 **Call: 07546584314 or email** **rascalsplaygroup@gmail.com**

**Rascals staff**

Tracey Hubbard – Manager / Safeguarding lead

Hayley Allen – Supervisor (Sendco)

Claire Denyer – Supervisor (Sendco)

Sian Welland - Senior Assistant

Alana Alderton – Senior Assistant

Rebecca Roberts – Assistant

Hannah Osborne- Trainee Assistant

**Welcome to Rascals Playgroup**

We hope your child will enjoy many happy sessions with us. We have put together some information about the group which you may find helpful.

**Playgroup and the Methodist Church**

Rascals Pre-school Playgroup was set up in 1989 by members of the Methodist Church. The Church retains overall responsibility for the playgroup, offering support but at the same time leaving the staff free to organise and run the group according to guidelines issued by West Sussex County Council and Ofsted. We welcome families of all religious and ethnic groups but as part of a Christian community, we only celebrate Christian festivals. We visit the church once a term and this usually involves the children joining in with some action prayers and singing some simple songs. A leaflet is available giving full details of Church activities and should you wish to speak to the Minister please contact the Church Office on 01903 776900.

**Playgroup and Ofsted**

Ofsted inspect our playgroup to ensure that we are conforming to their regulations and those of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

All staff must have completed a DBS check (disclosure & barring service) before being able to become fully involved in playgroup duties

Ofsted also offer advice, training and support when it is needed. The Early Childhood Services of West Sussex also acts as our advisory body.

**Aims of the Playgroup**

To provide a caring and secure atmosphere which promotes and embraces the principles of Christianity and fosters the belief that every child is a unique individual worthy of respect and love.

To provide quality care for pre-school children within a well structured, educational environment which safeguards play as essential for the growth and development of the children.

**Children Act 1989**

All parents/carers are advised that under the current law, all playgroups are required to report any unexplained or unusual injuries or symptoms to their Local Safeguarding Board.

**Early Years Alliance**

Rascals is a member of the Early Years Alliance (formerly known as the Pre-School Playgroups Association and Pre-school Learning Alliance). If you would like any information about this national organisation please access their website

**Policies and Procedures**

Our policies and procedures are available upon request.

The following policies are attached:

Achieving Positive behaviour, Information sharing, Promoting equality, Key worker/settling in, Collection of fees and Data Protection.

**Admissions Policy**

We operate a waiting list based on date of birth however there are other factors that will be considered prior to offering families a place at Rascals such as: ​

\* Children requiring the most sessions

\* Two year olds who are funded by WSCC

\* Looked after children identified to us by West Sussex County council

\* Siblings of those children currently attending the setting & siblings of previous Rascals members

\* Date of enquiry

\* Members of the Rustington Methodist Church

**Siblings – Younger siblings are not automatically put on our waiting list, so to avoid disappointment please let us have their details as soon as possible.**

**Fees**

Each term you will receive a letter detailing the fees due.

We appreciate prompt payment but if you do have any concerns regarding payment of your fees please talk to the manager.

Once your child reaches the term after their 3rd birthday their place will be funded by West Sussex County Council for 15 hours per week. There is funding available for some 2 year olds who fit a set criteria and from Sept 2025 there will be 30 hours per week of funding available for working families of children aged 2 and over. More information about funding can be found on the West Sussex Website following the links for Free Entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.

In 2017 the government announced two new initiatives to help families with the cost of childcare. These included Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours Childcare. To check your eligibility for support from either of these initiatives please check the Governments Child Care Choices website: https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/

**Staffing, Qualifications and Training**

We always have at least one member of staff to every 8 children over the age of 3 years and one member of staff to every 5 children under the age of 3 present during each session.

All permanent staff members hold a level 3 qualification in Childcare, or above. Our Manager holds Early Years Teacher status and one of our Supervisors holds Qualified Teacher status.

Regular training courses are provided for all staff for their own Continued Professional Development.

**Dates and Times**

You will receive a schedule of term dates for each academic year in our newsletter. The dates usually run from September to July and you will therefore receive an update prior to September each year.

We are open Monday and Tuesday 9.30am -3.30pm and Thursday and Friday mornings from 9.30am – 12.30pm.

We are closed on a Wednesday but you are welcome to join the Mod Mums group which is held on the premises.

**Settling in**

New children will take varying amounts of time to settle when they first arrive at Rascals.

In our experience, children who cry rarely do so for more than a few minutes and we will always tell you if your child remains unhappy.

Some children may need their adult to stay with them for a little while and we will always work with you to come to an arrangement that you feel comfortable with.

If you do stay with your child or if you offer to help at Rascals, you will be asked to store your mobile phone away from the children and the use of any camera other than those used by staff is prohibited. This is in accordance with our safeguarding policy.

