on the following dates:
February 2001, March 2002, April 2003, April 2004, May 2005, May 2006, March 2007 March 2008

Admissions Policy

It is our intention to make the URC Pre-School accessible to all children and families from all sections of the local community regardless of gender, special educational needs, disability, culture, language or religion.

There is a waiting list for admission to URC Pre-School. Any child residing in the local community may be added to the waiting list without charge. Parents and carers enquiring about places are invited to visit by appointment in order to help make their decision about a place.

Children generally start URC Pre-School around the time they reach 2yrs 6 months. We operate in line with Hertfordshire County Education guidelines, which at present has a two term per year entry policy. These entry times are September and January. Therefore, if places are available, children born in December - March will be able to start in September. Those with birthdays in April-August will normally be offered places in January. September - November born children will be offered places to start in the summer term, only if they become available, otherwise they will begin Pre-School in the September when they are rising 3 years old.

Parents/carers are usually contacted about a place for their child at the URC Pre-School in the term before they are due to start. Parent/carers of children unlikely to be offered a place will also be informed and advised to look for an alternative.

Those wishing to remain on the waiting list are offered places as they become available, strictly by order of their position on the waiting list.

In summary, our admissions/waiting list is managed according to the following criteria :-

- Children's names and details are added to the URC waiting list strictly in the order in which the information is provided to us by their parents/carers. The date when registered is recorded alongside their details.
- No fee is charged for being added to this list
- The waiting list applies to places for the pre-school and the nursery class
- Admissions are normally twice yearly in September and January but we can sometimes admit children during a term if a place becomes available. Admissions criteria as stated still apply.
- Children are usually only offered a place at pre-school once they reach the age of 2 years 6 months.

Our criteria for the order in which we admit children to the pre-school are as follows :-

- Children whom a health visitor, doctor, social services or the URC church have recommended or requested a place for are considered before others on the waiting list. *(NB. This is a rare occurrence and applies to very few but we are obliged to have such a ruling by Ofsted)*
- Siblings of children already at or having attended the URC Pre-School are given priority
- Further admissions are made strictly according to a child's place on the waiting list, offering those who are the appropriate age and have been on the list for the longest time, the first places.

The same criterion as stated above, applies to the admission of children to the nursery class once the child reaches the appropriate age.

Nursery Admissions

Admissions to the nursery class (Red Group) have the same criteria as those of the main pre-school. However we are sorry to say that not all children being offered a place in the Pre School will automatically gain a place in the nursery class. This is due to the fact that we are limited by the size of our premises. At present our maximum class size is 18 children with three members of staff.

Children will be admitted in to the nursery class in accordance with the Hertfordshire County Education guidelines. Children whose fourth birthday falls between 1st September and 29th February are entitled to a nursery place in the September prior to their fourth birthday. Those who are four between 1st March and 31st August may be offered a place in the January.

Children are offered places in the nursery class in the year before they are due to start their nursery education. Priority is given to siblings of children who have previously attended the nursery class and any children whom the Health/Social Services ask us to accommodate. We will normally only offer nursery class places to those children who have attended the URC Pre-School for at least two terms before they are due to begin their nursery year. Parents/carers of children unlikely to be offered a place will be informed and advised to look for an alternative.

Those wishing to remain on the waiting list are offered places as they become available, strictly by order of their position on the original URC Pre School waiting list.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Statement on Promoting Equality of Opportunity

'We are all special and all different

- At the URC Pre-School we aim to provide a happy and secure environment, which promotes and reflects cultural differences and social diversity.
- All children will be valued equally regardless of gender, culture, race, religion, or ability.
- We value diversity and adopt our curriculum accordingly to meet the needs of the children in our care.
- We will encourage everyone to gain a positive self-image and a high self-esteem.
- We will challenge offensive language or behaviour with regards to race, religion, culture, disability or gender.
- We aim to promote mutual respect and value each other's similarities and differences and face equality issues openly.
- We aim to monitor, evaluate and review all our practices regularly to secure continuous improvements in all that we do.

The United Reformed Church Pre-School believes that no child, individual or family should be excluded from the Pre-School's activities on the grounds of age, gender, religion, sexuality class, family status, means, ethnic origin, culture, religion or belief. We aim to ensure that all who wish to participate in our Pre-School have an equal chance to do so.

Admissions

The URC Pre-School is open to every family in the community. Families joining the pre-school are made fully aware of its equal opportunities policy.

Employment

The URC Pre-School will endeavour to appoint the best person for each job without bias on the grounds of age, gender, religion, sexuality class, family status, means, ethnic origin, culture, religion or belief.

Families

The URC Pre-School recognises that many different types of family successfully love and care for their children.

The Pre-School offers a flexible payment system for families with differing means.

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. 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 groups of people.

In order to help overcome the discrimination which can arise over certain play equipment, such as construction toys or home corner, the pre-school will aim to make use of small group times to enable all children to have equal opportunities.

Special Needs

The URC Pre-School recognises the wide range of special needs of children and families in the community, and will consider what part it will play in meeting these needs.

Planning for pre-school meetings and events will take into account the needs of all people with disabilities.

Discriminatory Behaviour/Remarks

These are unacceptable in the pre-school.

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

The URC Pre-School will endeavour to communicate information both written and spoken in as many languages as necessary to accommodate the families making use of its provision.

Bilingual and multilingual children and parents/carers are an asset. They will be valued and their languages recognised and respected in the pre-school.

Food

The URC Pre-School will meet medical, cultural and dietary needs as appropriate

Key Worker Policy

At the URC Pre-School we aim to offer the children in attendance a very high standard of care. One of the ways in which we hope to achieve this is to have a high ratio of adults to children. We hope that within a few weeks of a child attending Pre-School all staff will get to know them. However in order to give more personal attention to each child and his or her parents/carers, we have a key worker system in place.

What is a key worker?

- A key worker is the named carer for a small group of children as identified by a colour group. E.g. Green Group
- There maybe one or two key workers per group/child depending on the days when staff work and the days which a child attends
- The name of the key workers and the children in each colour group are displayed on the notice board each term.

What is the role of the key worker?

- To introduce themselves to the new child/adults
- To reassure the child and carer during settling in
- To help the child/ren to adjust to the new surroundings, people and routines
- To build a relationship with each child in their group giving continuity of care
- To have on going communication with the parents/carers
- To encourage the children in play, learning, friendship, conversation ect.
- To provide practical care such as toilet hygiene, change of clothes etc
- To provide and plan for small group activities when required
- To keep other staff informed of the child's development
- To have a responsibility for record keeping.

