



Policy Pack C:

Health, Safety and Care

These policies ensure that children's health, wellbeing and care needs are supported safely within the nursery.

- C1. Health and Safety Policy
- C2. First Aid, Medication and Sun Protection Policy
- C3. Food Safety and Nutrition Policy
- C4. Sleep and Rest Policy
- C5. Infection Control and Illness Policy
- C6. Intimate Care Policy
- C7. Fire Safety & Emergency Evacuation Policy
- C8. Critical Incident & Lockdown Policy
- C9. Packed Lunch & Guidance Policy



C1. Health, Safety & Care Policy

1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems the health, safety and wellbeing of children, educators and visitors is a fundamental priority.

The nursery is committed to providing a safe, secure and hygienic environment where children can learn and play with confidence. Through careful supervision, regular risk assessment and clear procedures, the nursery works to minimise hazards and promote a culture of safety.

Health and safety is a shared responsibility across the nursery and forms part of everyday practice.

2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Hillside Gems maintains a safe environment for children, staff and visitors.

This policy aims to:

- promote a safe and healthy environment for children and staff
- identify and minimise potential risks within the nursery
- ensure staff understand their responsibilities regarding health and safety
- maintain compliance with statutory requirements

Detailed procedures relating to specific areas of care are outlined in the following policies:

- Operational Risk Assessment Policy
 - First Aid, Medication and Sun Protection Policy
 - Food Safety and Nutrition Policy
 - Sleep and Rest Policy
 - Infection Control and Illness Policy
-

3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and statutory guidance:

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

4. Our Practice at Hillside Gems

The nursery takes a proactive approach to health and safety by maintaining safe environments, clear procedures and effective supervision.

This includes:

- maintaining safe premises and equipment
- carrying out regular risk assessments
- ensuring children are appropriately supervised
- maintaining high standards of hygiene and cleanliness
- ensuring staff are aware of health and safety procedures

Educators remain alert to potential hazards and take appropriate action to reduce risks.

5. Risk Assessment

Risk assessment forms an important part of maintaining a safe nursery environment.

The nursery carries out:

- routine environment checks
- risk assessments for activities and equipment
- dynamic risk assessment during daily practice

Further guidance is outlined in the **Operational Risk Assessment Policy (D1)**.

6. Health and Hygiene

Maintaining good hygiene helps protect children from illness and infection.

The nursery promotes:

- regular handwashing
- hygienic food preparation
- appropriate cleaning routines
- safe management of illness within the setting

Further procedures are outlined in the **Infection Control and Illness Policy (C5)**.

7. Medical Care and First Aid

The nursery ensures that appropriate first aid provision is in place.

This includes:

- trained first aid staff
- accessible first aid equipment
- procedures for administering medication
- recording accidents or injuries

Further procedures are outlined in the **First Aid, Medication and Sun Protection Policy (C2)**.

8. Food Safety and Nutrition

Food provided within the nursery is prepared and handled in accordance with food safety guidance.

The nursery aims to provide meals and snacks that are nutritious, balanced and suitable for young children.

Further procedures are outlined in the **Food Safety and Nutrition Policy (C3) and Packed Lunch Policy (C9)**.

9. Sleep and Rest

Children are provided with appropriate opportunities for rest and sleep during the nursery day.

Safe sleep practices are maintained to ensure that children rest comfortably and safely.

Further procedures are outlined in the **Sleep and Rest Policy (C4)**.

10. Staff Responsibilities

All educators share responsibility for maintaining a safe environment within the nursery.

Educators should:

- remain aware of potential hazards
- follow health and safety procedures
- report concerns to the Nursery Manager
- supervise children appropriately
- maintain hygienic practices

Health and safety forms part of everyday professional practice within the nursery.

11. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that health and safety procedures are implemented effectively.

This includes:

- reviewing safety practices within the nursery
- supporting staff in maintaining safe environments
- addressing any health or safety concerns that arise

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.

