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## **Policy Pack B:**

### **Learning and Child Development**

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These policies explain how the nursery supports children's learning, development and emotional wellbeing. They are supported by the Gemstones Guiding Practices Handbook, which outlines the nursery's educational philosophy and daily teaching practices.

B1. Learning and Development Policy

B2. Behaviour and Relationships Policy

B3. SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Policy

B4. Key Person Policy

B5. Observation, Assessment & Planning Policy

B6. 2-Year Review Policy



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## B1. Learning and Development Policy

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### 1. Our Philosophy

Guided by our three pillars — Positive, Playful and Purposeful — and lived through our five Gems values, we create environments where children develop confidence, curiosity, emotional resilience and a strong sense of belonging. Through everyday experiences, we also embed British Values, supporting children to make choices, understand fairness, respect others and feel part of their community.

Our policies exist not only to meet statutory requirements but to ensure that every child is supported to thrive during their early years.

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### 2. Purpose of Policy

This policy outlines how Hillside Gems supports children's learning and development in accordance with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**.

The policy ensures that:

- all children receive high-quality early education
  - learning experiences support development across all EYFS areas
  - staff provide environments and interactions that promote curiosity and exploration
  - children are supported to make progress at their own pace
  - partnerships with parents support children's development
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### 3. Values and Culture

The culture of Hillside Gems is shaped by our **5 Gems Values**, which underpin all interactions, expectations and experiences within the setting:

#### • Emotional Regulation & Positivity

Children are supported to understand and manage their emotions in a healthy way. Staff model calm, supportive responses and help children develop resilience and a positive outlook.

- **Independence & Collaboration**

Children are encouraged to make choices, explore their interests and develop independence, while also learning to work alongside others, share ideas and cooperate.

- **Gratitude & Generosity**

Children are guided to appreciate what they have, express thanks and show generosity towards others, fostering a sense of community and care.

- **Kindness & Supportiveness**

We create an environment rooted in warmth and compassion. Staff consistently model kindness, helping children learn to support, include and care for one another.

- **Community & Responsibility**

Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, their environment and their role within the nursery. This builds respect, accountability and a strong sense of belonging.

These values are modelled by all staff. They are embedded in daily practice, shaping how we speak to children, support behaviour and create a nurturing, inclusive environment where every child can thrive.

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## 4. Promoting British Values

At Hillside Gems, British Values are embedded within our daily practice through our three pillars and five Gems values.

We support children to develop:

### **Democracy**

Children are encouraged to make choices, share their ideas and take turns. Their voices are listened to and valued.

### **Rule of Law**

Children learn clear, consistent boundaries and expectations. We support them to understand right from wrong and the importance of fairness.

### **Individual Liberty**

Children are supported to develop independence, confidence and a sense of self. They are encouraged to explore, make decisions and express themselves safely.

### **Mutual Respect and Tolerance**

We promote kindness, inclusion and respect for others. Children learn to value differences and build positive relationships within our nursery community.

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## 5. Legal Framework (EYFS 2025)

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

- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2025)
- Childcare Act 2006
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

In line with EYFS requirements, the setting supports children through:

- a balance of child-initiated and adult-led learning
- careful observation and assessment of development
- environments that encourage exploration and active learning
- strong partnerships with parents and carers

The EYFS identifies three characteristics of effective learning which underpin our practice:

- playing and exploring
  - active learning
  - creating and thinking critically
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## 6. Our Practice at Hillside Gems

### Child-Led Learning

Children learn best through play, exploration and meaningful interactions. Educators observe children's interests and use these to support learning across the areas of the EYFS curriculum.

Adults support learning by:

- modelling language
  - introducing new vocabulary
  - encouraging curiosity and questioning
  - extending children's ideas and thinking
  - supporting collaboration with other children
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### Planning and Learning Opportunities

Alongside child-initiated play, educators implement a **planning process** designed to extend children's language, broaden their knowledge and introduce new experiences.

Planned experiences may support learning in areas such as:

- communication and language
- understanding of the world
- creative expression
- awareness of diverse cultures and communities

This planning works alongside children's independent exploration. The materials and resources available in the environment allow children to lead their play and inform Educators about emerging interests.