However the key worker is not exclusively responsible for any one child/group of children and as such all staff have a role in caring for each child in the pre-school. In addition parents/ carers must feel free to contact other staff members, especially the pre-school manager, with any concerns or encouragements that refer to their child.

Planning, Observation and Record Keeping

At the United Reformed Pre-School we plan experiences to meet learning intentions that cover all the six learning areas of learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) In addition we aim to make sure the EYFS principles are put into practice on a daily basis.

These principle themes are:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

Planning is crucial to ensure that the full range of children's development and learning is supported and extended. Staff use observations and assessment of the children to build on the children's existing knowledge skills and understanding

All parents and carers are asked to fill out an 'Initial Profile' of their child. This is a short questionnaire, which provides information about favourite activities, toys, songs, games, and people and about likes and dislikes. This allows us to respond to the children's interests by providing activities and experiences to match and extend learning.

Each member of staff is allocated 'key children' who are their specific responsibility. The staff all make written observations of the children. These observations record the children's interaction, their level of "involvement" in activities and describe the learning that is taking place. The staff take photos and observe the children in general, recording 'significant' achievements on sticker sheets that are later transferred to the children's files. Each child has an assessment sheet based on 'age appropriate' stepping stones and the Early Learning Goals as set out in the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The information gathered is used to inform planning. Thus we operate the triangular system of planning - observation - evaluation - planning etc. Our plans follow the children's interests and needs as much as possible and ensure that all areas of learning are covered. While planning should be flexible, our plans provide a useful framework around which any number of activities may occur. Our planning covers three time-scales.

Long term planning:

This provides an overview of the learning taking place at United Reformed Pre-School. It outlines our themes and describes the experiences that the children will have access to. Our core themes build on the children's own interests and experiences and covers the guidance given for the EYFS curriculum. The children are encouraged to contribute to our themes that promote links between pre-school and home.

Medium term planning:

This puts the long term plan into practice and involves thinking about the learning needs of particular groups of children. Our medium term plans cover each area of learning and details the learning intentions or stepping stones and shows what we aim the children are going to learn over a given period of time; usually a half-term. All staff are involved in planning our curriculum. Their knowledge of their key children is used to produce our medium plans.

Short term planning:

We aim to provide a balance of child-initiated experiences, which the children can access themselves and adult-directed focused activities. Our weekly plan outlines our adult focused activities and indicates where we can provide relevant resources and support for more child led learning. It shows the main areas of learning and the key learning intentions. An evaluation of the activity is recorded to ensure that the activity is appropriate, allows differentiation to include all children's needs and abilities and how we may extend the children's learning. Our daily plan for child-initiated learning details our use of equipment and ensures a full range of choice and variety covering all the areas of learning. Individual needs of the children are taken into account when planning all our 'play' environments.

Future planning

We are aware at the URC Pre-School that firstly new ideas, guidelines and thinking is continually being introduced into Early Years and secondly, we as practitioners, sometimes need refreshing in our views on working with young children. In order to account for these needs, we aim for all staff to attend training each year. Some of this will be covered by county led courses, or by receiving workplace training from specialists visiting, or our own staff members reporting back on their own recent learning experiences. In this way we aim to keep our planning for the children in our care at the URC Pre-School up to date and stimulating.

Confidentiality policy

Statement of intent

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.

Aim

The United Reformed Church Pre-School and Nursery Class 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.

Methods

We keep two kinds of records on children attending our setting:

1. Developmental records

- These include observation of children in the setting, samples of their work, summary developmental reports and records of achievement.
- They are usually kept in the main hall or the nursery class during the opening time of the pre-school and can be accessed and contributed to, by staff and child.

2. Personal records

- These include registration and admission forms, signed consents and correspondence concerning the child or family, reports or minutes from meetings concerning the child from other agencies, an ongoing record of relevant contact with parents, and observation by staff on any confidential matter involving the child, such as developmental concerns or child protection matters.
- These confidential records are stored in a lockable file or cabinet and are kept secure by Mrs Diane Chichester-Miles, Manager in a suitably safe place
- Parents have access, in accordance with the access to records procedure, to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other children.
- Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs. Staff induction includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality in the role of the key person.

Other records

- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- Students, or others with recognised qualifications and training, are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it, when they are observing in the setting.

Access to personal records

Parents may request access to any 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 setting manager.

- The manager informs the chairperson of the management committee and sends a written acknowledgement.
- The setting commits to providing access within 14 days - although this may be extended.
- Mrs Chichester-Miles and the chairperson and elders 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. A copy of these letters are retained on the files
- 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 request letter.
- A photocopy of the complete file is taken.
- Mrs Chichester-Miles and the chairperson of the elders go through the file and remove any information which the 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 Mrs Chichester-Miles, so that it can be explained.
- Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file, especially where the parents has possible grounds for litigation against the United Reformed Pre-School or another (third party) agency.

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

Parental Involvement Policy

Parents are viewed as the first and most important educator of their children and we regard the United Reformed Pre-School as a partnership with the home environment

All parents/carers should feel welcome and involved in their children's learning in an environment of mutual respect.

We aim to work together as joint educators in an open and supportive relationship. Parents are encouraged to discuss concerns, problems, and changes involving their child or family as they occur,

and celebrate and share achievements. A quieter room is available for private discussions where information can be shared with the child's key worker or with the pre-school manager. Parents are informed regularly about their children's progress, and all children are offered a formal consultation with the pre-school or nursery class manager twice per year.

We provide opportunities for the involvement of parents in their children's education. Parent/carers can share experiences and activities through open mornings, outings and fundraising events. Celebrating a range of festivals and involvement in local events contributes to a sense of community. Parents/carers/grandparents are actively encouraged to share skills, hobbies and jobs with the children or join in sessions to support and extend the children's learning. Themes and events are displayed on the notice board and frequent newsletters and calendars explain what is planned and how the children are helped to learn and how parents can contribute to their children's learning.