Created by S.T-L, March 2026, Review March 2027



C2. First Aid, Medication and Sun Protection Policy

1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems the health and wellbeing of children is a fundamental priority.

The nursery ensures that appropriate first aid provision is in place and that medication is administered safely and responsibly when required. Through clear procedures, trained educators and careful supervision, the nursery aims to support children's health needs while maintaining a safe and nurturing environment.

Sun safety is also promoted to help protect children from overexposure to the sun during outdoor play.

2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children receive appropriate care if they are injured, unwell or require medication while attending the nursery.

This policy aims to:

- ensure that appropriate first aid provision is available
- outline procedures for administering medication safely
- ensure accidents and injuries are recorded appropriately
- promote safe practices when children are exposed to the sun

3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and statutory guidance:

4. First Aid Provision

Hillside Gems ensures that appropriate first aid arrangements are in place.

This includes:

- trained paediatric first aid educators available within the setting
- accessible first aid kits
- clear procedures for responding to accidents or injuries

First aid kits are checked regularly to ensure that supplies remain stocked and suitable for use.

If a child becomes injured or unwell while attending the nursery, educators will provide appropriate first aid and comfort.

Where necessary, parents will be contacted and asked to collect their child.

In the event of a serious injury or medical emergency, emergency services may be contacted immediately.

5. Recording Accidents and Injuries

All accidents or injuries occurring within the nursery will be recorded.

Records will include:

- the nature of the injury
- how the incident occurred
- any first aid administered
- the time and date of the incident

Parents will be informed of accidents involving their child.

6. Administering Medication

Medication may be administered where necessary to support a child's health.

The nursery will ensure that:

- written parental consent is obtained before medication is administered
- medication is clearly labelled and in its original container
- medication instructions are followed carefully
- records are kept of medication administered

Medication will only be administered by educators who are authorised to do so.

7. Storage of Medication

Medication must be stored safely and securely.

Where necessary:

- medication may be stored in a locked cupboard
- medication requiring refrigeration will be stored appropriately

Staff will ensure that medication is kept out of children's reach.

8. Long Term Medical Conditions

Where children have ongoing medical conditions, the nursery will work with parents to ensure appropriate support is in place.

This may include:

- agreed care procedures
 - individual health plans where appropriate
 - communication with parents regarding the child's needs
-

9. Sun Protection

The nursery promotes safe outdoor play while helping to protect children from overexposure to the sun.

Sun protection measures may include:

- encouraging children to wear suitable clothing and hats during warm weather

- applying sunscreen where parental permission has been provided
- encouraging children to drink water regularly
- providing shaded areas for outdoor play

Educators will remain attentive to children's comfort and wellbeing during hot weather.

10. Staff Responsibilities

Educators share responsibility for ensuring that children's health needs are supported within the nursery.

Educators should:

- respond promptly to accidents or illness
 - follow procedures for administering medication
 - record accidents and medication accurately
 - promote safe outdoor practices
-

11. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that first aid, medication and sun protection procedures are implemented appropriately.

This includes:

- ensuring staff understand procedures
- reviewing incident records where necessary
- ensuring first aid provision remains appropriate

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if guidance or legislation changes.

Created by S.T-L, March 2026, Review March 2027



C3. Food Safety and Nutrition Policy

1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems we recognise that healthy eating plays an important role in children's growth, wellbeing and development.

The nursery aims to provide meals and snacks that are nutritious, balanced and suitable for young children. Mealtimes are also viewed as important social learning opportunities where children develop independence, communication skills and positive relationships with food.

Food is prepared and handled safely to ensure that children's health and wellbeing are protected.

2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that food provided within the nursery is prepared, stored and served safely while supporting children to develop healthy eating habits.

This policy aims to:

- ensure food is prepared and handled safely
 - provide balanced and nutritious meals and snacks
 - support children in developing positive relationships with food
 - ensure children with allergies or dietary needs are supported safely
-

3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Food Safety Act 1990

Food Standards Agency guidance on food safety and hygiene

<https://www.food.gov.uk>

4. Our Practice at Hillside Gems

Hillside Gems promotes healthy eating and safe food practices throughout the nursery.

