



---

## **Policy Pack D:**

### **Operational Safety and Information Security**

---

These policies explain how the nursery operates safely and protects both physical and digital environments.

D1. Operational Risk Assessment Policy

D2. Visitors, Site Security and Safe Access Policy

D3. Arrival, Departure and Collection of Children Policy

D4. Online Safety and Use of Technology Policy

D5. Data Protection, Information Sharing and Digital Media Policy

D6. Adverse Weather Policy



---

## D) Risk Assessment Policy

---

### 1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems we recognise that children learn through exploration, movement and active play. A well-managed environment allows children to develop confidence, independence and resilience.

Health and safety procedures are designed to ensure that the nursery environment is safe, well maintained and supportive of children's learning and development.

Educators take a proactive approach to identifying potential hazards and managing risks within the setting. Through careful supervision, thoughtful planning and regular safety checks, the nursery aims to protect the wellbeing of children, educators and visitors.

Risk management at Hillside Gems seeks to create a balance between **keeping children safe and allowing them to develop through exploration and play.**

---

### 2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Hillside Gems identifies, assesses and manages risks within the nursery environment.

This policy aims to:

- ensure potential hazards are identified and managed appropriately
- support a safe environment for children, educators and visitors
- promote consistent risk management practices
- ensure compliance with health and safety legislation

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

---

### 3. Legal Framework

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

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

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

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/contents>

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

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

---

## 4. Our Practice at Hillside Gems

Risk assessments are used to identify potential hazards and ensure appropriate safety measures are in place.

Risk assessments help educators consider:

- possible hazards within the environment
- who may be affected
- how risks can be reduced or managed

Risk assessments are carried out to support safe practice while allowing children to engage in meaningful and active learning experiences.

---

## 5. Types of Risk Assessment

Risk assessments may be carried out for:

### Daily Environment Checks

Educators check indoor and outdoor areas regularly to ensure the environment is safe before children begin using the space.

### Activities and Learning Experiences

Educators consider potential risks when planning activities and ensure appropriate supervision and safety measures are in place.

### Outdoor Play Areas

Outdoor environments are checked regularly to ensure equipment and surfaces remain safe for children.

### Outings and Visits

Risk assessments are completed before trips or visits outside the nursery to ensure the safety of children and educators.

### Equipment

Equipment is regularly checked to ensure it remains safe and suitable for children's use.

---

## 6. Managing Risks

Where a potential hazard is identified, educators will take appropriate action to reduce or manage the risk.

This may include:

- removing or repairing unsafe equipment
- adjusting the environment
- increasing supervision
- adapting activities where necessary

The aim is not to remove all risk but to ensure that children can engage safely in learning experiences.

---

## 7. Dynamic Risk Assessment

In addition to formal written risk assessments, educators at Hillside Gems use **dynamic risk assessment** throughout the day.

Dynamic risk assessment refers to the ongoing process of observing the environment, identifying potential hazards and responding appropriately in the moment.

This may include:

- adjusting an activity if a hazard becomes apparent
- moving equipment that may pose a risk
- increasing supervision during energetic play
- responding to changes in weather or outdoor conditions
- adapting activities to suit children's abilities and developmental stages

Educators use their professional judgement to ensure that children can continue to explore and learn while risks are managed safely.

Dynamic risk assessment allows educators to respond flexibly to situations as they arise and supports a balance between **safety and meaningful play experiences**.

---

## 8. Staff Responsibilities

All educators share responsibility for maintaining a safe environment.

Educators are expected to carry out both **formal and dynamic risk assessments** as part of their daily practice.

Educators should:

- remain aware of potential hazards
- report concerns about safety promptly
- follow risk assessment procedures
- supervise children appropriately

Educators are encouraged to use professional judgement when balancing safety with opportunities for learning and exploration.

---

## **9. Monitoring and Review**

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are carried out appropriately and reviewed regularly.

This includes:

- reviewing risk assessment procedures
- ensuring hazards are addressed promptly
- supporting educators in maintaining safe practice

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

---

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



---

## D2. Visitors and Site Security Policy

---

### 1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems the safety and security of children is a fundamental priority. Maintaining a secure environment helps ensure that children can learn and play safely while educators remain confident that appropriate safeguarding measures are in place.

Clear procedures for visitors and site access help ensure that only authorised individuals enter the nursery and that all visitors are appropriately supervised while on the premises.

Through consistent practice and shared responsibility, the nursery aims to maintain a safe and secure environment for children, educators and families.