Health and Safety Policy

We aim to make children, parents and staff aware of health and safety issues and to minimise the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

The following is a summary of safety at the URC Pre-School:

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

- All children are supervised by adults at all times and will always be within sight of an adult.
- The member of staff responsible for safety, health and hygiene is the pre-school manager.
- Health and safety advice/training is given to each employee on induction
- 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 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 an authorised adult.
- Equipment is checked regularly and any dangerous items repaired or discarded
- The layout and space ratios allow children and adults to move safely and freely between activities.
- Children are given the opportunity to play outside in the fresh air everyday weather permitting.
- Fire doors are never obstructed.
- All dangerous materials are stored out of reach of children.
- Children do not have unsupervised access to kitchen, cookers or any cupboards storing hazardous materials.
- Fire drills are held at least 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 allowed on the premises.
- A correctly stocked first aid box is available at all times.
- Fire extinguishers are checked regularly.
- 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 and energetic play receive close and constant supervision.
- The personal hygiene of the staff is very high and staff observe the current legislation regarding food hygiene.
- Waste products are disposed of appropriately. All surfaces are cleaned daily with an appropriate cleaner.

- Equipment offered to children is developmentally appropriate, recognising that materials suitable for an older child may pose a risk to younger/less mature children.
- The premises are checked at the end of the session.

Hygiene arrangements

Staff help children with their personal hygiene. Good practices in preventing the spread of infection are observed. Hands are washed after using the toilet and children are helped in blowing their noses. The children are encouraged towards independence. When children make their own snack, the importance of cleanliness is emphasised.

Toilet Routine

- Children are taken to the toilet by a member of staff if they ask to go during the session.
- When a child first starts, the key worker will ask them on a regular basis for the first two or three weeks
- All children are helped to wash their hands after they have used the toilet this is to teach the child good hygiene practice.

If a child should have a toileting accident, a member of staff will change the child wearing gloves and apron and place the wet clothes in a bag, telling the parents/carers about it when the child is collected.

Supervision

The children are supervised by staff at all times. Safety is of paramount importance. Safety checks of the premises both indoors and outdoors are made before each session. The front door is locked during the session and a member of staff is at the door during the children's arrival and departure at Pre-School. Children will only leave with known authorised adult whose name the parents have provided.

Registers

A register is completed in completed early on in the session and is updated throughout the session recording late arrivals and early leavers. A staff register is also kept. Visitors to the setting are recorded and show time of arrival and departure.

A notice board by the managers desk will have a notice detailing the number of people in the pre-school at any one time. This includes children, staff and visitors.

Illness

When a child becomes ill at the United Reform Preschool our policy is:

- to send the child home to ensure the child has his/her needs met in the most appropriate setting and to protect other children and adults from the risk of infection.
- A member of staff will make sure the child is as comfortable as possible in a quiet area, away from the other children.
- The person in charge will telephone the parents first and if there is no answer the other emergency contact numbers will be tried. If there is no answer, the child will be cared for by a member of staff until the end of the session.
- Parents will be advised to seek the advice of a medical practitioner. When the staff are concerned about a child's condition deteriorating, emergency medical advice will be sought.
- Parents/carers are asked to keep children at home if they have an infection and are asked not to bring in any child who has been vomiting or had diarrhoea until twenty four hours has elapsed.
- Parents will be informed if there is any infection such as head lice, scabies, worms, impetigo or childhood infectious diseases which may affect other children or family.

- Ofsted will be notified of any infectious diseases, which a qualified medical person considers notifiable.

Parents will administer prescribed medicines where possible. The person in charge is responsible for administering medication at United Reformed Pre-School. Prior consent must be completed and signed by the parents and records must be kept to show name of medication, dosage, time of administration and person administering. Another member of staff should witness the procedure. All medication will be clearly labelled and stored out of reach of the children in the staff trolley.

First aid

Under the Health and Safety Regulations 1981 all workplaces must have first aid provisions. The pre-school manager has a responsibility under these regulations for:

- Providing a first aid box for employees.
- See that each session has either a first aider or an appointed person to take charge in the events of an accident
- All employees must know where the first aid box is located (On the leaders table) and names of first aider/appointed person
- Arranging first aid training for staff particularly the appointed person(s)
- When administering first aid gloves, which are kept in first aid box, should be worn when dealing with open wounds, vomit etc.

All staff undertake first aid training. A member of staff is appointed yearly to be responsible for checking the contents of the First Aid box. First aid equipment is kept clean and replaced as necessary. Staff know where the accident book is kept and how to complete it. This is reviewed regularly to identify any potential or actual hazards. Parents are informed of any incidents and there are opportunities for parents to discuss health issues with the staff.

- Frequent accidents involving the same child/ren or the same piece of equipment can also be a useful indication of the need to observe certain activities, check equipment etc.
- In the events that an insurance claim might be made following an injury to a child or adult, it would be advisable to draw a rough sketch of the place of the accident/incident book for this.
- It is essential to inform parents of any injury to their child no matter how slight.
- If an emergency should occur the child must be taken to hospital as soon as possible.
- Send for an ambulance -dial 999.

Asthma

- The URC Pre-School welcomes all children with asthma
- We recognise that asthma is an important condition affecting many children.
- We encourage and help children with asthma to participate in all activities.
- We will ensure that children known to have asthma have immediate access to their prescribed reliever inhalers.
- We will ensure that if a child with asthma is attending the Pre-School we will inform all present that asthma is a serious condition and what to do in an emergency.
- Guidance will be provided for staff on what to do if a child has an asthma attack.
- We will work with parents/carers of children with asthma to ensure that their child is in a safe and caring environment.

In order to fulfil these aims, parents/careers need to:

- Provide written information detailing:
What asthma medicine the child takes and when.
What triggers an asthma attack and what to do in this situation?
Emergency contact details including any medical authorities involved
- Ensure any spare medicines stored by the URC Pre-school are labelled, pictured, in a plastic container and have not passed their expiry date.

In return the URC Pre-School staff should make sure the following is carried out:

- Staff should be given regular training and updates on a child's condition.
- Agree on a member of staff to normally administer the medication but have all staff trained and aware in case of absence or an emergency.
- Ensure that staff knows where inhalers are stored and how to access them speedily.
- Ensure that a record is kept on a child who has asthma including each time a child takes their medicine.
- Make sure that the person collecting the child is informed if the child has had to take any medication.
- Make sure that inhalers are always taken on group outings.
- Be aware of trigger factors for each child with asthma and ensure that the group environment is as safe as possible.

Risk

A risk assessment of the potential hazards at the United Reformed Pre-School has been undertaken and is reviewed regularly. New pieces of equipment and activities are also 'risk assessed' and all our equipment is checked before it is used and regularly updated.