This includes:

- providing balanced meals and snacks suitable for young children
- encouraging children to try a variety of foods
- supporting children in developing independence during mealtimes
- ensuring that food is handled safely and hygienically

Children are supported to develop healthy eating habits in a positive and relaxed environment.

5. Food Safety

The nursery follows safe food hygiene practices when preparing and serving food.

This includes:

- maintaining clean food preparation areas
- ensuring appropriate food storage
- following safe food handling procedures
- monitoring food temperatures where required

Staff involved in preparing or serving food understand the importance of maintaining good hygiene practices.

6. Allergies and Dietary Needs

Information regarding children's allergies or dietary requirements is obtained from parents when the child starts at the nursery.

The nursery ensures that:

- staff are aware of children's allergies or dietary restrictions
- allergen information is clearly recorded
- appropriate care is taken to prevent cross contamination

Where children have specific dietary needs, the nursery works with parents to ensure that these needs are supported safely.

7. Nutrition

The nursery aims to provide meals and snacks that support children's health and development.

Food provided within the nursery reflects current nutritional guidance for early years settings.

Meals and snacks aim to include a balance of:

- carbohydrates
- protein
- fruits and vegetables
- dairy or suitable alternatives

Drinking water is available to children throughout the day.

8. Mealtime Practice

Mealtimes are seen as important learning opportunities.

Educators support children to:

- develop independence during eating
- practise social skills during shared meals
- develop awareness of healthy food choices

Children are always supervised while eating to ensure that food is consumed safely.

9. Choking Safety

Educators remain attentive during mealtimes to ensure that children eat safely.

Staff ensure that:

- children are seated appropriately while eating
- food is prepared in a way suitable for the child's age and stage of development
- children are supervised while eating

These practices help reduce the risk of choking.

10. Dysphagia

Children with dysphagia or other feeding difficulties will be supported through carefully planned and individualised approaches to eating and drinking. Staff will follow guidance from

parents and relevant health professionals to ensure that food textures, portion sizes and positioning are appropriate and safe. Children will be closely supervised while eating, with staff promoting a calm and unhurried environment.

All staff will be made aware of specific feeding needs and any associated risks, including choking and aspiration. Where required, individual risk assessments or care plans will be in place and regularly reviewed. Staff will follow the setting's choking response procedures and seek immediate support in the event of any concerns.

11. Partnership with Parents

The nursery works in partnership with parents to support children's dietary needs.

Parents are encouraged to inform the nursery of:

- allergies or intolerances
- dietary requirements
- cultural or religious dietary practices

Open communication helps ensure that children's needs are supported safely and appropriately.

12. Staff Responsibilities

Educators share responsibility for maintaining safe food practices within the nursery.

Educators should:

- follow food safety procedures
 - remain aware of children's allergies and dietary needs
 - supervise children during mealtimes
 - promote positive eating experiences
-

13. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that food safety and nutrition procedures are implemented appropriately.

This includes:

- reviewing food safety practices
- ensuring staff understand procedures relating to allergies and food safety
- monitoring that nutritional guidance is followed

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if guidance or legislation changes.

Created by S.T-L, March 2026, Review March 2027

Hillside Gems



Dietary Needs & Allergy Information Form

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Dietary Requirements

Preferences: _____

Food Allergies / Intolerances

Allergen(s):

Type of reaction and details:

Mild _____

Moderate _____

Severe (e.g. anaphylaxis - please complete additional Epi-pen form)

Parent/Carer Declaration

I confirm that the information provided is accurate and up to date.

Parent/Carer Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For Staff Use

- Information shared with all staff
- Displayed in staff area (where appropriate)
- Linked care plan in place (if required)
- Kitchen informed

Staff Name: _____ Date: _____



C4. Sleep and Rest Policy

1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems we recognise that rest and sleep are important for children's health, wellbeing and development.

