



Policy Pack E:

Staff and Workplace

These policies support professional practice and staff wellbeing within the nursery.

E1. Staff Supervision and Professional Development Policy

E2. Staff Wellbeing and Fitness to Work Policy

E3. Staff Grievance Policy

E4. Parent Complaints and Concerns Policy

E5. Staff Absence Policy

E6. Lone Working Policy



E1. Staff & Workplace Policy

1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems we believe that the quality of children's experiences is directly linked to the quality of the educators who care for them.

The nursery values reflective practice, professional growth and open communication. Supervision and professional development provide opportunities for educators to reflect on their work, strengthen their skills and continue developing their knowledge of early childhood education.

Through supportive supervision and ongoing training, the nursery aims to maintain high standards of practice while supporting staff wellbeing and confidence.

2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that educators receive regular supervision and opportunities for professional development.

This policy aims to:

- support educators in reflecting on their practice
 - provide opportunities to discuss professional development
 - ensure staff receive appropriate guidance and support
 - promote continuous improvement in teaching and care practices
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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 that providers support staff through **regular supervision and opportunities for professional development.**

4. Our Practice at Hillside Gems

Hillside Gems promotes a culture of reflection and professional learning.

Educators are supported to:

- reflect on their practice
- develop their professional skills
- discuss challenges and successes
- identify areas for growth

Supervision meetings provide a supportive space for professional dialogue and development.

5. Staff Supervision

Supervision meetings take place regularly between educators and the Nursery Manager or designated supervisor.

Supervision meetings may include:

- reflection on daily practice
- discussion of children's development and wellbeing
- professional development goals
- safeguarding awareness and responsibilities
- discussion of any challenges or concerns

Supervision provides an opportunity for educators to seek guidance and support in their role.

6. Professional Development

Hillside Gems encourages educators to continue developing their knowledge and skills.

Professional development may include:

- training courses
- workshops or seminars
- safeguarding training
- first aid training
- reflective learning opportunities

The nursery aims to ensure that staff maintain relevant skills and knowledge to support children effectively.

7. Identifying Development Needs

Professional development needs may be identified through:

- supervision discussions
- reflection on practice
- training requirements
- changes in legislation or guidance

Where possible, the nursery supports staff in accessing training that strengthens their professional practice.

8. Supportive Practice

Supervision meetings also provide opportunities to discuss wellbeing, professional challenges and areas where additional support may be helpful.

The nursery encourages open communication so that educators feel comfortable discussing their experiences and seeking support where needed.

9. Staff Responsibilities

Educators are encouraged to take an active role in their professional development.

Educators should:

- engage positively in supervision meetings
 - reflect on their professional practice
 - participate in training opportunities where appropriate
 - seek guidance where support is needed
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10. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that supervision and professional development procedures are implemented effectively.

This includes:

- arranging regular supervision meetings
- supporting staff development
- reviewing training needs

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

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



E2. Staff Wellbeing and Fitness to Work Policy

1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems we recognise that the wellbeing of educators plays an important role in the quality of care and learning provided to children.

The nursery aims to create a supportive working environment where staff feel valued, respected and able to carry out their role safely and effectively. Supporting staff wellbeing helps maintain a positive atmosphere within the nursery and contributes to high standards of professional practice.

At the same time, the nursery has a responsibility to ensure that all staff members are physically and mentally able to work safely with young children.

2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to promote staff wellbeing and ensure that educators are fit to work safely within the nursery environment.

This policy aims to:

- support the health and wellbeing of staff
 - ensure staff are able to carry out their responsibilities safely
 - provide guidance where health or wellbeing may affect work
 - ensure that appropriate support or adjustments can be considered where needed
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3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

4. Our Practice at Hillside Gems

Hillside Gems aims to maintain a working environment that supports staff wellbeing and professional practice.

The nursery encourages:

- open communication between staff and management
- supportive supervision discussions
- respectful and professional relationships within the team

Where staff experience challenges relating to health or wellbeing, the nursery aims to respond with understanding and appropriate support.

5. Fitness to Work

Staff working with young children must be able to carry out their role safely and effectively.

Educators should ensure that they are:

- physically able to supervise and care for children
- mentally alert and able to respond to children's needs
- able to work safely within the nursery environment

Where a staff member feels unable to work safely due to illness or other circumstances, they should inform the Nursery Manager as soon as possible.

6. Staff Illness

Staff who are unwell should not attend work where illness may affect their ability to perform their duties safely or where there is a risk of spreading infection.

Where necessary, staff may be asked to remain away from work until they are well enough to return safely.