Our equipment is developmentally appropriate and we recognise that materials suitable for nursery children may pose a risk to younger children in the pre-school

Daily risk assessment

A list has been drawn up and printed for each week, showing areas that must be checked for risks and good provision. It is the responsibility of the senior member of staff present each day to check these areas, sign the sheet and report on anything amiss

Fire Procedure

Fire drills are held each half term, on different days, and a record is kept of them. Fires, heaters and electric point are adequately guarded, fire extinguishers are checked annually and fire doors are never obstructed.

Member of staff are aware of the position of the fire fighting equipment, familiar with their use and know the location of the fire exits and escape routes.

- A whistle (or horn) will sound.
- The children will be directed to the nearest fire exit these are situated in each of the rooms.
- All belongings will be left behind
- A toilet and corridors will be checked by a pre-school member of staff. The manager will collect the register of the children.
- Everyone will leave the building and meet at the end of the garden. Staff will ensure that the children are kept together at all times.
- Register will be taken.
- The building will not be re-entered until permission is given to do so.

Using the outside areas

In using the outside space at the URC we take into account the following procedures:

On going: It is the responsibility of the church, the Pre-school management committee to keep the garden, grass, plants, cellar, paths, fences and gates in good order, bearing in mind the requirements for use by young children.

Before daily use: The following items should be checked for safety and suitability of use:-

- Gates and fences
- The grassed and planted areas (esp for animal remains)
- The paths and steps
- The doors and gates

Just before going out: all gates and doors should be checked to make sure they are secure with the chains in place to prevent easy opening. Cellar door should be locked.

Policy for using the garden

- At least one adult should be outside before the children leave the building
- Child/adult ratios are maintained during outside play including a first aider
- At least one adult remains in the building
- Children are taken to the toilet inside by a member of staff
- One member of staff should remain near the door to inside to monitor movement in and out of the building
- Children use the slope, not the steps, to access the grassed area
- All visitors are challenged at the gate and parents discouraged from entering the secure outside area if children are using the garden
- We recommend the supply of wellingtons and sunhats for children to wear for outside play, brought to Pre-School daily.

Leaving the outside area: Two adults make a sweep of the garden to ensure that all children have gone inside prior to the doors being secured. Children are counted on returning to the building.

Hot weather

During hot and in particular, strong sunshine, weather, we would ask that parents/carers apply sun lotion to their child prior to a Pre-School session. We recommend that parents/carers supply sunhats for the staff to encourage the children to wear outside.

We aim to avoid using the outside during the hottest part of the morning/afternoon on such occasions and make good use of the shade afforded by our large trees.

Outings

Before taking the children on any outing, two members of staff will visit the venue and carry out a risk assessment. Parents always sign consent forms before major outings and we have a ratio of one adult to two children. The children are supervised to ensure no children get lost and that there is no unauthorised access to children. Contact telephone number for parents will be taken, along with a fully charged mobile phone.

Electrical Equipment

Electrical equipment is to be visually checked and if damaged should not be used. Any damaged equipment should be labelled 'defective -do not use' and the Elders of the URC informed in order that effective repairs can be carried out.

Good housekeeping

Notice should be posted identifying prohibited practices such as NO SMOKING, DO NOT OBSTRUCT DOOR OR PASSAGE ECT.

Disposal of waste

Normal everyday waste such as dust, paper and milk cartons are disposed into a black bag in the kitchen bin which is that put out for the refuse collection. In case of body fluids such as blood products or nappies the waste is put into a sealed disposal bag using rubber gloves. This bag is then added directly to the outside refuse point.

Cleaning

General cleaning of the areas used by the pre-school is carried out firstly by the pre-school staff on a day to day basis and secondly by the church members. Members of staff carry out cleaning of toys and equipment as necessary. In conclusion

This policy will be reviewed at regular intervals and will be updated to incorporate any significant changes and/or introduction of systems of working not currently accounted for. Health and Safety issues can be raised at any time for consultation at future staff or committee meeting.

Emergency Procedures Policy

Non-collected Children Policy

We expect children will be picked up at the usual time (12.15pm or 3pm(Fri)), and if they are not, we will assume an emergency has caused the delay.

In the event that an authorised adult does not collect a child at the end of a session, the pre-school will put into practice agreed procedures. These will ensure that an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child cares for the child safely.

Aim

In the event that an authorised adult does not collect a 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 unavoidable delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Methods

- Parents of children starting at the pre-school are asked to provide specific information which is recorded on our registration form, including:
- 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 and address, telephone number and signatures of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting, for example a childminder or grandparent
- Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child
- Who has parental responsibility for the child
- On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they record how they can be contacted in our Collection Book or by letter.
- On occasions when parents or the person normally authorised to collect the child are not able to collect the child, they record the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child in our collection book. We agree with the parents how to verify the identity of the person who is to collect their child.
- 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 use back-up procedures. We provide parents with our contact telephone number. We also inform parents that - in the event that their children are not collected from the pre-school by an authorised adult and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises - we apply our child protection procedures as set out in our child protection policy.

If a child is not collected at the end of the session, we instigate the following procedures:

- The Collection Book 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 and in the Collection Book.
- 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 our local authority social services department Community Team at Porter Wood in St Albans on 01727 849144.
- The child stays at the setting in the care of two fully-vetted workers until the child is safely collected either by the parents or social workers
- Social Services will aim to find the parents or relative. If they are unable to do so, the child will be admitted into the care of the local authority.
- Under no circumstances are members of staff to go to look for the parents, 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 the parents for the additional hours worked by the staff.
- Ofsted may be informed
- Our Local Pre-school Learning Alliance office/Pre-School Development Worker may also be informed

Missing Child

If a child goes missing while at United Reformed Pre-School the person in charge will:

- Instigate a search of the premises/area without causing undue panic amongst the other children. Staff to look in toilets, upstairs, in cupboards etc.
- Contact the parents to inform them.
- Widen the search to the surrounding area, including the garden and streets nearby.
- If the child is still not found, contact the police to conduct a full search.
- Review security procedures after the event
- Inform all relevant parties of findings, implications and outcome of review.
- Inform Ofsted of the occurrence giving a full

Fire Procedure

Fire drills are held each half term, on different days, and a record is kept of them. Fires, heaters and electric point are adequately guarded, fire extinguishers are checked annually and fire doors are never obstructed.

Member of staff are aware of the position of the fire fighting equipment, familiar with their use and know the location of the fire exits and escape routes.