Young children have varying sleep needs, and the nursery aims to provide a calm and supportive environment where children can rest comfortably when they are tired.

Educators work closely with parents to understand children's individual sleep routines and preferences. Children are supported in ways that promote comfort, security and wellbeing while ensuring that safe sleeping practices are followed at all times.

2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Hillside Gems supports children's sleep and rest while ensuring that safe sleeping practices are followed.

This policy aims to:

- ensure children sleep in a safe and appropriate environment
- support children's individual sleep needs
- ensure appropriate supervision of sleeping children
- work in partnership with parents regarding sleep routines
- follow recognised safe sleep guidance

This policy should be read alongside the Health and Safety Policy.

3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework-2>

Lullaby Trust – Safer Sleep Guidance

<https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice/>

4. Our Practice at Hillside Gems

Children who require sleep or rest during the day are supported in a calm and comfortable environment.

Sleep arrangements are designed to ensure that children are:

- comfortable
- safe
- appropriately supervised

Educators respect children's individual sleep needs and routines where possible.

Some children may require a full sleep, while others may benefit from a short rest period.

Children are never forced to sleep but are supported to rest if they appear tired.

5. Safe Sleeping Arrangements

The nursery ensures that sleeping arrangements follow recognised safe sleep guidance.

This includes:

- children sleeping on suitable sleep equipment such as cots or sleep mats
- children being placed on their backs to sleep, unless parents have provided alternative guidance supported by medical advice
- ensuring that bedding is suitable and safe for the child's age
- maintaining a comfortable room temperature

Where possible, a designated sleep area will be used.

If a separate sleep area is not available, educators will carefully select a suitable space within the room. The chosen sleep space must:

- be away from cold areas such as doors, windows or draughts
- not be positioned in main walkways or access routes
- be located away from areas where children are actively playing
- allow educators to supervise sleeping children easily

Children may hold soft comforters while settling to sleep where this forms part of their usual routine.

To support a safe sleep environment:

- only soft comforters are encouraged to be held by the child
- hard toys or objects that may pose a risk will be removed from the sleep area
- where children are strongly attached to such items, educators will remove or gradually remove them with care, supporting the child to settle safely

Sleeping environments are monitored regularly to ensure that children remain safe and comfortable while resting.

6. Supervision of Sleeping Children

Sleeping children are supervised by educators at all times.

Educators will:

- check sleeping children regularly
- remain attentive to changes in breathing or positioning
- ensure children remain comfortable and safe while resting

Sleep areas are arranged so that educators can observe children easily.

7. Partnership with Parents

Parents are asked to provide information about their child's sleep routines when their child joins the nursery.

This may include:

- usual sleep times
- comfort items
- individual settling routines

The nursery will work with parents to support these routines where possible.

Parents may be informed about their child's sleep during the nursery day.

8. Staff Responsibilities

Educators share responsibility for ensuring safe sleep procedures are followed.

Educators should:

- follow safe sleep guidance
- supervise sleeping children appropriately
- ensure sleeping areas remain safe and suitable
- respect children's individual sleep needs and routines

Any concerns regarding a child's wellbeing during sleep should be reported to the Nursery Manager.

9. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that safe sleep procedures are implemented within the nursery.

This includes:

- monitoring sleep arrangements

- ensuring educators understand safe sleep practices
- reviewing procedures where necessary

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.

Created by S.T-L, March 2026, Review March 2027



C5. Infection Control and Illness Policy

1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems we aim to maintain a clean and healthy environment where children can learn and play safely.

Young children are naturally exposed to common illnesses as their immune systems develop. Through good hygiene practices, appropriate cleaning procedures and clear communication with families, the nursery works to minimise the spread of illness within the setting.

Educators support children in developing good hygiene habits while ensuring that the environment remains clean and safe for everyone in the nursery community.

2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Hillside Gems manages illness and infection control within the nursery.