We prefer that dummies are not brought into the setting. Research has shown that prolonged use of dummies can have a detrimental effect on speech development and we are happy to offer further information.

**Health**

At Rascals we aim to promote a healthy lifestyle and encourage a high standard of general hygiene on a daily basis. Please do not send your child to playgroup if they are unwell in any way. Since the appearance of Covid 19 we ask that all children remain at home if they display any of the main symptoms but also if they are generally unwell with colds also. This is to protect our staff and the other children. They will not enjoy playing if they are ill and it is not fair to the other children or to the staff. If they have had a tummy bug please keep them at home for at least 48 hours following their last bout of sickness/diarrhoea.

Occasionally head lice become a problem. Please check their hair regularly and treat them immediately if you find them (your pharmacist will offer advice).

If you are unsure whether you should bring your child to playgroup, please call us for advice prior to bringing them in.

We encourage each child to bring a drink of water with them in a named flask in order that they can have access to this throughout the session.

We provide the children with a drink and a snack of toast, crumpets, pitta bread or something similar along with fruit during the morning sessions and a small snack of fruit and crackers will be offered during the afternoon sessions. At the beginning of each term we do ask for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of these snacks and it is clearly itemised on the invoices that we send out.

The children are encouraged to wash their hands themselves after using the toilet and prior to eating their snack and it would be really helpful if you could also encourage this practise at home.

**Behaviour Management**

All children will be positively encouraged to co-operate in the social life of the playgroup and be made aware of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

A child will never be punished physically, nor subjected to humiliating or abusive statements about themselves, their lifestyles, ethnic background, status, appearance etc.

Please see our policy attached for further information.

**Accidents and Safeguarding**

We record all accidents that occur indoors and outdoors. The records are available at every session and will be completed by the member of staff who dealt with the accident. If your child has bumped their head, you will be given a letter advising you of what symptoms to look out for where necessary. All accidents will be reported to the child’s parent/carer at the end of the session.

If your child comes to playgroup with an existing injury such as a bruise, a member of staff will discuss the injury with you and ask you to complete a form with the details concerning the injury. Please do not send your child to Rascals if they require medication such as calpol.

All our staff are required to attend safeguarding training and our Manager is the Designated Safeguarding lead who will deal with any incidents that may arise.

We take safeguarding very seriously and as well as reporting any concerns we may have regarding the children, all staff have access to procedures which must be followed if they have concerns regarding their colleagues.

All our staff hold a current Paediatric First Aid certificate which we renew every three years and in addition to this training we attend any other relevant training including the use of Epi-pens when required.

**Toilet Procedures**

We welcome all children wearing nappies, pull ups or pants and we are happy to work alongside parents during toilet training. The children are asked at regular intervals if they need the toilet particularly when they are new to Rascals. The children are ALWAYS accompanied when they first attend playgroup, however during their last two terms at Rascals we do try to encourage the older children to access the toilet themselves in preparation for school. A member of staff will always be available to help with accidents and hand washing.

During the first few weeks it is always a good idea to bring more than one set of spare clothes in case of accidents. This should include pants, socks, trousers/skirt and top. It is very helpful to dress your child in clothes and footwear that they can manage themselves with little or no fastenings and without belts/poppers.

If your child uses a potty or special toilet seat at home, you are very welcome to bring this to playgroup. Please ensure you tell a member of staff that your child will wish to use this.

All soiled clothes/nappies must be taken home with you at the end of the session as we do not have any means of disposing of nappies on our premises. Any nappies or wet clothes will be put into a nappy sack and placed back in your child’s bag, so please check their bag after every session!

**Inclusion**

At Rascals we aim to have regard to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practise on the Identification and Assessment of additional needs and provide a welcome for all children combined with appropriate learning opportunities suited to the age, stage and ability of each child.

Children with additional needs, like other children, are admitted to Rascals after consultation with parents, the playgroup Managers and, where appropriate, other professionals working with the child.

Our system of observation and record-keeping, operating in conjunction with parents, enables us to monitor children’s needs and progress so that, if necessary, early and appropriate action to meet additional needs can be taken. If we have any concerns whatsoever about a child in our care, the first stage will be for the Manager or Sendco (Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator) to chat to the parents/carers. The areas we may discuss could include the child’s general health and development, behaviour at home and in playgroup and any possible causes for difficulties or worries. In many cases early discussion resolves problems without any further help.

If the problem persists, the next stage is for the playgroup and the parents together to consider the area or areas in which the child is having difficulty and draw up a plan together. Targets for the child to achieve will be set and a date to review progress will be agreed. At this stage, parents may also find it helpful to talk to their health visitor or doctor.

The next step, if we are still concerned, will be to discuss with the parents the possibility of outside help or advice. With parental consent, we are able to make some referrals ourselves.