This helps ensure the wellbeing of both children and staff.

7. Medication and Health Conditions

Staff should inform the Nursery Manager if they are taking medication that may affect their ability to work safely, for example where medication may cause drowsiness or reduced alertness.

Where staff have ongoing health conditions that may affect their work, the nursery will work with the individual to consider appropriate support or adjustments where possible.

8. Pregnancy and Health Considerations

Where a member of staff becomes pregnant, the nursery will carry out a risk assessment to ensure that working arrangements remain safe.

The nursery will consider reasonable adjustments where appropriate to support staff wellbeing and safety.

9. Staff Wellbeing

The nursery recognises that working with young children can be both rewarding and demanding.

Staff wellbeing may be supported through:

- supervision discussions
- supportive team relationships
- opportunities for reflection and communication

The nursery encourages staff to speak openly with the Nursery Manager if they are experiencing difficulties that may affect their wellbeing at work.

10. Staff Responsibilities

Educators share responsibility for maintaining a safe working environment.

Staff should:

- take reasonable care of their own health and wellbeing
 - inform the Nursery Manager of any health concerns that may affect their work
 - follow health and safety procedures within the nursery
 - seek support where needed
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11. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that staff wellbeing and fitness to work are considered within the nursery.

This includes:

- responding appropriately to health concerns
- supporting staff where reasonable adjustments may be required
- maintaining a safe working environment

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

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



E3. Staff Grievance Policy

1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems we aim to maintain a professional, respectful and supportive working environment. Positive working relationships help create a calm and stable atmosphere that benefits both educators and children.

Occasionally, concerns or disagreements may arise within the workplace. The nursery encourages open communication so that concerns can be discussed and resolved fairly and respectfully.

This policy provides a clear process for staff to raise concerns and seek appropriate resolution.

2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a fair and transparent process for staff to raise workplace concerns.

This policy aims to:

- provide a clear procedure for raising concerns or complaints
 - encourage early resolution of workplace issues
 - ensure that concerns are handled fairly and respectfully
 - maintain positive working relationships within the nursery
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3. Our Approach

Hillside Gems encourages staff to raise concerns as early as possible so that issues can be addressed constructively.

Where possible, concerns should be resolved informally through open discussion. Many workplace concerns can be resolved quickly when staff feel able to communicate openly and respectfully.

Where informal resolution is not possible, staff may choose to raise a formal grievance.

4. Informal Resolution

Staff are encouraged to raise concerns informally in the first instance.

This may involve:

- speaking directly with the person involved
- discussing the concern with the Nursery Manager
- seeking guidance or support to resolve the situation

Informal discussions often allow issues to be resolved quickly and maintain positive working relationships.

5. Formal Grievance Procedure

If a concern cannot be resolved informally, staff may raise a formal grievance.

This should normally be submitted in writing to the Nursery Manager and should include:

- the nature of the concern
- relevant details of the situation
- any steps already taken to resolve the issue

The Nursery Manager will review the concern and arrange a meeting with the staff member to discuss the matter.

6. Investigation

Where necessary, the nursery may investigate the grievance in order to understand the situation fully.

This may involve:

- speaking with relevant staff members
- reviewing relevant information
- considering appropriate steps to resolve the issue

The nursery aims to ensure that grievances are considered fairly and respectfully.

7. Outcome

Following review or investigation, the Nursery Manager will provide a response outlining any actions or decisions made.

Where appropriate, steps may be taken to support improved working relationships or resolve the issue.

8. Confidentiality

Grievances will be handled with appropriate confidentiality.

Information will be shared only with individuals who need to be involved in reviewing or resolving the concern.

9. Staff Responsibilities

Staff are encouraged to raise concerns respectfully and constructively.

Educators should:

- raise concerns in a timely manner
 - participate in discussions aimed at resolving issues
 - maintain professionalism during the grievance process
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10. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that grievance procedures are followed appropriately.

This includes:

- responding to staff concerns fairly
- maintaining respectful workplace practices
- reviewing procedures where necessary

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

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



E4. Parent Complaints and Concerns Policy

1. Our Philosophy

At Hillside Gems we value positive and open relationships with families. Strong partnerships between parents and educators help support children's wellbeing, development and learning.

The nursery encourages parents to share feedback, questions or concerns so that matters can be addressed promptly and constructively. Concerns are taken seriously and handled respectfully to ensure that families feel heard and supported.

This policy outlines how parents can raise concerns and how the nursery will respond.

2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear process for parents to raise concerns or make a complaint.