Educators use these observations to **adapt day-to-day planning**, ensuring learning opportunities remain responsive and meaningful.

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## Enabling Environments

The learning environment is organised to support independence, exploration and sustained play.

Resources are:

- accessible to children
- developmentally appropriate
- regularly reviewed and rotated to maintain engagement

Children are encouraged to select resources independently and explore them in ways that support their learning and development.

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## Story-Centred Learning

Books and storytelling play an important role in supporting children's language development and engagement with learning.

Stories are used to:

- introduce new vocabulary
- support communication skills
- encourage imagination and creativity

Selected stories may also be used during group sessions to support discussions about emotions, relationships and behaviour. Stories linked to the **Five Gems values** may be used to explore social and emotional learning in an age-appropriate way.

A wide range of story books are available throughout the setting and are regularly rotated to maintain interest and promote a love of reading throughout the day.

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## Physical Development

Physical activity is an important part of children's health, wellbeing and learning.

Children have **regular access to outdoor garden space**, allowing them to run, climb, balance and explore large-scale movement.

The outdoor environment supports children to:

- develop coordination and strength
- build confidence in movement
- engage in cooperative physical play

Educators also support physical development through planned opportunities such as:

- group song and movement sessions
- dance and music activities
- social games that encourage coordination and cooperation

Fine motor development is supported through activities including:

- mark making
- construction and building
- creative play using tools and materials

These experiences support children in developing the strength and control needed for later writing and self-care skills.

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## **Observation and Assessment**

Educators regularly observe children's play and development to understand their interests, abilities and progress.

Observations help Educators to:

- identify children's next steps in learning
- adapt learning experiences
- monitor development over time

Information about children's development may be recorded in learning records and shared with parents through regular discussions.

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## **Supporting Individual Needs**

Children develop at different rates and may require additional support at times.

Where concerns arise, Educators work with families and relevant professionals to ensure that children receive appropriate support.

Support may include:

- adapting learning experiences
  - targeted support strategies
  - referral to external professionals where appropriate
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## Partnership with Parents

Parents and carers are a child's first educator. Hillside Gems works closely with families to support children's development.

We support this partnership by:

- sharing information about children's progress
  - encouraging parents to share observations from home
  - discussing children's interests and routines
  - working collaboratively where additional support is required
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## 7. Staff Responsibilities

All staff share responsibility for supporting children's learning and development.

Educators are expected to:

- build positive relationships with children
- observe children's development
- support learning through play and interaction
- maintain safe and stimulating learning environments
- work collaboratively with colleagues and families

Staff participate in ongoing training and professional development to maintain high-quality early years practice.

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## 8. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy on a daily basis in the nursery.

This includes:

- supporting staff through supervision and training
- monitoring children's progress and learning environments
- ensuring practice remains aligned with EYFS requirements

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

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## B2. Behaviour and Relationships Policy

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### 1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside we believe that children flourish in environments where they feel safe, respected and emotionally supported.

Through our pillars of **Purpose, Positivity and Playfulness**, we create a culture where children learn how to build positive relationships, understand their emotions and develop confidence in themselves.

Our behaviour approach is rooted in our **Five Gems Values**, which guide children towards making thoughtful, respectful and responsible choices.

The Five Gems Values are:

- Emotional Regulation & Positivity
- Independence & Collaboration
- Gratitude & Generosity
- Kindness & Supportiveness
- Community & Responsibility

We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication. Children are still learning how to express feelings, solve problems and navigate relationships. Our role as educators is to guide, model and support children as they develop these important life skills.

Positive behaviour is encouraged through:

- strong relationships with adults
- consistent expectations
- modelling kindness and respect
- structured support for emotional development

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### 2. Purpose of Policy

This policy outlines how Hillside Gems supports positive behaviour and respectful relationships within the setting.

The policy ensures that:

- children are supported to understand emotions and behaviour
  - adults respond to behaviour in a calm and consistent way
  - children learn how to build positive relationships with others
  - behaviour guidance focuses on learning rather than punishment
  - the setting maintains a safe and respectful environment for everyone
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### **3. Legal Framework (EYFS 2025)**

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

- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2025)
- Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

In accordance with the EYFS, providers must promote children's personal, social and emotional development and manage behaviour in an appropriate way.