Alternatively, we can offer advice on how parents/carers can proceed if they wish to deal with the matter themselves. Details of discussions with parents/Carers regarding additional needs will be kept with the child’s records.

We are happy to work in liaison with professional staff from outside the playgroup, including therapists, health visitors, family outreach workers, psychologists, social care workers, paediatricians and Portage workers, to meet the children’s specific needs.

Our staff are willing to attend training on special needs arranged by the Pre-School Learning Alliance and other professional bodies.

Our current Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-Coordinators are Claire Denyer and Hayley Allen.

**Recording children’s progress**

Throughout your child’s time at Rascals their progress and achievements will be observed and recorded on a regular basis by your key person in a Learning Journal. You can ask to see your child’s Journal at any time and are welcome to take it home to show your family but would ask that you inform your key person before doing so to prevent any records becoming lost.

We welcome contributions from home towards the Learning Journal such as pictures and photos and will be asking you during each term to work with us and provide us with an update as to how you think your child is progressing and to update any information we hold regarding your child’s interests. This ensures that we offer your child stimulating and interesting activities based around their interests whilst they are at Rascals.

We will also carry out a review of all children's development between the ages of 2 and 3 years that you can share with your health visitor.

**Reading Sessions**

During your child’s last year with us at rascals they will be invited to take part in a short reading session with their key person each week. Your child will then be given a book to take home and share with you. Please find the time to share the book with your child and talk about the pictures. We don’t expect the children to be reading the words but it is really helpful if they can learn how to hold a book carefully, look at the pictures and describe what is happening and most importantly enjoy sharing their book with you.

**General reminders**

•Please tell a member of staff if someone else is collecting your child. We will need to take a contact number if they are not already held on our records and will be unable to let your child leave with them unless we have your prior permission.

•Don’t send your child to playgroup in their best clothes as they will inevitably get messy!

•Please don’t send your child to playgroup in converse trainers as they are very difficult for the children (and adults) to put on. This can hamper your child’s independence in learning how to dress themselves.

•Please don’t send your child in wearing vests with poppers once they have started the toilet training process as they will be unable to manage this themselves.

•Please remember that your child will not always make you something or draw you a picture whilst at playgroup as lots of our activities are providing children with experiences rather than producing an end product. The children will learn a great deal from mixing paint with their hands or smearing glue all over their paper without actually sticking anything to it. Please talk to your child about what they did at playgroup but again please don’t expect them to remember it all!

**Complaints Procedure**

If parents/carers have any concerns or worries the first thing to do is to talk to the Manager who will probably be able to resolve them easily and informally. If this does not produce a satisfactory outcome, and agreement cannot be reached the parent/carer should put the concern or complaint in writing. Ofsted will be informed of the complaint which will be sent to them immediately.

Parents may contact Ofsted directly on 0300 123 4666. The complaint will also be noted in the Playgroup’s complaints book. A meeting will be arranged which will include an external mediator, acceptable to both parties, to listen to both sides and offer advice. A member of the Methodist church will be available to act as a mediator if both parties wish. The mediator will keep all discussion confidential, will help define the problem and suggest further solution. An agreed written record of meetings will be kept.

The following pages contain the policies mentioned above.

1. **Safeguarding children**

**1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection**

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

**Policy statement**

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

**Procedures**

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we safeguard all children from all types of abuse.

Abuse can occur in varying forms such as Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Neglect. Abuse also includes Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Bullying and cyberbullying, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), extremism and radicalisation (Prevent), grooming, Domestic Violence (DV). More information regarding the various forms of abuse can be found on the NSPCC website.

**Staff and volunteers**

* Our Designated Safeguarding Lead who co-ordinates child protection issues is:

|  |
| --- |
| Tracey Hubbard |
|  |

* Our designated person within the church is ‘The Minister’ who oversees this work.
* We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
* We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children in accordance with the EYFS statutory requirements.
* Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
* Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure’ checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before posts can be confirmed.
* Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
* We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
* All staff are given the opportunity, at regular supervision meetings, to disclose any changes or new information relating to their DBS check.
* Staff are made aware of the management’s responsibilities to notify Ofsted of any changes or new information to staff DBS checks. It is made clear that this may affect the status of their employment. It is explained that Ofsted may consider a waiver application but if this is not granted instant dismissal is required.
* Volunteers or visitors who have not received a DBS check are not left unattended with the children at any time and are requested to always remain in sight of a staff member.
* All staff members, visitors and volunteers are asked to store their mobile phones in our designated area at every session. Staff members are permitted to answer urgent personal calls or messages where necessary but must inform a manager before doing so. These calls or messages must not interfere with the staff member’s capabilities of keeping the children safe. If appropriate, the Manager will organise staffing accordingly for the call to be taken.
* We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.