---

### 2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Hillside Gems manages visitors and maintains site security.

This policy aims to:

- ensure that only authorised individuals enter the nursery premises
- maintain a secure environment for children and staff
- ensure visitors are identifiable and appropriately supervised
- reduce safeguarding risks within the nursery environment

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Arrival, Departure and Collection of Children Policy.

---

### 3. Legal Framework

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

## **4. Our Practice at Hillside Gems**

Hillside Gems maintains procedures to ensure that the nursery environment remains secure.

This includes:

- controlling access to the nursery premises
- ensuring visitors are identifiable
- supervising visitors where appropriate
- ensuring staff remain vigilant to unfamiliar individuals on site

Educators are responsible for maintaining awareness of who is present within the nursery.

---

## **5. Visitor Procedures**

All visitors to the nursery must report to a member of staff upon arrival.

Visitors may include:

- parents or carers
- prospective families
- professionals working with children
- contractors or maintenance workers
- students or volunteers

Visitors will be asked to:

- identify themselves

- explain the purpose of their visit
- follow nursery procedures while on site

Where appropriate, visitors may be asked to sign in and out of the nursery.

---

## **6. Visitor Identification**

To ensure that visitors can be easily recognised within the setting, visitors may be required to wear visitor identification, such as a coloured lanyard or badge.

This allows educators and children to identify individuals who are visiting the nursery.

Visitors must return visitor identification when leaving the premises.

---

## **7. Supervision of Visitors**

Visitors who do not hold appropriate safeguarding checks will be supervised by educators while on site.

Visitors must not:

- be left alone with children
- enter areas of the nursery without staff awareness
- interact with children without appropriate supervision

These procedures help ensure that safeguarding is maintained throughout the nursery.

---

## **8. Contractors and Maintenance Workers**

Contractors or maintenance workers may occasionally need to access the nursery premises.

Where possible:

- work will be scheduled outside of children's hours
- contractors will be supervised while on site
- areas where work is taking place will be made safe for children

Staff will ensure that children are kept away from any potential hazards.

---

## **9. Unknown or Unauthorised Visitors**

If an unfamiliar person is observed within the nursery without identification, educators should politely challenge the individual and ask the purpose of their visit.

Where necessary:

- the Nursery Manager should be informed
- safeguarding procedures may be followed

The nursery prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children when responding to unfamiliar visitors.

---

## **10. Site Security**

The nursery maintains procedures to ensure that the premises remain secure.

This includes:

- keeping access doors secure where appropriate
- ensuring that children cannot leave the premises unsupervised
- maintaining awareness of who is present within the building

Educators remain vigilant to ensure that the nursery environment remains safe and secure.

---

## **11. Staff Responsibilities**

Educators share responsibility for maintaining site security.

Educators should:

- remain aware of visitors within the nursery
- ensure visitors follow nursery procedures
- challenge unfamiliar individuals politely where necessary

- report any concerns to the Nursery Manager

Maintaining site security is a shared responsibility across the nursery team.

---

## **12. Monitoring and Review**

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that visitor and site security procedures are implemented effectively.

This includes:

- reviewing security procedures
- supporting staff in maintaining safe practice
- addressing any safeguarding concerns relating to visitors

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

---

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



---

## D3. Arrival, Departure and Collection of Children Policy

---

### 1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems the safe arrival and departure of children is a key safeguarding responsibility.

Clear procedures ensure that children are received safely into the care of educators and are only released to authorised adults at the end of the nursery day.

Through careful supervision, clear communication with families and consistent routines, the nursery aims to maintain a safe and secure environment for all children.

---

### 2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children are safely received into the nursery and safely collected at the end of their session.

This policy aims to:

- ensure children are safely handed over between parents and educators
- ensure children are only collected by authorised individuals
- maintain secure entry and exit procedures
- reduce safeguarding risks during arrival and collection times

This policy should be read alongside the Visitors and Site Security Policy and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

---

### 3. Legal Framework

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

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

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

Working Together to Safeguard Children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2>

---

## **4. Arrival of Children**

Parents or carers must bring children directly into the nursery and ensure that an educator is aware that the child has arrived.

Children must not be left unattended when arriving at the nursery.

During arrival:

- an educator will acknowledge the child and parent
- relevant information about the child may be shared with staff
- children will be safely handed into the care of the nursery

These procedures help ensure that educators are aware of which children are present within the setting.

---

## **5. Authorised Collectors**

Parents must provide the nursery with the names and contact details of adults who are authorised to collect their child.

This information will be recorded in the child's registration details.