The EYFS requires that:

- corporal punishment is not used or threatened
  - physical intervention is only used where necessary to prevent harm
  - behaviour management strategies are developmentally appropriate
  - children are supported to understand boundaries and expectations
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## **4. Our Practice at Hillside Gems**

### **Building Positive Relationships**

Strong relationships are the foundation of positive behaviour.

Educators support children by:

- building secure and trusting relationships
- modelling respectful communication
- helping children feel valued and included
- supporting children to form friendships

Children are encouraged to develop empathy, kindness and cooperation through everyday interactions.

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### **Teaching Social and Emotional Skills**

Children are supported to understand emotions and develop strategies for managing them.

Educators help children learn to:

- recognise and name emotions
- understand how their behaviour affects others
- express feelings appropriately
- develop patience and cooperation

This learning is supported through daily interactions, group discussions and storytelling.

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## **Positive Reinforcement**

At Hillside Gems we prioritise **positive reinforcement**, recognising and praising appropriate behaviour.

Educators acknowledge behaviours such as:

- kindness towards others
- sharing and cooperation
- perseverance when solving problems
- helpfulness within the nursery community

This approach helps children build confidence and encourages them to make positive choices.

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## **Clear Boundaries and Calm Communication**

Clear expectations help children understand appropriate behaviour.

Educators guide behaviour by:

- using calm and consistent language
- explaining expectations clearly
- modelling respectful communication
- using appropriate tone and facial expression to reinforce messages

This approach helps children become more aware of their actions and supports the development of responsibility.

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## **Supporting Challenging Behaviour**

Some behaviours occur when children are tired, frustrated, overwhelmed or still developing emotional regulation.

When behaviour challenges arise, Educators:

- remain calm and supportive
- help children understand their emotions
- guide children towards more appropriate behaviour
- ensure that all children remain safe

Educators also support children by **modelling and providing the language children need to express their needs and feelings**. Educators help children learn phrases and communication strategies that allow them to:

- ask for help
- express frustration or disappointment
- request turns or space
- explain their feelings to others

By modelling appropriate language and communication, Educators help children develop the skills needed to resolve conflicts and express themselves in positive ways.

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## Counting Down

Educators may use a **countdown approach** when guiding children to complete a requested action.

For example, when a child needs to:

- tidy resources
- move to a different area
- return an item

The countdown gives the child time to process the instruction and respond independently.

If the action has not been completed by the end of the countdown, an adult will support the child to complete it. This approach helps children anticipate transitions and supports the development of self-regulation.

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## A Different Space

If a child continuously disrupts a situation, Educators will support them in understanding the feelings of others and why certain behaviours may not be appropriate.

Where necessary, the child may be supported to move to a different area where they can continue their learning in a more suitable environment.

This approach ensures that:

- all children feel safe and respected
- the child is supported to reflect on their behaviour
- learning can continue positively

All responses remain in line with the setting's **Safer Handling Policy (A9)**.

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## **Time-In Approach**

At Hillside Gems we do not use time-out as a behaviour management strategy.

Instead, we use a **Time-In approach**, where a supportive adult stays with the child to help them regulate emotions.

This approach:

- supports emotional understanding
- teaches children how to manage feelings
- strengthens relationships between adults and children

Children are supported to calm down, reflect on the situation and reconnect with others.

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## **Conflict Resolution**

Children are supported to resolve conflicts constructively.

Educators guide children through a process that includes:

- identifying emotions
- listening to each person involved
- helping children understand different perspectives
- modelling respectful language
- supporting repair and reconnection

This helps children develop the social skills needed to navigate relationships and disagreements.

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## **Language Development and Emotional Regulation**

Strong language skills are essential for emotional development and behaviour regulation.

Educators support this by:

- modelling vocabulary for emotions and social situations
- encouraging conversation and storytelling
- supporting role play and discussion
- helping children express thoughts and feelings

These experiences support children in becoming confident communicators who can manage social situations with resilience.