**Photography and phones within the setting**

* The use of personal mobile phone cameras to take photos of children within the setting is strictly prohibited. All members of staff, volunteers and visitors are informed of this. No personal mobile phone cameras are used at any time to take photos of children, without exception. The only cameras used within the setting to take photos of children are the designated digital cameras for adult use. The work mobile phone may be used to take photos if the cameras are unavailable with permission from the manager. The manager is responsible for the mobile phone whilst the setting is closed.
* Parents, carers and extended family members are provided with the opportunity to take photos at the Christmas Nativity, but a written request is issued each year, that no images of the children are uploaded to any online domain such as a Facebook or Instagram. This request is also repeated verbally by the minister or a church representative at the time of the event.
* Staff may sometimes organise a photographer to be present at the Nativity, to ensure that all families receive a photo of their own child where possible. These photos are placed into the children’s learning journals.
* The photographer is not permitted to take the SD cards home and is asked to pass them to the manager for developing before he/she leaves the premises.
* A member of staff is responsible for developing photos for the setting. Once the photos have been ordered online, the original images are deleted from the cameras and access is only gained to the photos online via our online photo account, details of which are only known to the manager and the person responsible for ordering the photos. No photos are held on personal laptops.
* The photos are only used for displays within Rascals, for Learning Journals, to raise funds by printing photos for parents and occasionally to upload to our Facebook page (No children’s faces are shown)
* No photos are left on display when Rascals is not in attendance at any time.

**Visitors and unfamiliar adults**

* We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting. Visitors are asked to sign in using a label, which is then put into our visitor’s book, so that the privacy of previous visitors is not disclosed.
* All visitors are required to identify themselves clearly. Professional identifications are requested where necessary and visitors will not be offered access to the premises until the staff have checked this ID. If a member of staff is not satisfied about the identity of a visitor, phone calls and checks will be made prior to allowing them admission to the premises.
* If an unfamiliar adult comes to collect a child but we have no prior record of this, a phone call will be made to the parents/carers to gain their permission before we let the child leave the premises.
* When we know in advance that an unfamiliar adult will be collecting a child, we use a password system as agreed with the parent/carer.
* If an unknown person manages to enter the premises forcibly the police will be called immediately, and staff will take every step to ensure the safety of all the children within the setting. Staff will make every effort to ensure the intruder does not come into contact with the children.
* We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children. (See ‘Maintaining children’s safety and security on premises’ policy)
* All new members of staff work through a clearly defined induction period which includes attending external training on child protection and First Aid. Preferably these courses are attended within the first term of working within the setting but otherwise within the first 6 months.

Rascals Playgroup is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused' (HMG March 2023).

**Prevent Duty**

* Our setting is subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of our functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty. Bodies to which the duty applies must have regard to the statutory guidance. Paragraphs 57-76 of the guidance are concerned specifically with schools and childcare providers (Revised Prevent Duty Guidance April 2023).
* In order for us to fulfil the prevent duty, it is essential that we are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do if identified.
* The Early Years Foundation Stage sets standards for learning, development and care for children from 0-5, thereby assisting us in developing children’s personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world, thus assisting us in building resistance to radicalisation.
* The statutory guidance on the Prevent duty summarises the requirements of early years providers in terms of four general themes; risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies and we have regard for these themes throughout our work within the setting.

**Responding to suspicions of abuse**

* We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
* When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
* Where such evidence is apparent, staff make a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the DSL. The information is stored in a separate file. Staff make written notes of any incidents, comments or observations they feel cause them concern, however small and insignificant they may seem. These are recorded in our ‘concerns’ file which is kept confidentially by the DLS. This enables the DSL to observe any patterns in incidents, behaviour or any other issues that cause them concern and enables the number of occasions to be monitored. By recording these concerns, a picture begins to build and action can be taken with confidence
* We refer concerns to the Integrated Front Door and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. In some cases, this may mean the police, or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board.

**Integrated Front Door: 01403 229900 (Mon – Friday 9am – 5pm)**

**Emergency Duty Team (5pm – 9am weekdays & 24 hr emergency at weekends and bank holidays):**

**0330 222 6664 or 07711 769657**

**Email: WSChildrenServices@westsussex.gov.uk**

* We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.

**Children arriving with existing injuries**

* Parents/Carers are asked to inform us if their child has injured themselves prior to arriving at the setting.
* The Parent/Carer is then asked to complete a document providing information regarding the injury and the circumstances surrounding the incident. The Parent/Carer is asked to sign the document before they leave their child with us.
* If we notice an existing injury after the child has entered the setting and their Parent/Carer has already left them, we will either call or message their Parent/carer (depending on the severity of the injury) to discuss the details of the injury and they will then be asked to sign the document upon their return.

**Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures**

* Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), or a staff member observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect, that member of staff:
* listens to the child, offers reassurance, and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
* does not question the child;
* makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
* the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
* the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
* the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
* the names of any other person present at the time.
* These records are signed and dated and kept in a separate folder which is kept securely and confidentially.

**Informing parents**

* Parents/Carers are normally the first point of contact when we have concerns and, in all cases, unless we feel it puts the child in danger, we will discuss our concerns with the Parent/Carer.
* If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance does not allow this.
* This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

**Liaison with other agencies**

* We work in accordance with the Sussex protection and Safeguarding procedures.
* We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
* Once a referral has been made, we work with all other professionals involved in the case and the Manager will attend any further meetings that take place.

**Allegations against staff**

* We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone else working on the premises, which may include an allegation of abuse.
* We follow the Sussex Protection and Safeguarding Procedures when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone working on the premises, has abused a child.
* We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
* We refer any such complaint immediately to our LADO (Local Area Designated Officer).

**The LADO for West Sussex County Council can be contacted on: 0330 222 6450 (9.00am – 5.00pm)**

**Out of Hours (Emergency Duty Team): 0330 222 26664 (5.00pm – 9.00am)**

**Email: LADO@westsussex.gov.uk**

* We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this. We also notify the Minister immediately.
* We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children’s social care in conjunction with the police.
* Where the manager and children’s social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the manager will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

**Disciplinary action**

* Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Disclosure and Barring Service, so that the name may be included on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Barred List.

Rascals is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues amongst staff and volunteers. We are also committed to empowering young children, promoting their right to be strong, resilient, and listened to.

**Training**

* We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
* Training is booked through the West Sussex training portal and is delivered face to face or online.
* We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.
* Staff attend regular training every two years
* The DSL attends training every year.
* New members of staff attend safeguarding training within their first 6 months of employment where possible.
* The Designated Safeguarding Lead supports all staff to understand their responsibilities regarding safeguarding.

**Curriculum**

* We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be *strong, resilient and listened to* and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
* We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
* We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

**Confidentiality**

* All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Sussex Protection and Safeguarding Procedures.

**Support to families**

* We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
* We make clear to parents/carers our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children’s social care team.
* We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
* We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child’s social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
* Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of Sussex Protection and Safeguarding Procedures.

**Legal framework**

### *Primary legislation*

* Children Act (1989 s47)
* Protection of Children Act (1999)
* Data Protection Act (2018)
* The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
* Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

### *Secondary legislation*

* Sexual Offences Act (2003)
* Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
* Human Rights Act (1999)
* Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)
* Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations
* Equalities Act (2006)
* Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance

### Further Guidance

* Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised HMG July 2023)
* What to do if you’re Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2015)
* Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
* Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
* Information Sharing: Practitioners’ Guide (HMG 2006)
* Prevent Duty (DFE,2023)

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| --- | --- | --- |
| This policy was adopted at a meeting of | Rascals Pre-school Playgroup | name of setting |
| Held on | Nov 2024 | (date) |
| Date to be reviewed | Nov 2025 or before | (date) |
| Signed on behalf of Rascals | Tracey Hubbard |
|  |  |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) | Manager |

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**3. Equality of opportunity**

**3.1 Valuing diversity and promoting equality**

**Policy statement**

We will ensure that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children, particularly those that arise from their ethnic heritage, social and economic background, gender, ability or disability. Our setting is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children, families and staff. We aim to:

* provide a secure and accessible environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are considered and valued;
* include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
* provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people;
* improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity; and
* make inclusion a thread that runs through all the activities of the setting.

**Procedures**

### Admissions

* Our setting is open to all members of the community.
* We reflect the diversity of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
* We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
* We provide information in other languages when needed.
* We base our admissions policy on a fair system.
* We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy.
* We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, based on colour, ethnicity, religion or social background, such as being a member of a Travelling community or an asylum seeker.
* We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our setting for reason relating to disability.
* We develop an action plan to ensure that people with disabilities can participate successfully in the services offered by the setting and in the curriculum offered.
* We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents. Displaying of openly discriminatory and possibly offensive materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner.

## *Employment*

* Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
* Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all.
* We may use the exemption clauses in relevant legislation to enable the service to best meet the needs of the community.
* The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service. This ensures fairness in the selection process.
* All job descriptions include a commitment to promoting equality and recognising and respecting diversity as part of their specifications.
* We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.

### Training

* We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which enable all children to flourish.
* We ensure that staff are confident and fully trained in administering relevant medicines and performing invasive care procedures when these are required.
* We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for promoting equality, valuing diversity and inclusion.