Children will only be released to:

- a parent or legal guardian
- an adult authorised by the parent

Parents must inform the nursery in advance if someone different will be collecting their child.

Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 16 years.

Where an unfamiliar adult arrives to collect a child, educators may request identification before releasing the child.

---

## **6. Password System**

Where a child is collected by someone unfamiliar to the nursery, a password system may be used.

Parents may provide a password that can be shared with the authorised collector.

Educators may ask the collector to provide the password before the child is released.

If the password cannot be provided, educators may contact the parent to confirm the arrangement before allowing the child to leave.

---

## **7. Safeguarding During Collection**

Educators remain attentive during arrival and collection periods to ensure that children are supervised appropriately.

Staff will ensure that:

- children do not leave the premises without an authorised adult
- unfamiliar adults are challenged if they are not known to staff
- doors and access points remain secure

If there are concerns about a person collecting a child, educators will follow safeguarding procedures and may contact the parent or relevant authorities where necessary.

---

## **8. Late Collection**

Parents are expected to collect their child promptly at the agreed collection time.

If a parent is delayed:

- they should contact the nursery as soon as possible
- educators will continue to supervise the child until collection

Where late collection occurs regularly, the nursery may discuss arrangements with parents to ensure appropriate collection arrangements are in place.

---

## **9. Uncollected Child**

If a child has not been collected at the agreed time and the nursery has not been informed:

- educators will attempt to contact the parent or authorised collectors
- the child will remain supervised by staff

If the child remains uncollected and contact cannot be made, the nursery will follow safeguarding procedures and may contact relevant authorities for guidance.

---

## **10. Parent Unfit to Collect**

If a parent or collector appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or otherwise unable to safely care for the child:

- educators will prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the child
- staff may attempt to contact another authorised collector
- safeguarding procedures may be followed if concerns remain

The nursery will always act in the best interests of the child's safety and welfare.

---

## **11. Absence of a Child**

Parents are asked to notify the nursery if their child will be absent.

If a child expected at nursery does not arrive and the nursery has not been informed, staff may contact the parent or carer to confirm the child's whereabouts.

This helps ensure that children are safe and accounted for.

---

## **12. Staff Responsibilities**

Educators share responsibility for ensuring safe arrival and collection procedures.

Educators should:

- supervise arrival and departure times carefully
  - ensure children are only released to authorised adults
  - report any concerns regarding collection arrangements
  - follow safeguarding procedures where necessary
- 

### **13. Monitoring and Review**

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that arrival and collection procedures are implemented consistently.

This includes:

- reviewing procedures where necessary
- supporting staff in maintaining secure practices
- addressing any safeguarding concerns relating to collection arrangements

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

---

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



---

## D4. Online Safety and Use of Technology Policy

---

### 1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems we recognise that technology forms part of modern life and can support children's learning and communication when used appropriately.

The nursery aims to ensure that any use of technology supports children's development while maintaining a safe and secure environment.

Educators take a responsible and safeguarding-focused approach to the use of digital devices, online resources and electronic communication within the setting.

---

### 2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline how technology is used safely within Hillside Gems and how children are protected from potential online risks.

This policy aims to:

- ensure that technology is used safely and responsibly within the nursery
- protect children from inappropriate digital content
- provide clear guidance on staff use of devices
- protect children's personal information and digital images

This policy should be read alongside the **Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy** and the **Photography, Video and Digital Media Policy**.

---

### 3. Legal Framework

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

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

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

## 4. Our Practice at Hillside Gems

Technology may occasionally be used within the nursery to support learning, communication and administrative tasks.

Where technology is used with children, it will be:

- age appropriate
- carefully supervised by educators
- selected to support learning and development

Children are never given unsupervised access to the internet or digital devices.

Educators ensure that any digital content used within the setting is suitable for young children.

---

## 5. Staff Use of Technology

Educators must use technology responsibly while working in the nursery.

Staff must:

- follow nursery procedures when using digital devices
- ensure children's images or information are not shared without authorisation
- maintain professional boundaries when using technology

Personal devices should not be used in areas where children are present unless authorised.

Staff should not photograph children using personal phones or personal devices.

---

## 6. Photography and Digital Images

Photographs or videos of children may only be taken using nursery-approved devices.

Images of children must:

- be used in accordance with parental permissions
- be stored securely
- not be shared through personal devices or social media

Further guidance is outlined in the **Photography, Video and Digital Media Policy**.

---

## 7. Protection of Children's Information

Children's personal information must be protected when using digital systems.