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## Story-Based Behaviour Support

Stories are often used to help children understand social situations and emotional experiences.

Educators may use selected stories to explore themes such as:

- friendship
- kindness
- sharing
- managing frustration
- resolving disagreements

Stories linked to the **Five Gems Values** help reinforce positive behaviour and emotional understanding.

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## Structured Emotional Support

### Regroup Time (Circle Time)

Regroup Time may be used to address issues affecting the group and to support children's personal and social development.

During these sessions Educators may:

- discuss feelings and behaviour
- explore social situations through stories
- reinforce the Five Gems values
- promote cooperation and respect

### Individual Support

Where appropriate, individual support sessions may be planned to help children develop emotional resilience and self-regulation skills.

These sessions may focus on:

- understanding emotions
  - developing coping strategies
  - building confidence and social skills
- 

## Partnership with Parents

Partnership with parents is essential when supporting behaviour development.

The nursery will:

- share information with parents about behaviour concerns
- work collaboratively to support children's emotional development
- develop consistent strategies between home and nursery where needed

Where appropriate, guidance from external professionals may be sought to support a child's individual needs.

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## 5. Staff Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive relationships and behaviour.

Educators are expected to:

- model calm and respectful behaviour
- support children in understanding emotions
- guide children in resolving conflicts
- create environments that support positive interactions
- communicate with colleagues and families when concerns arise

Staff receive ongoing training and supervision to support effective behaviour guidance.

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## 6. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively.

This includes:

- supporting staff through supervision and training
- reviewing behaviour practices across the setting
- monitoring incidents or concerns

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

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



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## B3. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

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### 1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside we believe that every child deserves to feel valued, included and supported in their learning and development.

Children develop at different rates and in different ways. Our role as educators is to create an environment where all children are supported to participate fully in nursery life and to reach their individual potential.

Through our pillars of **Purpose, Positivity and Playfulness**, we create inclusive environments where differences are respected and where children are supported with care, patience and understanding.

Our approach focuses on early identification, responsive support and strong partnerships with families and professionals.

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### 2. Purpose of Policy

This policy outlines how Hillside Gems identifies and supports children with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the SEND Code of Practice.

The policy ensures that:

- children with SEND are identified as early as possible
  - children receive appropriate support tailored to their individual needs
  - all children are able to access the learning environment
  - families are actively involved in supporting their child's development
  - educators work collaboratively with external professionals where required
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### 3. Legal Framework (EYFS 2025)

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

- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2025)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015)
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

The EYFS requires early years providers to have arrangements in place to support children with SEND and to ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

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## 4. Our Practice at Hillside Gems

### Inclusive Practice

Hillside Gems is committed to creating an inclusive environment where all children feel welcomed, respected and supported.

Educators support inclusion by:

- adapting activities to meet individual needs
- providing flexible learning opportunities
- creating environments that support participation for all children
- recognising and valuing children's individual strengths

Children with additional needs are supported to participate fully in the life of the nursery.

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### Reasonable Adjustments

Under the **Equality Act 2010**, Hillside Gems has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that children with disabilities are not disadvantaged in accessing the nursery environment, activities or learning opportunities.

Where required, the setting will make adjustments to support a child's participation. These adjustments may include:

- adapting activities or teaching approaches
- modifying the learning environment or resources
- providing additional adult support where appropriate
- adjusting routines to meet individual needs
- using alternative communication methods or visual supports

These adjustments are made in partnership with families and, where appropriate, with guidance from external professionals.

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## Early Identification

Early identification of SEND is essential in ensuring children receive the support they need.

Educators monitor children's development through:

- ongoing observation
- discussions with families
- monitoring developmental progress
- reflection on children's engagement and behaviour

Where educators identify concerns about a child's development, these will be discussed with the **Key Person, SENDCo and the child's family**.

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## Graduated Approach to Support

Hillside Gems follows the **Assess, Plan, Do, Review** cycle recommended in the SEND Code of Practice.