This policy aims to:

- reduce the spread of infection within the nursery
- promote good hygiene practices
- ensure children who are unwell receive appropriate care
- support clear communication with parents regarding illness
- maintain a clean and hygienic environment

This policy should be read alongside the **Health and Safety Policy (C1)**.

3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework-2>

Health Protection in Education and Childcare Settings (UKHSA)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37>

4. Our Practice at Hillside Gems

Hillside Gems takes reasonable steps to reduce the spread of infection within the nursery environment.

This includes:

- maintaining high standards of hygiene
- encouraging regular handwashing
- cleaning surfaces and equipment regularly
- ensuring appropriate ventilation within rooms
- monitoring children's health and wellbeing

Educators remain attentive to signs of illness and respond appropriately when children become unwell.

5. Hygiene Practices

Good hygiene practices help reduce the spread of infection within the nursery.

Educators support children in:

- washing hands regularly
- washing hands before meals and after using the toilet
- covering coughs and sneezes where appropriate

Educators also follow hygiene procedures such as:

- washing hands before handling food
- washing hands after assisting children with toileting or changing
- cleaning surfaces and equipment regularly

These practices help maintain a safe and healthy environment for everyone within the nursery.

6. When Children Become Unwell

If a child becomes unwell while attending the nursery:

- educators will monitor the child and provide appropriate care
- parents or carers may be contacted if the child appears too unwell to remain at nursery
- the child may be supported to rest in a comfortable area while waiting to be collected

The nursery prioritises the wellbeing of the child while also considering the health of other children and staff in the setting.

7. Exclusion from Nursery

In some circumstances children may need to remain at home if they are unwell.

Parents may be asked to keep children at home where they have symptoms that could pose a risk to others.

This may include:

- vomiting or diarrhoea
- fever
- contagious illnesses

The nursery follows guidance from the UK Health Security Agency regarding recommended exclusion periods.

- **Diarrhoea and vomiting:** 48 hours after last episode
- **Fever:** 24 hours fever-free without medication
- **Chickenpox:** Minimum 5 days and spots scabbed

Updates are found the UK Health Security Agency website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/children-and-young-people-settings-tools-and-resources>

8. Cleaning and Environment

The nursery maintains regular cleaning routines to support a hygienic environment.

This includes:

- cleaning toys and equipment regularly
- cleaning surfaces used for meals or activities
- maintaining clean toilet and changing facilities

Where necessary, additional cleaning procedures may be implemented to help reduce the spread of infection.

9. Staff Responsibilities

Educators share responsibility for maintaining a healthy nursery environment.

Educators should:

- follow hygiene procedures
- support children in developing good hygiene habits
- monitor children for signs of illness
- inform the Nursery Manager of any concerns relating to illness or infection

Educators who are unwell should follow the nursery's procedures regarding illness and absence.

10. Partnership with Parents

Parents and the nursery share responsibility for helping to prevent the spread of illness within the setting.

Parents are asked to:

- keep children at home if they are unwell
- inform the nursery if their child has a contagious illness or infection
- follow recommended exclusion periods before returning to nursery
- notify the nursery if their child will be absent due to illness

Where possible, parents should report their child's absence and the reason for the absence to the nursery as soon as practicable.

Hillside Gems will also communicate with families where there are known cases of contagious illness within the nursery, so that parents are aware and can monitor their children for symptoms.

Open communication between the nursery and families helps ensure that appropriate precautions can be taken and supports the health and wellbeing of the nursery community.

11. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that infection control procedures are followed within the nursery.

This includes:

- monitoring hygiene practices
- ensuring cleaning routines are maintained
- reviewing illness guidance when necessary

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if guidance or legislation changes.

Created by S.T-L, March 2026, Review March 2027



C6. Intimate Care Policy

Policy Statement

At Hillside Gems Nursery, we are committed to ensuring that all children feel safe, respected and cared for during intimate care routines. Intimate care is a sensitive aspect of practice and will always be carried out in a way that preserves the child's dignity, privacy and emotional wellbeing.