Educators must ensure that:

- digital records are stored securely
- personal information is accessed only by authorised staff
- information is shared appropriately and confidentially

Further guidance is outlined in the **Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy**.

---

## 8. Online Safety

At Hillside Gems Nurseries, we recognise that safeguarding children includes protecting them from risks associated with digital technology, including emerging concerns such as artificial intelligence (AI), manipulated content, and fake media.

We ensure that any use of technology within the setting is purposeful, age-appropriate, and closely supervised. Staff are trained to understand online safety risks, including the potential for AI-generated or altered content to mislead, harm, or expose children to inappropriate material.

We do not permit children unsupervised access to the internet, and all devices used within the setting are appropriately filtered and monitored. Staff remain vigilant to the ways in which digital media—such as images, videos, and information—may be inaccurate or manipulated, and we promote a culture of critical awareness, even at an early level, through discussion and guidance.

We also work in partnership with parents to promote safe use of technology at home. This approach aligns with current safeguarding guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* and Ofsted expectations regarding online safety and emerging technologies.

---

## 9. Staff Responsibilities

Educators share responsibility for maintaining safe use of technology within the nursery.

Educators should:

- use technology responsibly and professionally
- follow nursery procedures for digital devices

- ensure children are supervised when technology is used
  - report any concerns relating to online safety
- 

## **10. Monitoring and Review**

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that technology is used safely within the nursery.

This includes:

- reviewing procedures relating to digital safety
- ensuring staff understand expectations regarding device use
- addressing concerns relating to online safety

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

---

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



---

## D5. Data Protection, Information Sharing and Digital Media Policy

---

### 1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems we recognise the importance of protecting the privacy and personal information of children, families and staff.

The nursery is committed to handling personal data responsibly and securely. Information is collected and used only where necessary to support children's care, learning and wellbeing.

At the same time, the nursery recognises that appropriate information sharing is essential for safeguarding children and supporting their development.

Digital media, including photographs and videos, are used carefully and responsibly to support children's learning while protecting their privacy.

---

### 2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to explain how Hillside Gems collects, stores, protects and shares personal information.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- personal information is handled securely and confidentially
  - data is collected and used appropriately
  - information is shared lawfully when required
  - digital images of children are used responsibly
- 

### 3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

<https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>

Data Protection Act 2018

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

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

Working Together to Safeguard Children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

---

## **4. Personal Information**

The nursery collects personal information in order to support the care and education of children.

This may include:

- child registration details
- emergency contact information
- medical information
- learning and development records
- safeguarding records

Staff information may also be collected to support employment and safeguarding requirements.

Information is collected only where necessary for the safe and effective operation of the nursery.

---

## **5. Data Protection Principles**

Hillside Gems follows key data protection principles to ensure that information is handled responsibly.

Personal data will be:

- processed lawfully and fairly
  - collected for specific purposes
  - kept accurate and up to date
  - stored securely
  - retained only for as long as necessary (see below)
- 

## **6. Secure Storage of Information**

The nursery takes appropriate steps to protect personal information.

This may include:

- secure digital storage systems
- password-protected files and accounts
- restricted access to sensitive information

Access to personal information is limited to staff who require it for their professional responsibilities.

---

## 7. Data Retention

At Hillside Gems Nurseries, we retain personal data only for as long as necessary to meet legal, safeguarding, and operational requirements, in line with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

We ensure that all records are:

- Stored securely
- Kept only for as long as required
- Disposed of safely and confidentially when no longer needed

### Retention Periods

#### Child Records

Records relating to children (including registration forms, observations, assessments, accident/incident records, and general correspondence) are retained until the child reaches **21 years of age**.

Where a child has been subject to **safeguarding concerns**, records are retained until the child reaches **24 years of age**.

#### Safeguarding Records

Safeguarding and child protection records are kept securely and separately where appropriate. These are retained in line with safeguarding guidance and may be held longer where necessary to support potential investigations or legal proceedings.

#### Accident and Incident Records

Records of accidents and incidents are retained until the child reaches **21 years of age**, in line with legal limitation periods.

#### Attendance Registers

Daily attendance registers are retained for a minimum of **3 years**, in accordance with statutory requirements.

#### Special Educational Needs (SEN) Records

SEN records, including support plans and external agency involvement, are retained until the child reaches **21 years of age**, or longer where safeguarding considerations apply.

#### Complaints Records

Records of complaints are retained for a minimum of **3 years**, as required by Ofsted.

## Staff and Employment Records

Staff records are retained in line with employment law and HMRC requirements, typically for **6 years after employment ends**.