This approach includes:

### Assess

- identifying the child's needs through observation and discussion with families and any relevant professionals

### Plan

- Setting targets and agreeing support strategies and approaches

### Do

- implementing the agreed support within daily practice

### Review

- evaluating progress collaboratively and adapting support as needed

This approach ensures that support remains responsive and focused on the child's development.

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## Role of the Key Person

The Key Person plays a key role in identifying and supporting children with SEND.

The Key Person supports the child by:

- observing development and identifying potential concerns
- sharing information with families

- implementing agreed support strategies within daily practice
- working with the SENDCo to monitor progress

The Key Person maintains close communication with families throughout this process.

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## **Role of the SENDCo**

Hillside Gems has a **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo)** who oversees support for children with additional needs.

The SENDCo is responsible for:

- supporting educators in identifying and supporting SEND
- coordinating support plans and strategies
- liaising with external professionals
- working with families to support children's development
- promoting inclusive practice across the nursery

The SENDCo ensures that the nursery follows statutory SEND guidance and that appropriate support systems are in place.

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## **Individual Support Plans**

Where appropriate, children may have an **Individual Support Plan (ISP)** developed to guide their learning and development.

Support plans may include:

- specific developmental goals
- strategies to support learning
- adaptations to activities or the environment
- regular review of progress

These plans are developed collaboratively with families and relevant professionals.

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## **Working with Families**

Families play an essential role in supporting children with SEND.

Hillside Gems works in partnership with families by:

- sharing observations and concerns
- discussing support strategies
- agreeing next steps together
- providing regular updates on progress

Families are encouraged to share their knowledge and understanding of their child to help inform support strategies.

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## **External Support**

Where additional support is required, the nursery may seek guidance from external professionals.

These may include:

- speech and language therapists
- educational psychologists
- health visitors
- local authority early years advisors

External professionals may help assess children's needs and recommend strategies to support development.

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## **Supporting Transitions**

Transitions can be particularly important for children with SEND.

Educators support transitions by:

- sharing relevant information with receiving settings
- preparing children gradually for changes
- working with families to support continuity

This helps ensure that children continue to receive appropriate support as they move between settings or prepare for school.

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## **5. Staff Responsibilities**

All educators share responsibility for supporting inclusive practice within the nursery.

Educators are expected to:

- observe children's development carefully
- respond sensitively to children's individual needs
- implement agreed support strategies
- work collaboratively with colleagues and families
- seek guidance from the SENDCo when concerns arise

Educators receive training and professional development to support inclusive early years practice.

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## 6. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager, Directors and SENDCo are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of SEND provision within the nursery.

This includes:

- reviewing individual support plans
- monitoring children's progress
- supporting educators through training and guidance
- reviewing inclusive practice across the setting

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

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



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## B4. Key Person Policy

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### 1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside we believe that strong, trusting relationships are the foundation of children's wellbeing, behaviour and learning.

Every child benefits from having a consistent adult who understands their individual needs, interests and personality. Through warm and responsive relationships, children develop the confidence to explore, communicate and build positive relationships with others.

Our Key Person system reflects our commitment to creating a nurturing environment where children feel safe, valued and supported as individuals.

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### 2. Purpose of Policy

This policy outlines how Hillside Gems ensures that every child is supported through a **Key Person system** in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The Key Person system ensures that:

- each child forms a secure relationship with a familiar adult
  - children feel safe, settled and confident within the setting
  - parents have a consistent point of communication
  - children's development and wellbeing are closely supported
  - transitions within the nursery and beyond are supported effectively
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### 3. Legal Framework (EYFS 2025)

This policy is guided by:

- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2025)
- Childcare Act 2006
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

The EYFS requires that every child is assigned a Key Person to help ensure that their care is tailored to their individual needs and that they form secure attachments within the setting.

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

### **The Role of the Key Person**

Each child is assigned a Key Person who takes a special interest in their wellbeing and development.

The Key Person supports the child by:

- building a warm and trusting relationship
- helping the child settle into the nursery environment
- understanding the child's interests and individual needs
- supporting emotional wellbeing and confidence
- observing and supporting the child's development

The Key Person helps the child feel safe and secure within the setting, particularly during transitions or unfamiliar situations.