This policy aims to:

- encourage open communication between families and the nursery
 - ensure concerns are addressed promptly and fairly
 - provide a transparent process for handling complaints
 - ensure compliance with EYFS requirements regarding complaints procedures
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3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by the following guidance:

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

The EYFS requires early years providers to have a procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents.

4. Our Approach

Hillside Gems encourages parents to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity so that they can be addressed quickly.

Many concerns can be resolved through open conversation with nursery staff. The nursery aims to respond respectfully and work collaboratively with families to find solutions where needed.

Parents are welcome to speak with educators or the Nursery Manager if they have questions or concerns.

5. Informal Concerns

In many cases, concerns can be resolved informally.

Parents may choose to:

- speak with their child's educator
- speak with the Nursery Manager
- request a meeting to discuss their concern

Informal discussions often allow concerns to be addressed quickly and positively.

6. Formal Complaints

If a concern cannot be resolved informally, parents may make a formal complaint.

Formal complaints should normally be made in writing to the Nursery Manager and should include:

- the nature of the complaint
- relevant details of the situation
- any steps already taken to resolve the concern

The Nursery Manager will review the complaint and arrange to discuss the matter with the parent where appropriate.

7. Investigation

Where necessary, the nursery may investigate the complaint in order to understand the situation fully.

This may involve:

- speaking with relevant staff members
- reviewing relevant information
- considering appropriate actions to resolve the concern

The nursery aims to ensure that complaints are handled fairly and respectfully.

8. Outcome and Response

The nursery will aim to respond to complaints within a reasonable timeframe.

Parents will be informed of the outcome of the review and any actions taken where appropriate.

The nursery aims to work collaboratively with families to resolve concerns in a positive manner.

9. Recording Complaints

Complaints relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage welfare requirements will be recorded and kept on file.

Records may include:

- the nature of the complaint
- how the complaint was investigated
- the outcome of the complaint

These records will be made available to Ofsted on request.

10. Escalating Concerns

If a parent feels that their complaint has not been resolved appropriately, they may choose to contact Ofsted.

Ofsted can be contacted at:

Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

11. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that concerns and complaints are handled appropriately.

This includes:

- responding to concerns raised by parents
- maintaining records of formal complaints
- reviewing procedures where necessary

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



Complaint Record Form (EYFS Compliant)

This form is used to record complaints relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) welfare requirements, in line with statutory guidance. All complaints must be investigated and a written response provided within 28 days.

Child's Name (if applicable): _____

Date Complaint Received: _____

Name of Person Raising Complaint: _____

Contact Details: _____

1. Nature of the Complaint

(Include full details of the concern raised)

- Verbal complaint
- Written complaint

Details:

2. Investigation Process

(Record how the complaint was investigated)

- Discussion with staff involved
- Review of records / documentation
- Observation of practice
- Meeting with parent/carer
- External advice sought (e.g. Local Authority / Ofsted)
- Other: _____

Details:

3. Outcome of the Complaint

(Include findings and actions taken)

- Complaint upheld
- Complaint not upheld
- Partially upheld

Actions taken:

4. Timescales & Communication

Date investigation completed: _____

Date outcome shared with complainant: _____

- Outcome shared within 28 days (EYFS requirement)
- Delay in response (reason provided below)

If delayed, reason:

Manager/DSL Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Additional Notes



E5. Staff Absence Policy

1. Purpose of this policy

Hillside Gems is committed to supporting staff wellbeing while also ensuring that the nursery is safely and appropriately staffed at all times.

As we care for young children, staff absence must be managed carefully so that we can maintain safe ratios, provide consistency for children and meet our safeguarding responsibilities.

This policy explains what employees must do if they are unable to attend work due to sickness, emergency or any other absence.

2. Reporting sickness absence

If an employee is unwell and unable to attend work, they must notify management **as soon as possible**, and no later than **7.00am** on the first day of absence.

The employee must contact: **Nursery Manager or Deputy Manager**

Contact should be made by **telephone call**, unless this is not possible. Text messages, WhatsApp messages or emails should only be used if agreed by management or in an emergency.

When reporting sickness absence, the employee should provide:

Information required	Details
Reason for absence	A brief explanation of why they are unable to work
Expected return date	When they think they may be able to return
Any urgent work information	Anything the nursery needs to know for that day
Contact details	How they can be contacted during their absence

Employees must personally report their absence unless they are too unwell to do so.

3. Keeping in contact during absence

Employees must keep management updated during their absence.

If the employee does not know when they will return to work, they must update management regularly and as reasonably requested.