### Curriculum

The curriculum offered in the setting encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

Our environment is as accessible as possible for all visitors and service users. If access to the setting is found to treat disabled children or adults less favourably then we make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled children and adults. We do this by:

* making children feel valued and good about themselves;
* ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
* undertaking an access audit to establish if the setting is accessible to all children;
* making adjustments to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairments;
* making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities, e.g. recognising the different learning styles of children;
* positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources;
* avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of books or other visual materials;
* creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
* differentiating the curriculum to meet children’s special educational needs;
* helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable;
* ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities;
* ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning; and
* ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages.

### Valuing diversity in families

* We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families.
* We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life to the setting.
* We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of the setting and to contribute fully.
* For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion.
* We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means and offer information regarding sources of financial support.

### Food

* We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met.
* We help children to learn about a range of food.

*Monitoring and reviewing*

* To ensure our policies and procedures remain effective we will monitor and review them on an ongoing basis to ensure our strategies meets the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and valuing diversity.
* We provide a complaints procedure and a complaints summary record for parents to see.

**Legal framework**

* The Equality Act 2010
* Equal Opportunity Act 2010
* Children Act 2004
* Children and Families Act: Part 3: Children and Young People in England with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities 2014
* Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years 2015
* Disability Equality Duty as part of DDA 2005

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| This policy was adopted at a meeting of | Rascals Pre-school Playgroup | name of setting |
| Held on | 4th July 2024 | (date) |
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| Signed on behalf of Rascals | Tracey Hubbard  |
|  |  |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) | Manager |

**3. Equality of opportunity**

**3.3 Achieving positive behaviour**

**Policy statement**

Our setting believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

## Children need to learn to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. This is a developmental task that requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example. The principles that underpin how we achieve positive and considerate behaviour exist within the programme for promoting personal, social and emotional development.

**Procedures**

## All staff have overall responsibility for our programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour.

**The person responsible for ensuring this policy is kept up to date is Tracey Hubbard.**

We require the manager to:

* keep themselves up-to-date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support;
* access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development ; and
* check that all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour. We keep a record of staff attendance at this training.
* We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of and respect those used by members of the setting.

We require all adults including staff, parents/carers, volunteers, visitors and students to:

* Provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
* Keep to these guidelines at all times.
* Behave in a non-aggressive and non-abusive way at all times. Differences of opinion will be discussed in a calm and respectful manner, away from the children at all times.
* Any use of disrespectful, abusive or aggressive behaviour will immediately be reported to a Church Official.

Members of staff have the right to discontinue a conversation with any aggressive/abusive adult if they feel the situation requires this action and they have the right to ask that adult to leave the premises.

We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the setting's behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.

We work in partnership with children's parents/carers. Parents/carers are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person. We work with parents/carers to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

## *Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour*

* We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. This will involve the adult explaining to the child how their behaviour was not acceptable. A conflict resolution strategy is used. This means an adult will never assume the circumstance of an incident but will talk to both children and offer them the opportunity to talk about the incident and to offer their own viewpoint. The adult will also encourage them to work together to resolve their conflict offering support where needed so the child can learn a more appropriate response.
* We ensure that there are enough popular toys and resources and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns.
* We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share. We make extra effort to praise any positive behaviour.
* We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
* We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
* We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
* When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.
* We never send children out of the room by themselves, nor do we use a ‘naughty chair’ or a ‘time out’ strategy that excludes children from the group.
* We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with these.
* We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children.
* We use physical restraint, such as holding, only to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property.
* Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of our Manager and the situation is discussed with the child’s parent/carer on the same day.
* In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
* We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's inconsiderate behaviour.

## *Children under three years*

* When children under three behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those for older children.
* We recognise that young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.
* Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.
* If tantrums, biting or fighting are frequent, we try to find out the underlying cause and work together with the family to offer support where needed. Sometimes a child has not settled in well and the behaviour may be the result of ‘separation anxiety’.
* We focus on ensuring a child’s attachment figure in the setting, usually their key person, is building a strong relationship to provide security to the child but equally ensure that the child is comfortable with all adults within the setting.

*Rough and tumble play and fantasy aggression*

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using strategies as above.

* We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or aggressive.
* We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.
* We encourage children to only engage in this play with others who want to engage in the same theme and to not involve others who look unhappy, frightened or unwilling to join in. Practitioners encourage children to do this by observing other children’s facial expressions and body language.
* We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently dramatic strategies, blowing up, shooting etc., and that themes often refer to ‘goodies and baddies’ and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.
* We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of ‘teachable moments’ to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.
* We discourage children from bringing realistic looking toy weapons into playgroup.