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### **Supporting Emotional Wellbeing**

The Key Person plays an important role in supporting children's emotional development.

Educators support children by:

- providing comfort and reassurance when needed
- helping children recognise and express emotions
- supporting children in forming friendships
- modelling positive communication and behaviour

This consistent relationship helps children feel secure and confident in exploring their environment.

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### **Observation and Development**

The Key Person observes the child's play, development and interests.

These observations help educators:

- understand how the child learns best
- identify areas where additional support may be needed
- support the child's next steps in learning

Information gathered through observations contributes to the child's learning records and is shared with parents.

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## **Working with Parents**

The Key Person acts as the main point of contact for parents and carers.

They support communication by:

- sharing information about the child's day
- discussing development and progress
- listening to parents' observations and concerns
- working together to support the child's wellbeing

This partnership helps ensure consistency between home and nursery.

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## **Supporting Transitions**

The Key Person helps children feel secure during transitions such as:

- starting nursery
- moving between rooms
- preparing for school

Educators support transitions by:

- introducing children gradually to new environments
  - sharing information with families
  - ensuring children remain supported by their Key Person or Deputy Key Person where possible
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## **Supporting Individual Needs**

Where children require additional support, the Key Person works alongside:

- the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo)
- colleagues within the setting
- external professionals where appropriate

This ensures that the child receives appropriate support tailored to their individual needs.

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## **Deputy Key Person**

Each child is also allocated a **Deputy Key Person** who supports the child when their Key Person is absent.

The Deputy Key Person helps ensure continuity of care by:

- supporting the child when their Key Person is not available
- maintaining familiarity and consistency for the child
- assisting with communication with families when needed

This arrangement ensures that children continue to feel secure and supported by familiar educators within the setting.

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## 5. Staff Responsibilities

All educators share responsibility for creating a nurturing and supportive environment for children.

Key Persons are expected to:

- build strong relationships with their key children
- observe and support children's development
- maintain communication with families and colleagues
- support children's emotional wellbeing and behaviour
- ensure that children feel safe and valued within the setting

Educators receive training and supervision to support high-quality early years practice.

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## 6. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Key Person system.

This includes:

- ensuring children are appropriately allocated Key Persons
- supporting educators through supervision and professional development
- monitoring the effectiveness of relationships and communication with families

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

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## **B5. Observation, Assessment and Planning Policy**

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### **1. Our Philosophy**

At Hillside Gems we believe that effective observation and thoughtful planning help educators understand each child's interests, abilities and stage of development.

Children learn best when their curiosity and natural interests are recognised and supported. Observations help educators identify what children know, what they are exploring, and how their learning can be extended.

Assessment and planning allow educators to create meaningful experiences that support children's language development, curiosity and confidence while respecting each child's individual learning journey.

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### **2. Purpose of Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Hillside Gems observes children's development and uses this information to plan meaningful learning experiences.

This policy aims to:

- ensure that children's development is understood and supported
  - guide educators in observing children's learning
  - support thoughtful planning that extends children's knowledge and skills
  - ensure learning opportunities remain responsive to children's interests
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### **3. Legal Framework**

This policy is informed by the following guidance:

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

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

The EYFS requires educators to observe children, assess their development and plan experiences that support their progress.

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

Observation, assessment and planning form an ongoing cycle within the nursery.

Educators observe children as they play, explore and interact with their environment. These observations help educators understand children's interests, emerging skills and areas where further support may be beneficial.

Planning then uses this information to create experiences that extend children's learning while remaining responsive to their interests.

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## **5. Observations**

Educators observe children during everyday activities and play.

Observations may focus on:

- children's interests and curiosity
- emerging skills and abilities
- social interactions and communication
- problem solving and exploration

Observations help educators understand how children are learning and developing within the nursery environment.

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## **6. Assessment**

Assessment allows educators to reflect on observations and consider how children's development can be supported.

Assessment helps educators to:

- recognise children's strengths
- identify areas where development may be supported
- understand children's learning journeys

Assessment is used to inform future planning and ensure that learning experiences remain appropriate for each child.