- A whistle (or horn) will sound.
- The children will be directed to the nearest fire exit these are situated in each of the rooms.
- All belongings will be left behind
- A toilet and corridors will be checked by a pre-school member of staff. The manager will collect the register of the children.
- Everyone will leave the building and meet at the end of the garden. Staff will ensure that the children are kept together at all times.

- Register will be taken.
- The building will not be re-entered until permission is given to do so.

Behaviour policy

At the URC we believe 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.

Aim

We aim to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to understand the needs and rights of others. The principles guiding management of behaviour exist within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development.

Methods

The manager is the named person who has overall responsibility for our programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour.

- The manager of the URC have a name person who has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour.

The manager will be require to

- Keep her/himself 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; and to
- Check that all staff promotes positive behaviour.
- The URC recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and staff to be aware of - and respect- those used by members of the setting.
- The staff, volunteers and students will provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
- We familiarise new staff, volunteers and students -to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.
- The URC work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children behaviour by their keyworker. We will 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

- The URC 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 age 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 feeling 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 attentions 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 send children out of the room by themselves.
- 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.
- 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.

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 the, 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.

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 feeling 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 feeling that sometimes overwhelm them.
- We will help them manages 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 explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.
- We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feeling experienced. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and 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? It made you feel angry, didn't it, and you hit him'.
- We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feeling too and that their actions impact on other's feelings. 'When you hot 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 help a child to understand that 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 challenging, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons for 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 the 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 is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse; and
 - The child has a development 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 referral to a Behaviour Support Team where necessary.

Special Educational Needs Policy

At United Reformed pre-school under the Education Act 1996, we have regard for the revised Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2002. This code takes into account the Special Education Needs and Disabilities Act 2001.

The code states;

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them:

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- a) *have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or*
- b) *have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in school within the area of the local education authority .*
- c) *are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at a) or b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.*

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Special educational provision mean:

- a) *for children of two or over, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in school maintained by the LEA, other than special school in the area.*
- b) *For children under two, educational provision of any kind.*

Identification and Action

The Code of practice on the identification, assessment and provision of Special Educational Needs (DFEE1996) recommends a graduated approach based within the setting (although external agencies can increasingly be involved)

A special educational need may be identified for:

- Short lengths of time, on one or more occasions
- A prolonged length of time

Aims

At United Reformed Pre-School we aim to:

- Work towards meeting the needs of all the children in our care, offering equal opportunities to play and learn.
- Promote each child's motivation, self confidence and independence
- Identify a child's special educational needs as soon as possible
- Adjust our provision to a greater or lesser degree to ensure the needs can be met
- Continually monitor the child's progress
- Work closely with parents
- Make use of specialist skills (both internally and externally) where appropriate

The Hertfordshire County Council 'Pre-School Pack for Achieving Progress for Children with Special Educational Needs' is available on loan at United Reformed Pre-school

This document enables us to assess a child's educational needs and follow a recommended strategy.

The Special Educational Needs Programme

The Special Educational Needs Programme is broken down into three stages:

- Early Years Action
- Early Years Action Plus
- Statutory Assessment

Early Years Action

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator will

- Gather information in consultation with the parents and key worker
- Complete a development profile
- Together with the parent and key worker, identify easily attainable targets and agree a strategy which will be recorded on an IEP (Individual Educational Plan)
- Set a review date.

If at the review, it is decided that the strategies have been effective and are no longer required than the programme is halted. It may be decided that the child should remain at the Early Years Action stage with revised targets and a new IEP. If however, it is felt that the strategies are not effective and the child needs external help we will progress to Early Year Action Plus.

Early Year Action Plus

Early Year Action Plus is characterised by the involvement of external agencies.

Using information from the Early Years Action stage external agencies will:

- Advise us on new IEP's and targets
- Provide specialist assessments
- Give advice on the use of new/specialist strategies/materials
- In some cases, provide support for particular activities

If the child's learning difficulties persist it may be appropriate to request a Statutory Assessment

Statutory Assessment

The statutory Assessment is a detailed examination to determine exactly what a child's Special Educational Needs are- and what special help they may require.

A request for assessment may come from:

- The child's parents
- The head of the setting or
- An advisory teacher or doctor

A decision to make a statutory assessment is made by the LEA and is based on evidence that, despite every effort being made, the difficulty persists, or that the child has significant learning difficulties, or significant emotional or behavioural problems.

This process can continue through further stages, with the result that a final statement is issued i.e the child is 'statemented'

These later stages will occur during a child's school years, not whilst they attend United Reformed Pre-school.

At all stages the views of the parents and the child will be taken into account.

Mrs Diane Chichester-Miles, is our designated Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). They attend all relevant training and disseminate information to all the staff. We ensure that our provision for children with SEN/disabilities is the responsibility of everyone at United Reformed Pre-School

Practice Guidance for working with Children who have English as an Additional Language (EAL)

As part of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, we are required to 'have strategies for helping bilingual and multilingual children improve their English' (p11)

The Language Development Process of children with EAL

Children learn EAL will typically progress through four stages of language development, as follows:

Stage One

- The child may not speak at all (a silent phase)
- They will watch and listen to the other children and staff in the setting.
- They may prefer outside play, familiar play such as the home corner or solitary activities such as sand/water
- They may repeat everything that they hear e.g during story time
- This stage can last for several months.

Stage Two

- The child will start to use single English words and phrases to communicate
- They will understand familiar or 'chunked' language such as "time for register" and "tidy up time"

Stage Three

- The EAL child will now feel confident about communicating in English
- They will be able to express their feeling in English and may take risks with the language, experimenting with words and phrases
- They will communicating more with their peers

Stage Four

- The children will now be fluent in English but will need support with sentence structure and grammar.
- Written work will still need help

Differences in Behaviour

EAL children may:

- Avoid eye contact (in some cultures it is considered rude to look people in the eye)
- Smile even when they disagree with what is being said or when being reprimanded
- Smile/nod when you are talking to them but they may not understand what you are saying
- Avoid any physical contact
- Stand closer to or further away from you
- May be unwilling to talk in a group
- Display different attitudes to food/eating styles
- Display aggressive behaviour during outside play as this is the time when they will release feeling of frustration

Strategies for working with EAL children

- During stages one and two staff should use as many gestures and no verbal communication techniques as possible
- Staff should be consistent with familiar phrases such as "tidy up time"
- Repetition is a useful strategy for children during stage one and two. Use rhymes and stories such Bear Hunt
- Use photographs and pictures to communicate
- Give the child time to express their needs in either language and maintain eye contact
- Do not correct the child's English. Instead model words/phrases in a normal voice
- Try using ICT, EAL children commonly enjoy this activity
- Parents can be the key to supporting the EAL child (see section on parents)

Our key worker system is an excellent way to support EAL children in the setting as it is important that they and their parents form a relationship with a familiar adult in the setting.