*Hurtful behaviour*

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child, especially if their emotions are high at the time, but it is not helpful to label this behaviour as ‘bullying’. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often children are unaware of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

* We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them.
* We will help them manage these feelings as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.
* We understand that self-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that take place when triggers activate responses of anger or fear.
* Therefore, we help this process by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour. By helping the child to return to a normal state, we are helping the brain to develop the physiological response system that will help the child be able to manage his or her own feelings.
* We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child’s rage as that will have the opposite effect.
* Our way of responding to children is to calm them through holding, cuddling and where appropriate the use of signing. We will talk to all children offering them an explanation and will discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.
* We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they experience. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. “Adam took your car, didn’t he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn’t like it when he took it, did you? Did it make you feel angry? Is that why you hit him?” Older children will be able to verbalise their feelings better, talking through themselves the feelings that motivated the behaviour.
* We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others’ feelings. “When you hit Adam, it hurt him and he didn’t like that and it made him cry.”
* We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. “I can see you are feeling better now and Adam isn’t crying any more. Let’s see if we can be friends and find another car, so you can both play with one.”
* We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing and turn-taking develop. In order for both the biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries. We will talk to parents/carers and ask for their support outside of the setting also.
* We support social skills through modelling behaviour, through activities, drama and stories. We build self-esteem and confidence in children, recognising their emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.
* We help a child to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we do not force children to say sorry but encourage this where it is clear that they are genuinely sorry and wish to show this to the person they have hurt. Sometimes we encourage them to show they are sorry through body language such as a hug or even a smile.
* When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons for very young children to engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are that:
* they do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs – this may be in the home and it may also be in the setting;
* their parent, or carer in the setting, does not have skills in responding appropriately, and consequently negative patterns are developing where hurtful behaviour is the only response the child has to express feelings of anger;
* the child may have insufficient language, or mastery of English, to express him or herself and may feel frustrated;
* the child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse;
* the child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
* Where this does not work, we use the SEND Code of Practice to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to other professionals where necessary with parent/carer’s permission.

**Legal Framework**

* Statutory guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage – 2021
* SEND code of Practice - 2015

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| This policy was adopted at a meeting of | Rascals Pre-school Playgroup | name of setting |
| Held on | March 2025 | (date) |
| Date to be reviewed | March 2026 or before | (date) |
| Signed on behalf of Rascals | Tracey Hubbard |
|  |  |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) | Manager |

**6. Administration**

**6.2 Collection of Fees and Unpaid Fees Policy**

**Policy statement**

It is our intention to make our setting accessible to children and families from all sections of our community. We aim to work together with families to ensure that they can access the services we provide within a set framework.

**Procedures**

Opening Hours and funding

* Rascals Pre-School Playgroup is open Monday & Tuesday 9.30am – 3.30pm and Thursday & Friday mornings from 9.30am to 12.30pm, 38 weeks of the year, term time only. All children are entitled to funding from the Government of up to 15 hours per week from the term after their third birthday and some working families are entitled to 30 hours of funding per week if they meet set criteria. Rascals can only offer a maximum of 18 hours per week subject to places being available. West Sussex County Council offer Early Years Funded Entitlement to some children under 3 who meet certain criteria and this is available at Rascals the term after the child’s second birthday.

Calculation of fees

* Fees for children not yet eligible for the funding are calculated at £6 per hour. Rascals is open for 38 weeks of the year and each term may vary in length depending on the number of weeks we are open. Fees are calculated based on the usual number of hours of care provided for your child per week for the number of weeks per individual term. The cost is per term and therefore bank holidays, sickness absence and closure days are still due.

Acceptance of your place at Rascals

* Once we have received your written acceptance of your place at Rascals the first terms fees will become due at the beginning of the first term you are with us. If you decide to withdraw your acceptance within the term leading up to your start date the first terms fees will still be due if we are unable to fill this place at short notice. We are a non-profit making group and vacant places would affect our financial situation greatly.

Snack Contribution

* Although we do not include a charge in our fees for snacks provided to the children, we do ask for a voluntary contribution at the beginning of every term to cover the costs. This amount will vary depending on how many hours per week your child attends and is one charge per term. You will be invoiced at the beginning of every term and the voluntary contribution towards snack will be itemised.

Methods of Payment

* Children are registered for a number of hours per week with fees payable on a termly basis at the start of each term. Fees can be settled on a Termly, Half Termly or where requested on a Weekly or Monthly basis. We prefer that fees are paid directly into our bank account.
* For families with Twins or Triplets attending our setting a payment plan can be arranged to spread the payments. Please talk to us if you require this facility.

Absence and fees payable

* Fees must still be paid if children are absent for a short period of time for example holidays or illness. This is because the setting will still have a requirement to meet the cost of rent, wages and other overheads. If your child has to be absent over a long period of time please let us know.

Notice period

* Families are required to give us one months notice prior to moving their child away from the setting, whether they are fee paying or in receipt of Early Years Funded Entitlement from West Sussex County Council. Parents sign their agreement to this within our registration form.