We recognise that intimate care is part of safeguarding and will be approached with the same level of care, professionalism and vigilance.

What is Intimate Care

Intimate care includes:

- Nappy changing
 - Supporting children with toileting
 - Cleaning a child after toileting or accidents
 - Supporting with changing clothes
 - Any care involving close physical contact in private areas
-

Principles

All staff will:

- Treat children with dignity and respect at all times
 - Encourage independence appropriate to the child's age and development
 - Communicate with the child throughout the care process
 - Ensure the child feels safe, comfortable and reassured
 - Respect the child's privacy as far as possible
 - Follow safeguarding procedures at all times
-

Safeguarding and Staff Conduct

- Intimate care will only be carried out by **vettted staff members** who have undergone DBS checks
 - Wherever possible, staff will inform another adult when intimate care is taking place
 - Doors will remain appropriately managed (not fully closed unless necessary for privacy, and never locked)
 - Staff will remain alert to any signs of discomfort, distress or safeguarding concerns
 - Any concerns arising during intimate care must be reported immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**
-

Promoting Independence

Staff will:

- Encourage children to manage their own toileting and hygiene where appropriate
 - Offer guidance and support rather than doing tasks for the child
 - Celebrate progress and confidence in self-care
-

Hygiene and Health

- Staff will follow strict hygiene procedures, including handwashing and use of gloves/aprons
 - Changing areas will be cleaned after each use
 - Soiled clothing will be handled hygienically and returned to parents in sealed bags
 - Any signs of infection, rash or illness will be recorded and shared with parents
-

Working with Parents

- Parents will be informed of intimate care routines when their child starts
 - Any specific needs or preferences will be discussed and respected
 - Accidents or concerns will be communicated promptly
 - Ongoing toileting development will be shared with parents to ensure consistency
-

Children with Additional Needs

For children requiring regular or specialised intimate care:

- An **individual care plan** will be created in partnership with parents
 - Staff will receive appropriate guidance or training where needed
 - Care will be consistent, respectful and tailored to the child's needs
-

Recording and Reporting

- Any unusual marks, injuries or concerns noticed during intimate care must be recorded and reported immediately in line with safeguarding procedures
 - Accidents will be recorded in line with the nursery's accident and incident policy
-

Confidentiality

All information relating to intimate care will be treated with sensitivity and confidentiality, shared only with relevant staff and parents where appropriate.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in line with updates to statutory guidance.

Created by S.T-L, March 2026, Review March 2027



C7. Fire Safety & Emergency Evacuation Policy (All settings)

1. Purpose

At Hillside Gems, we are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children, staff, and visitors by maintaining effective fire prevention, detection, and evacuation procedures across all settings.

This policy outlines how we prevent fire risks and how we respond in the event of a fire or emergency.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Hillside Gems settings:

- Little Waltham
- Terling
- The Barn

All staff are responsible for understanding and implementing this policy.

3. Fire Prevention Measures

We minimise fire risk by:

- Keeping all exits and walkways **clear at all times**
 - Ensuring fire doors are **closed and functioning correctly**
 - Maintaining electrical equipment and checking for faults
 - Storing materials safely and minimising clutter
 - Ensuring no cooking of hot food onsite (packed lunches only at Terling and The Barn)
 - Supervising use of kitchen areas where snacks are prepared
 - Keeping outdoor areas and exits unobstructed
-

4. Fire Detection and Equipment

Each setting is equipped with:

- Smoke detectors / fire alarm systems
- Fire extinguishers (appropriate types)
- Clearly marked fire exits

All equipment is:

- Checked regularly
 - Serviced in line with legal requirements
 - Recorded in the **Health & Safety / Risk Assessment records**
-

5. Evacuation Procedure

If a fire alarm sounds or fire is identified:

1. **Stop immediately**
 2. Staff calmly instruct children to line up or gather
 3. **Evacuate via nearest safe exit**
 4. Do not collect belongings
 5. Lead children to the **designated assembly point**
 6. Senior staff member conducts a **headcount/register check**
 7. Call emergency services if not already done (999)
 8. Do not re-enter the building until declared safe
-

6. Site-Specific Evacuation Arrangements

Little Waltham

- Evacuate through main exit or garden exit
 - Assemble at designated outdoor safe area
 - Staff maintain ratios and supervise all children
-

Terling

- Multiple exit routes available
 - Children escorted to outdoor assembly area
 - Packed lunches mean no hot food risks
-

The Barn

- Main exit and secondary exit near entrance
- Rear push-bar fire exit leads to pathway and church grounds

- All doors are alarmed and kept closed during sessions
 - Outdoor storage areas are kept clear at all times
 - Kitchen used for snack preparation only (no cooking)
-

7. Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Know the **location of fire exits and assembly points**
 - Know how to **raise the alarm**
 - Lead children safely and calmly out of the building
 - Ensure no child is left behind (toilets, quiet areas, outdoor spaces)
 - Take registers where possible
 - Report any fire hazards immediately
-

8. Fire Drills

- Fire drills are carried out **termly (at minimum) with consultation with landlords**
 - Drills are varied (different times of day, routines)
 - All drills are:
 - Recorded
 - Evaluated
 - Used to improve practice
-

9. Children's Safety During Evacuation

- Children are supported calmly and reassured
 - Younger or vulnerable children are prioritised
 - Staff maintain **ratios at all times**
 - Clear, consistent routines help children understand evacuation expectations
-

10. Visitors and Contractors

- All visitors are informed of fire procedures on arrival
 - Visitors must follow staff instructions in an evacuation
 - Staff are responsible for ensuring visitors are accounted for
-

11. Emergency Contact and Follow-Up

- Emergency services: **999**

- Parents will be contacted if required
 - Any incident will be:
 - Recorded
 - Reported to relevant authorities if necessary
 - Reviewed to improve safety
-

12. Linked Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
 - Risk Assessment Policy
 - Health & Safety Policy
 - Missing Child Policy
-

13. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually
 - After any fire incident or drill requiring improvement
 - In line with legislative updates
-

Created by S.T-L, March 2026, Review March 2027



C8. Critical Incident & Lockdown Policy (All Settings)

1. Purpose

At Hillside Gems, the safety and wellbeing of all children, staff, and visitors is our highest priority.

This policy outlines how we respond to **critical incidents and lockdown situations**, ensuring all staff act quickly, calmly, and consistently across all settings.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Hillside Gems settings:

- Little Waltham
- Terling
- The Barn

Site-specific procedures are detailed in individual setting risk assessments and appendices.

3. What is a Critical Incident?

A critical incident is any event that:

- Disrupts the safe running of the setting, or
- Poses a risk to children, staff, or visitors

This may include:

- Fire or building emergency
 - Flood or environmental incident
 - Intruder or security breach
 - Abduction or attempted abduction
 - Bomb threat or terrorism
 - Serious accident or medical emergency
 - Any situation affecting safe operation
-

4. Key Principles

- Children's safety is always the priority
 - Staff act immediately and remain calm
 - The Manager or Deputy leads all incidents
 - Emergency services are contacted when required
 - Clear communication is maintained
 - All incidents are recorded and reviewed
-

5. Lockdown Procedure (General)

A lockdown is used when it is **safer to remain inside than evacuate**.