## Financial Records

Financial and accounting records are retained for a minimum of **6 years** in line with HMRC requirements.

---

## Secure Disposal

When records reach the end of their retention period, they are:

- Permanently deleted (digital records), or
- Shredded or securely destroyed (paper records)

We ensure that all disposal methods maintain confidentiality and protect personal data from unauthorised access.

---

## 8. Confidentiality

Educators must respect the confidentiality of information relating to children, families and staff.

Staff should not:

- discuss confidential information outside of professional contexts
- share personal information without appropriate authorisation
- access information unnecessarily

Maintaining confidentiality is an important part of professional practice.

---

## 9. Information Sharing

Information may sometimes need to be shared with other professionals in order to support children's wellbeing or safeguarding.

Where possible, parents will be informed when information is shared.

However, information may be shared **without parental consent** where there are safeguarding concerns and sharing information is necessary to protect a child.

The nursery follows statutory safeguarding guidance when sharing information. See **Information Sharing policy** for more detail.

---

## 10. Photography and Digital Media

Photographs or videos of children may be used to support learning documentation and communication with families.

The nursery ensures that:

- parental consent is obtained before photographs are taken or used
- images are captured using nursery-approved devices
- images are stored securely

Staff must not take photographs of children using personal devices.

Images of children must not be shared through personal social media accounts.

---

## 11. Use of Digital Systems

Where digital systems are used to record children's learning or communicate with families, the nursery ensures that these systems are secure and appropriate for use within early years settings.

Staff follow nursery procedures when using digital systems and ensure that children's information remains protected.

---

## 12. Staff Responsibilities

Educators share responsibility for protecting personal information within the nursery.

Educators should:

- handle personal information carefully
  - maintain confidentiality
  - follow procedures for storing and sharing information
  - report any concerns regarding data protection
- 

## 13. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that data protection procedures are implemented effectively.

This includes:

- ensuring staff understand confidentiality and data protection expectations
- reviewing information storage practices
- responding appropriately to any data protection concerns

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

---

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



---

## D6. Adverse Weather Policy

---

### 1. Purpose

At Hillside Gems, we aim to remain open wherever possible to provide continuity of care and education for children.

However, the safety of children, staff, and families is our priority. This policy outlines how decisions are made during adverse weather conditions.

---

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all settings:

- Little Waltham
- Terling
- The Barn

Decisions may be made **per site** depending on local conditions.

---

### 3. Legal Framework

This policy is in line with:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework (2025)
- 

### 4. Types of Adverse Weather

This may include:

- Snow and ice
- Flooding
- Extreme cold
- High winds or storms
- Any condition affecting safe access to the setting

---

## 5. Decision to Open or Close

- A decision will be made by **8:30am** where possible
- Each site will be assessed individually based on:
  - Staff availability
  - Safety of the building and outdoor areas
  - Travel conditions for staff and families
- The setting will only open if:
  - Safe staff-to-child ratios can be maintained
  - The environment is safe for children

As a minimum, at least **two staff members must be present** for a setting to open

---

## 6. Staffing Arrangements

- Staff must inform the setting **as early as possible** if they are unable to attend due to weather conditions
  - Where possible, local staff may be asked to support
  - Ratios must be maintained at all times
- 

## 7. Maintaining a Safe Environment

Before opening and throughout the day, staff will:

- Check and clear pathways, entrances, and exits
- Use salt/grit where necessary
- Complete a **risk assessment** before children access outdoor areas
- Record and sign all risk assessments

Outdoor access may be restricted depending on conditions.

---

## 8. Deteriorating Weather During the Day

If conditions worsen:

- The Manager/Deputy will assess risk
- Staff may be sent home where ratios allow
- Parents/carers may be contacted to collect children early
- A decision may be made to close the setting

---

## 9. Communication with Parents

Parents/carers will be informed of any changes via:

- Email
- Text message
- Social media (where applicable)

Communication will include:

- Whether the setting is open or closed
  - Any changes to collection times
- 

## 10. Fees and Sessions

- If the setting is closed due to adverse weather:
    - Alternative sessions may be offered where possible
    - Refunds cannot be provided
    - Funded sessions cannot be reimbursed
- 

## 11. Site-Specific Considerations

Each setting will consider:

- Accessibility of the site
- Outdoor areas and surfaces
- Local travel conditions
- Building-specific risks

Additional risk assessments may be required depending on the site.

---

## 12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually
  - Following any significant weather-related closure
  - In line with EYFS updates
-