Working with Parents of EAL children

- Do not assume that all parent can read/write in their home language as they may have a British education and can only speak the home language
- Some parents, for cultural reason, may be unwilling to participate in their child's education
- The parents may be willing to provide a list of the child's key words and phrases and possibly help with other translation during the settling in period

EAL Children and their home language

Nearly all research into English as a second language suggests that it is important that children continue to use their home language as it is a part of the child's cultural identity. As practitioners we should value and encourage its use within the setting.

Assessment of EAL children

Government guidelines advise assessing EAL children in their own language (a Language in Common QCQ200) and the Foundation Stage Profile allows for this at United Reformed Pre-School, we should continue to use our own assessment/observation system to monitor the child's development, but taking into account both languages

- The children will be directed to the nearest fire exit these are situated in each of the rooms.
- All belongings will be left behind
- A toilet and corridors will be checked by a pre-school member of staff. The manager will collect the register of the children.
- Everyone will leave the building and meet at the end of the garden. Staff will ensure that the children are kept together at all times.
- Register will be taken.
- The building will not be re-entered until permission is given to do so.

Food and Drink Policy

The United Reformed Pre-school regards snack time as an important part of our session. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children learn about healthy eating.

We provide a variety of snacks to meet our children's individual dietary needs. Before a child starts at the URC Pre-School we find out from parents/carers their child's dietary needs, including any allergies. This information is recorded in the child's records. Sensitivity is shown in both our provision of snacks and in our cookery activities. Staff will not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child or make a child feel singled out. We include foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones. Our snacks and cookery activities are inclusive for all our children.

The children are given either milk or water to drink. Children and staff can help themselves to water at any time during the session from the self-service water cooler.

Snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate. At the URC Pre-School we normally operate a 'café' system where the children can choose when they wish to have their snack during the pre-school session.

The children make their way to the snack area; select their name, which they add to a box. This shows staff who has had their snack during any session.

Children wash their hands and help themselves to a drink of choice and sit at the snack table to partake of the food on offer. This will normally be fruit/veg (provided if possible by parents contributing to a basket) and other healthy food such as bread sticks, sandwiches, cheese, raisins.

We use these times to help our children develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.

Equipment/Toys Policy and Practice

The toys and equipment in the pre-school 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 stage/development of the children present
- Offers challenges to developing physical, social,, personal and intellectual skills.
- Features positive images of people, both male and female, form 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.
- The Pre-school Manager will check the equipment every day as it is put out for use.
- Staff will also check the equipment when putting it away.
- A through check on all equipment is made every Sunday during term time.
- Inset days will be included in the pre-school timetable to allow for cleaning, repairs and redistribution of toys and equipment by staff.

ICT Policy

The Foundation Stage Guidance states that children should "*find out about and identify the uses of everyday technology and use information technology and programmable toys to support their learning*"

At the United Reformed Pre-School we follow the Foundation Stage Curriculum Guidance and ICT is incorporated into all curriculum areas. The children have access to tills, mobiles, telephones, kitchen equipment, office equipment, cameras, and programmable toys. Computer equipment includes laptops and digital cameras. We have a variety of software applications that are suitable for use with children of all abilities. As we are based in a church hall we are at present unable to provide Internet access.

Health and Safety

We recognise the health risk to young children from using computers and ensure that equipment is the correct size for the children; the work area is at the correct height and that the screen is

positioned to reduce glare from light sources. We also position the equipment away from hazards such as sand and water. As part of our ongoing program we teach the children how to position themselves correctly at the computer and how to develop a keyboard technique that uses more than two index fingers. Computer use is limited to fifteen minutes and is closely supervised by a member of staff at all times.

Anti- discrimination

We are an inclusive setting and all aspects of the ICT curriculum are available to all children and all staff. We are aware of the Data Protection Act 1988.

Children with Special Educational Needs

One of the fundamental principles of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2001 is the right of every child to an inclusive education. This means that pre-school and nurseries may have to adjust their provision to meet the needs of all children in the setting. ICT has a vital role to play in the inclusive setting, the SEN Toolkit suggests using ICT as "*an alternative means of accessing the curriculum*" (DfES 2001)

Staff training

Like the children, the staff at the URC Pre-School have a range of experience levels with computers and participate in an ongoing ICT development program.

Outings Policy

At the URC Pre-School we aim to take the nursery class children out on a visit within the local area approx once each term. This may involve a short trip to the local library or walk to the park or shops. On each occasion no private transport is used.

For such events the following points should be taken into consideration.

- A risk assessment is carried out by the member of staff leading the outing and signed by the leader for approval.
- Parents/carers should be informed of the coming outing at least a week before the event and asked to sign to give permission for their child to leave the pre-school on this occasion.
- The ratio recommended for outing from the URC is 2 children per adult.
- If extra help is required to meet this ratio, the leader should ask for parents/carers to help out.
- The children should be informed of their outing at least the day before the event.
- On the morning of outing, the children should be reminded before leaving of basic safety whilst out, particularly with reference to the roads.
- Each adult should be asked to be responsible for two children. However should a child require the toilet or medical assistance, a member of staff, rather than a helper, should deal with the situation.
- A portable first aid kit is available in the pre-school and should be checked and carried on each outing by a suitably qualified member of staff.
- The pre-school leader should register the children before leaving the hall and again on their return.

Transitions Policy

Children move on in their education and learning resulting in times of change for them. In order to make these transitions as easy as possible we have thought through how we can help children with the process.

The following are ideas we aim to put in place for children moving from the pre-school into our nursery class (Red Group):

- We are fortunate that the children will already know the nursery staff from their presence and work with all the pre-school children. The nursery manager and key workers will make an extra effort to spend time with the children moving on to their class in the half-term before the event.
- Towards the end of the term before joining Red Group, the new children will have the opportunity to spend a session in the nursery room with their new key workers
- Parents/carers are welcome to visit the nursery the term before their child starts to see what sort of experience their child will be having.