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## **7. Planning**

Planning within Hillside Gems is flexible and responsive to children's interests.

The nursery uses a planning process that:

- extends children's language and communication
- promotes wider knowledge and new experiences
- introduces children to diverse cultures and perspectives

Planning works alongside child-led learning. Materials and experiences within the environment allow children to explore ideas and themes that naturally emerge during play.

Educators remain attentive to these interests and adapt day-to-day planning so that children's exploration can develop further.

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## **8. Story-Centred Learning**

Stories form an important part of the learning environment at Hillside Gems.

Carefully selected stories are used to support children's language development, imagination and understanding of social and emotional situations.

Stories may be used during group sessions to explore themes connected to the nursery's 5 Gems learning values.

Social stories are also used where appropriate to help children understand emotions, relationships and everyday experiences.

A wide range of books is available within the setting and rotated regularly so that children develop a love of reading throughout the day.

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## 9. Partnership with Parents

Parents are important partners in understanding children's development.

The nursery aims to maintain open communication with families regarding children's experiences and learning.

Where appropriate, information from parents may help educators better understand a child's interests, strengths and developmental needs.

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## 10. Staff Responsibilities

Educators share responsibility for observing children and supporting their development.

Educators should:

- observe children during everyday play and learning
  - reflect on children's interests and development
  - contribute to planning experiences that support learning
  - create an environment that encourages exploration and curiosity
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## 11. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that observation, assessment and planning practices remain effective.

This includes:

- supporting educators in reflective practice
- reviewing planning approaches within the nursery
- ensuring practice remains aligned with EYFS guidance

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

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## B6. 2-Year Progress Check Policy

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### Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems, we are committed to supporting every child's development through early identification, understanding, and partnership with families. The 2-Year Progress Check is a key opportunity to reflect on a child's development, celebrate strengths, and identify any areas where additional support may be needed.

This policy ensures that all children aged between 24–36 months receive a clear, accurate, and supportive progress review in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework.

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### Legal Framework

This policy is based on:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
  - Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
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### Purpose of the 2-Year Progress Check

The 2-Year Progress Check aims to:

- Provide a short written summary of a child's development
  - Identify strengths and areas where progress is less than expected
  - Support early identification of additional needs
  - Strengthen partnership working with parents/carers
  - Inform future planning and support strategies
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### Areas of Development Covered

The progress check focuses on the three prime areas of learning:

- Communication and Language

- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

These areas are fundamental to a child's overall development and readiness for learning.

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## Timing of the Check

- The progress check will be completed when a child is between 24 and 36 months of age
  - The child's key person is responsible for completing the check
  - The check will be completed within a reasonable timeframe of the child turning two
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## Role of the Key Person

The key person will:

- Observe the child over time within the setting
  - Gather evidence from observations and daily interactions
  - Consider information shared by parents/carers
  - Complete a clear and concise written summary
  - Identify any areas where progress is less than expected
  - Discuss the report with parents/carers in a sensitive and supportive way
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## Working in Partnership with Parents/Carers

At Hillside Gems, we value strong relationships with families. Parents/carers will:

- Be invited to contribute their views on their child's development
  - Receive a copy of the written progress check
  - Be offered a meeting to discuss the findings
  - Be supported with practical strategies to continue development at home
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## Identifying Additional Needs

If concerns are identified:

- The key person will discuss these with the setting's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)
- A plan of support will be developed in partnership with parents/carers
- Referrals to external professionals may be considered where appropriate
- The setting will follow its SEND and Safeguarding policies

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## **Confidentiality and Record Keeping**

- All progress checks will be treated as confidential documents
  - Records will be stored securely in line with GDPR and data protection requirements
  - Information will only be shared with other professionals with parental consent, unless safeguarding concerns arise
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## **Links with Other Professionals**

Where appropriate, the progress check may be shared with:

- Health Visitors
- Early Years professionals
- Other support services

This supports a joined-up approach to the child's development.

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## **Monitoring and Review**

- The manager will oversee the quality and consistency of progress checks
  - This policy will be reviewed annually or in line with updates to EYFS guidance
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Created by S.T-L, March 2026, Review March 2027