For longer absences, management may agree suitable contact arrangements with the employee.

4. Self-certification and fit notes

For sickness absence of **7 calendar days or less**, employees do not usually need to provide a fit note. However, they may be asked to complete a self-certification form when they return to work. GOV.UK confirms that employees can self-certify for sickness absence of 7 days or less. ([GOV.UK](#))

For sickness absence lasting **more than 7 calendar days**, the employee must provide a fit note from a registered healthcare professional. ACAS confirms that this applies even if some of the 7 days were not normal working days. ([Acas](#))

Fit notes must be provided promptly and must cover the full period of absence.

5. Statutory Sick Pay

Employees may be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay, subject to the rules in place at the time of absence.

Statutory Sick Pay will be paid where the employee qualifies under the current statutory requirements. GOV.UK provides guidance for employers and employees on Statutory Sick Pay entitlement, eligibility and evidence requirements. ([GOV.UK](#))

If an employee is not eligible for Statutory Sick Pay, Hillside Gems will explain this and provide any required statutory form where applicable.

6. Medical appointments

Where possible, routine medical, dental and other appointments should be arranged outside working hours or during nursery holiday periods.

If this is not possible, employees must request time off in advance and provide as much notice as possible.

Hillside Gems may ask for evidence of the appointment, such as an appointment card, letter, email or text confirmation.

Time off for appointments may be unpaid unless otherwise agreed or required by law.

7. Emergency absence and dependants

Hillside Gems understands that emergencies can happen, including issues involving children, dependents or urgent family matters.

Employees must notify management as soon as possible if they are unable to attend work because of an emergency.

Emergency time off is intended to deal with the immediate situation and make alternative arrangements. It is not usually intended to cover ongoing care needs.

Emergency absence may be unpaid unless otherwise agreed or required by law.

8. Absence during term time

As Hillside Gems nurseries operate on a **term-time only basis**, employees are expected to attend work during term time unless they are unwell, have an approved absence or there is another genuine reason for absence.

Holidays and planned leave should be taken during nursery holiday periods wherever possible.

Unauthorised absence during term time may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

9. Return to work

Employees may be required to attend a return-to-work meeting after any period of absence.

The purpose of this meeting is to:

Purpose	Details
Confirm the reason for absence	To ensure records are accurate
Check fitness to return	To make sure the employee is well enough to work
Identify support needed	To consider any reasonable adjustments or temporary support

Discuss absence levels	To review any patterns or concerns
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Return-to-work meetings are intended to be supportive, but they also help Hillside Gems manage staffing, safeguarding and nursery ratios effectively.

10. Frequent or repeated absence

If an employee has frequent, repeated or concerning levels of absence, management may arrange an absence review meeting.

This may happen where there are:

- repeated short-term absences;
- absences that form a pattern, such as Mondays, Fridays or days before or after holidays;
- absences that affect the nursery's ability to operate safely;
- concerns about the employee's health, wellbeing or ability to carry out their role.

Hillside Gems will consider each case individually and will take account of any medical information, disability, pregnancy-related absence or other relevant circumstances.

Where appropriate, Hillside Gems may request medical advice or occupational health guidance.

11. Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is absence that has not been reported or approved in line with this policy.

Examples may include:

- failing to attend work without notifying management;
- failing to follow the absence reporting procedure;
- taking leave without approval;
- failing to provide required evidence, such as a fit note;
- not returning to work on the expected date without explanation.

Unauthorised absence may result in loss of pay and may be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

12. Infectious illness and nursery safety

Employees must not attend work if they have an illness that may pose a risk to children, families or colleagues.

This may include sickness, diarrhoea, fever, contagious infections or any condition where attending work could create a health and safety risk.

Employees must follow nursery infection control procedures and any exclusion periods required by Hillside Gems or relevant public health guidance.

If an employee becomes unwell at work, management may ask them to go home if it is not safe or appropriate for them to remain in the nursery.

13. Absence records

Hillside Gems will keep records of staff absence, including:

- dates of absence;
- reason for absence;
- whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised;
- self-certification forms;
- fit notes;
- return-to-work meeting notes;
- any agreed support or adjustments.

Absence records will be handled confidentially and in line with data protection requirements.

14. Failure to follow this policy

Failure to follow this policy may result in action being taken under the disciplinary procedure.

This includes failure to report absence correctly, failure to maintain contact, unauthorised absence or providing false or misleading information about an absence.

15. Policy review

This policy may be reviewed and updated from time to time to reflect business needs, statutory requirements or changes to nursery procedures.

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