Another transition is from the nursery class to school. The following are ideas we aim to put in practice during this time:

- During the half term before school, we will talk in positive terms about the new experience and welcome feedback from children being sensitive to any concerns.
- We read starting school stories
- We encourage children to talk about their school visits and even to wear their new uniforms to show us
- We welcome teachers and school staff in to visit the children and us. If they cannot make a visit we will ring to either arrange a visit to them or have phone a conversation about the children's interests.
- We provide parents with a report, in addition to records kept on their child during their time at the URC Pre-school. These are copied to the school if parents give permission.
- Children have a small ceremony to say 'goodbye' and are presented with their work folders.

Some children leave us at the pre-school stage to go onto another nursery. The process for their transition is similar to that shown above.

Child Protection Policy

The URC is concerned about the welfare and safety of all its children. We intend to create in our Pre-School an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to.

The key commitment of the United Reformed Pre-School policy is for safe guarding children.

1. The 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.
2. The 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 are worried a child is being abused'(DoH2004)
3. The 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

Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

- Promoting children's rights to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our setting 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 tradition and home background.
- Promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- Promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- Helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers and with adults
- Working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

The legal framework for this work is:

Primary legislation

The Children Act 1989 - s 47

The Protection of Children Act 1999

Data Protection Act 1998

The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)

Guidance

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (2004)

The Framework for the Assessment of children in Need and Their Families (2000)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised 1999)

The Common Framework 2005

Secondary Legislation

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)

Human Rights Act (1999)

Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)

Liaison with other Bodies

- We work within the Area Safeguarding Children Committee guidelines
- We have a copy of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff, and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and social services to work well together.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
- Details of the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty of Children (NSPCC) contacts are also kept.
- If a referral is to be made to the local authority social services department, we act within the Area Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

Methods

Key commitment 1

The United Reformed Pre-School is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of the pre-school.

Staffing and volunteering

- Our designated person (DSP) who co-ordinates child protection issues is
Mrs Diane Chichester-Miles
- Our designated Officer who oversees this work is
Mrs Gill Morris
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for a post within the setting are clearly informed that the positions appointed within the guidance given within the from Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Candidates are informed of the needs to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureau before posts can be confirmed.
- 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 Criminal Record Bureau checks for staff, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Children 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 reason of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- 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 childrens.

Key Commitment 2

The 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 are worried a child is being abused' (DoH2004)

Method

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.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the setting manager who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- Diane Chichester-Miles (the DSP) will decide whether the concerns should be referred to Hertfordshire's Children's School and Families Community Team in the West Quadrant (01727 849144). This referral, if necessary, will be made without prior discussion with the parents.

- Staff in the setting take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of the children.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's social service department for further investigation.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.
- Our policy is to suspend the member of staff on full pay for the duration of the investigation; this is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect that staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

Key Commitment 3

The United Reformed 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 Years Foundation Stage, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Method

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglects and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

Planning

- The layout of the room allows for constant supervision.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of child protection 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 so that they develop 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 the children.

Disclosure

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- Offers reassurance to the child;
- Listens to the child;
- Gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

The member of staff does not question, the child.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff make a record of:

- The child's name;
- The child's address;
- The age of the child;
- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- An objective record of the observation of 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;
- The name of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file.

All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact.
- If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the local Area Safeguarding Children Committee does not allow this.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

Confidentially

- 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 Area Safeguarding Children Committee.

Supporting to families

- The United Reformed pre-school believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The pre-school makes clear to parents its 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 social services department.
- The pre-school continues 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 social services department in relation to the setting's designated role and task in supporting the child and the 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 procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee

Staff and Employment

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

- In our Nursery class we usually have two members of staff present with every group of 9 children.
- In the younger group we have at least one staff member to each four children
- Our key worker system ensures each child and family has one particular staff member who takes a special interest in them.

- Regular staff meeting provides opportunities for staff to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss the children's progress and any difficulties
- All staff members hold or are working towards a relevant child care qualification
- Diane Chichester Miles (Pre-School Manager) is NVQ Level 4 & has an Early Years Foundation Degree
- Sue Parker (Deputy Manager and Nursery class leader) is NVQ Level 3 and has EYPS(Early Years Professional Status)
- All other staff will aim to hold a minimum N.V.Q. Level 2/3 or NNEB
- Induction training for new staff will be given
- Full staff meetings will be held twice every half term and a briefing each morning.
- Regular in service training is available to all staff, both paid and volunteer members.

All the staff have taken first Aid training and Child Protection and all staff have undertaken training in the implementation of the Foundation Stage. Staff are dedicated to giving appropriate support to the children's learning. Activities are adapted to meet individual children's needs. Staff respond to unexpected learning opportunities and help children to persevere with tasks but are able to recognise when to change activities. At United Reformed Pre-School, the children are given plenty of encouragement and praise.

The United Reformed Pre-School & Nursery is owned by the Church. Diane Chichester-Miles is employed as Nursery Manager with Sue Parker as Deputy.

Student Placement

We recognize that the quality and variety of work which goes on in a pre-school makes it an ideal place for students on placement from school and collage childcare courses.

Students are welcome into the pre-school 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 pre-school
- Students must be confirmed by their tutor as being engaged on a bona fide childcare course which provides necessary background understanding of children; development and activities
- Students who are required to conduct child studies will obtain written permission from parents of the child to be studied.
- Any information gained by the student about the children's families or other adults in the pre-school must remain confidential
- Students are never left unsupervised with the children.

Staff Contingency Arrangements

In the event of a member of staff being unable to attend pre-school for any reason, they are expected to ring the pre-school leader before 8am on the day in question.

The leader will firstly ring other staff that are not expected at pre-school that day to see if they can fill the need for supply. If none are available the leader will contact one of the names on the supply list.

In the event of a member of staff being called away from the pre-school during a session, the leader will assess the ratio of qualified adults: children and decide whether to call upon a supply assistant.

Fewer staff, even for a short time, may require the leader to change the routine of the morning so that every area of pre-school provision is adequately covered.

Supply List

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Mrs Theresa Roberts | Nursery nurse | 075256233682/01582 762119 |
| Mrs Helen Mellor | Nursery nurse | 01582 762284 |

Complaints Procedures

Ofsted Number Harlow office
01279 693584

As a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all 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/carers 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 concern know

Our promise to you

- Your complaint will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence
- Your complaint will be looked into thoroughly and fairly
- If your complaint is urgent we will deal with it more quickly
- We will keep you up to date with progress at each stage
- You will get an apology if we have made a mistake
- You will be told what we are going to do to put things right
- You will get a full and clear written reply to formal complaints within 28 working days

How to make a complaint

Most complaints should be resolved informally or at the initial stage.