When lockdown may be required:

- Unauthorised person on site
 - Suspicious behaviour nearby
 - Immediate external threat
-

Lockdown Actions

1. **Raise the alarm verbally** (e.g. "LOCKDOWN")
 2. **Manager/Deputy will:**
 - Call **999 immediately**
 - Collect:
 - Register
 - Mobile phone
 - Medication
 3. **Staff will:**
 - Gather all children quickly and calmly
 - Move to the designated **safe place**
 - Check all areas (toilets, quiet spaces, outdoor areas)
 4. **Secure the building:**
 - Lock doors
 - Close windows
 - Draw curtains/blinds where possible
 5. **Account for everyone:**
 - Complete headcount immediately
 6. **Remain calm and quiet:**
 - Reassure children
 - Avoid drawing attention
 7. **Wait for emergency services**
 - Do not leave safe place until instructed
-

After Lockdown

- Manager informs parents/carers
 - Children are reassured and supported
 - Incident is recorded
 - Relevant authorities (including Ofsted) are informed where required
-

6. Abduction or Attempted Abduction

If a child is taken or at risk:

- Call **999 immediately**
 - Inform Manager/DSL
 - Provide as much detail as possible:
 - Child details
 - Description of individual
 - Direction of travel
 - Vehicle details (if known)
 - Keep remaining children safe
 - Contact parents immediately
-

7. Evacuation (Fire or Unsafe Building)

Where evacuation is safer than remaining inside:

- Follow the **Fire Safety & Evacuation Policy**
 - Move children to designated assembly point
 - Conduct headcount and register check
-

8. Other Critical Incidents

- Manager/Deputy assesses the situation
 - Staff follow instructions immediately
 - Emergency services contacted where necessary
 - Safety of children remains the priority at all times
-

9. Communication with Parents

In the event of a critical incident:

- Parents/carers will be informed via:
 - Phone
 - Text
 - Email

Communication will be:

- Timely
 - Clear
 - Reassuring
-

10. Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Be familiar with this policy
 - Know:
 - Safe place locations
 - Exit routes
 - Emergency procedures
 - Act immediately when concerns arise
 - Never leave children unattended
-

11. Recording and Reporting

Following any incident:

- A full written record must be completed
 - Actions and decisions documented
 - Relevant agencies informed where required:
 - Ofsted
 - Local Authority
-

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually
 - After any critical incident
 - Following updates to statutory guidance
-



C9. Packed Lunch Policy & Guidance for Parents

At Hillside Gems, we recognise that some families choose to provide a packed lunch for their child. We work in partnership with parents to ensure that all food brought into the setting is safe, healthy and suitable for young children, while maintaining a safe environment for all.

Our Approach

We aim to:

- Keep all children safe, particularly those with allergies or dietary needs
- Promote healthy eating habits
- Ensure food is stored and handled safely
- Support children to enjoy positive, social mealtimes

Allergies & Food Safety

- We are a nut-aware setting. Packed lunches must not contain nuts or nut-based products.
- Additional food restrictions may apply depending on children's allergies within the setting. Parents will be informed of these.
- Children must not share food under any circumstances.
- Staff are aware of all children's dietary needs and supervise meals closely.

Food Temperature & Storage

To reduce the risk of food becoming unsafe:

- Please include an ice pack in your child's lunchbox for any perishable items (e.g. dairy, meat, cooked foods).
 - Lunchboxes should be clearly named.
 - We store lunches in a cool, shaded place or fridge where available.
 - We do not reheat food brought from home.
 - Food should be suitable to be eaten safely at lunchtime without further preparation.
-

Healthy Lunch Guidance

We encourage balanced, nutritious lunches to support children's growth and concentration.

A healthy packed lunch might include:

- A sandwich, wrap, pasta or rice dish
- Fruit and/or vegetables
- A dairy item (or dairy alternative)
- Water as the main drink

Please do not include:

- Fizzy drinks or energy drinks
 - Sweets and chocolate
 - Highly processed or high-sugar foods
-

Food Preparation

- All food should be cut into safe, manageable sizes (e.g. grapes cut lengthways, no whole nuts).

- Please ensure food is prepared safely at home and is fresh on the day.
 - Any items that may pose a choking risk should be appropriately prepared.
-

Working in Partnership

If we have concerns about the safety or suitability of a packed lunch, we will:

- Speak with parents in a supportive and respectful way
- Offer guidance to help meet our safety requirements

We appreciate your support in helping us create a safe and healthy environment for all children.