Firstly

If you have a concern about anything we do, or if you wish to make a complaint, you can do this by telephone, in person or in writing. We hope that most complaints can be settled quickly and informally, either by putting matters right or by giving you an explanation. If there is something you are not happy about, or you don't understand why we are doing something in a particular way, please come in and discuss it with the manager or another appropriate member of staff, such as the special needs co-ordinator (SENCo) if it about special needs.

We know that it can feel uncomfortable to question or challenge, but if you don't tell us what is worrying you we cannot explain what we are doing or try to put it right.

Second step

If you are not satisfied, you can complain formally by filling in a form, which is available from the manager. Address the form to the Elder of the United Reformed Church. The manager will tell you who this is. The chairman will then arrange for your complaint to be investigated and considered and will reply within 10 working days to give you a progress report and tell you what will happen next.

When your complaint has been fully investigated you will be told of the outcome in writing.

- If the matter is still not sorted out to the parent/carer's satisfaction, the parent/carer should again contact the Elders.
- If parents/carers and group cannot agree, 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 role of the registering authority

In some circumstances, it will be necessary to bring in the local authority registration and inspection unit (Ofsted), who have a duty to ensure laid down requirements are adhered to and with whom the Pre-School Learning Alliance works in partnership, to encourage high standards. The registering authority would be involved if a child appeared to be at risk or where there seemed to be a possible breach of registration requirement. In these cases both parents/carers and the pre-school would be informed and the Pre-School Learning Alliance fieldworker would work with the inspection department to ensure a proper investigation of the complaints followed by appropriate action.

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 pre-school and parents/carers that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way, which respects confidentiality.

Disciplinary and grievance procedure for URC Pre-School employees

Minor disagreements

It is recognised that disagreements may arise among pre-school staff or between staff and the Minister and Elders of United Reformed Church, Harpenden (URC). These can usually be resolved informally by discussion, if necessary with the help of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA) fieldworker, and provided they are outside the limit of disciplinary or grievance procedure.

Disciplinary procedure

A more serious situation arises when a dispute cannot be resolved, or when the Elders of UDC Harpenden are dissatisfied with the conduct or activities of an employee. Instant dismissal is possible only in extreme circumstances of gross misconduct.

Examples of such misconduct would be:

- (a) Theft or fraud
- (b) Ill-treatment of children
- (c) Assault
- (d) Malicious damage
- (e) Gross carelessness which threatens the health and safety of others.
- (f) Being unfit through the use of drugs or excessive alcohol.

Otherwise an employee will not be dismissed without the appropriate warning. Any disciplinary matter will normally be dealt with in three stages.

- (a) an oral warning
- (b) a written warning
- (c) a notice of dismissal

The employee may be accompanied by a friend or trade union official at each stage if she/he wishes, and that friend or trade union official may speak on her/his behalf.

1. If an oral warning is to be given:
 - (i) The employee should be interviewed by the Minister of the URC Harpenden and the Pre-School Manager, who will explain the complaint.
 - (ii) The employee will be given full opportunity to state her/his case.
 - (iii) If the warning is still considered to be appropriate, the employee will be informed:
 - (a) What action should be taken to correct the conduct
 - (b) That she/he will be given reasonable time to rectify matters.
 - (c) That if she/he fails to improve then further action will be taken
 - (d) That a record of the warning will be kept.
 - (e) That she/he may appeal against the decision.
2. If the employee fails to correct* her/his conduct and further action is necessary:
 - (i) The employee will be interviewed and given the opportunity to state her/his case, as before.
 - (ii) If the need for disciplinary action is established, a letter will be sent to the employee immediately.
 - (iii) The letter must:
 - (a) Contain a clear reprimand and give the reason for it.
 - (b) Explain what corrective action is required and that reasonable time will be given for improvement.

- (c) Warn that failure to improve will result in further action being taken.
- (d) Explain that she/he has the right to appeal against the decision.

3. If the employee still fails to correct her/his conduct then:

- (i) The employee will again be interviewed and given an opportunity to state her/his case as before.
- (ii) If the decision is to dismiss, the employee will be given notice of dismissal, stating the reasons for the dismissal and giving details of the right to appeal.

** If progress is satisfactory within the time given to rectify matters, the record of verbal warning on the individual's file will be destroyed.*

Appeals

At each stage of the disciplinary procedure the employee must be told she/he has the right to appeal against any disciplinary, and that the appeal must be made in writing to the Pre-School Manager or the Elders within five days of a disciplinary interview. The Elders of the URC Harpenden will normally hear appeal, and it will be heard as soon as possible. Procedure will be informal and the employee may take a friend or trade union official to speak for her/him.

- (a) The employee will explain why she/he is dissatisfied and may be asked questions.
- (b) The Pre-School Manager or Minister of the URC Harpenden will be asked to put her/his point of view and may be asked questions.
- (c) Witnesses may be heard and may be questioned by the Elders of URC Harpenden and by the employee and the Pre-School Manager or the Minister of URC Church Harpenden.
- (d) The Elders of URC Harpenden will consider the matter and make know their decision.

A written record of the meeting will be kept. If the employee remains dissatisfied she/he may appeal to the PSLA Branch or County Executive Officer, set up an appeals procedure within two weeks of receiving the request. Procedure will be as above.

Suspension

If the circumstances appear to warrant instant dismissal, an employee may be suspended while investigations are made.

Grievance procedure

If an employee is dissatisfied she/he must have the opportunity for prompt discussion with her/his immediate supervisor. For the Pre-School Manager this would normally be the Minister of URC Harpenden. For other per-school staff, it would be the Pre-School Manager. If the grievance persists, a sub-committee of the URC Elders should be set up for the purpose of further discussion, at which the employee may, if she/he wishes be accompanied by a friend.

United Reformed Church Pre-School

Formal Complaint Form

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number Day _____ Evening _____

What is it you want to complain about?

Have you complained to the Manager?

When did you do this?

What happened when you complained to the Manager?

What would you like us to do to put things right?

| |
|--------|
| |
| Signed |
| Date |

Please return this form addressed to the Elders of the United Reformed Church, in a sealed envelope via the Pre-School Manager.

Disciplinary and grievance procedure for URC Pre-School employees