Closures and fees payable

* There may be odd occasions throughout the year where Rascals will be closed including Bank Holidays. If we are closed for a Bank Holiday, fees are still due as the fees are calculated on a termly basis and staff, premises and other costs are still payable by us.
* However, there may be occasions where fees will be waived for closures, such as:
* Severe weather conditions which make it unsafe for us to access the premises
* Staff sickness/absence which results in us not being able to meet the necessary adult:child ratio as required by Ofsted and the EYFS.
* Use of the hall by the Methodist Church
* Closure as instructed by Government in the case of a Pandemic.

Financial Support

* Details of financial support can be found at [www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/individuals/fagWtc1.shtml) or from the Family Information Service within the West Sussex County Council website.
* The Government are now offering a Tax Free Childcare scheme and 30 hours free childcare scheme. A website to support parents/carers in calculating what help they are eligible for can be found here: [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/)

Non payment of fees

* Non payment of fees will be dealt with promptly and any arrears must be paid before the next term.

We realise that this may be a temporary problem but it is important that you discuss the matter in private and in confidence with us as soon as possible in order that we can support you in arranging payment of the outstanding fees.

* Where no payment of fees has been made for 3 weeks an informal invitation to discuss the matter will be offered. Following this discussion any agreement reached regarding payment will be put into writing.
* If agreement isn’t reached, we reserve the right to withdraw access to non-funded hours for your child.
* If discussion is declined, an agreement is not reached, or if a payment method is not committed to, after a further 3 Weeks, the Pre-School Manager will inform the parent/carer in writing that no further non-funded hours will be available to their child. This results in your child losing those hours at Rascals.

* If the issue remains unresolved, we will seek legal advice.

* We will at all times respect confidentiality and aim to work with parents/carers to reach a positive and realistic solution. If you ever have any concerns regarding the payment of your fees please speak to us.
* Should a family default on their fee payments and fees remain outstanding when the child leaves without attempts being made to clear the debt, we reserve the right to decline future requests for a place for younger siblings. We also reserve the right to offer places for immediate family members on a weekly fee basis only. If these payments are defaulted at any time, we will inform the family that the place will be withdrawn if no further payments are made within 7 days.

Further guidance:

* [Early Years Funded Entitlement - West Sussex County Council](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/childcare-and-early-education/childcare-options-and-funding/early-years-funded-entitlement/)
* <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>
* <https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/free-childcare-and-education-for-2-to-4-year-olds>

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| This policy was adopted at a meeting of | Rascals Pre-school Playgroup | name of setting |
| Held on | March 2025 | (date) |
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| Signed on behalf of Rascals | Tracey Hubbard |
|  |  |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) | Manager |

**7. Record keeping**

**7.0- Data Protection (General Data Protection Regulation 2018)**

**Policy Statement**

The record keeping systems at Rascals meet the legal requirements for storing and sharing information within the framework of the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

This policy and procedures work in conjunction with our Confidentiality Policy and our Information Sharing Policy.

General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR) came into effect on 25th May 2018. GDPR states that personal data should be ‘processed fairly & lawfully’ and ‘collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and that individual’s data is not processed without their knowledge and are only processed with their ‘explicit’ consent. GDPR covers personal data relating to individuals.

Rascals Pre-School Playgroup is committed to protecting the rights and freedoms of individuals with respect to the processing of children's, parents, visitors and staff personal data. GDPR gives individuals the right to know what information is held about them. It provides a framework to ensure that personal information is handled properly.

**Procedures**

***Data Controller***

Rascals Pre-School Playgroup is registered as a data controller with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO). Registration number:A8289481. This registration is renewed annually and updated as and when necessary. **The Data Protection officer for Rascals Pre-School Playgroup is Tracey Hubbard**. We ensure that your data is processed fairly and lawfully, is kept secure and is kept for no longer than is necessary\*.

***The legal basis for us collecting data***

We are required to collect data to comply with our legal requirements as an Early Years setting. This is in accordance with Ofsted regulation, in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and to fulfil our role with regards to West Sussex County Council.

***How we use information***

We collect and hold personal information relating to staff, volunteers, students, children, parents, carers and other family members or friends who have authority to collect children from our setting. We may share information with other Early Years settings or local authorities when a child moves setting. In addition, we may share information with other professional services such as health care professionals, schools and financial institutions. We only share information relating to your child with other professionals with your permission unless the safety of the child is at risk as per our information sharing policy.

***Who the information is processed about***

We process personal information about:

1. Past, current and future employees
2. Children attending the setting and their families/carers
3. People enquiring about our setting
4. Students and volunteers
5. Visitors to the setting

***Reasons/purposes for processing information***

We process personal information to enable us to provide educational play, to maintain our own accounts and records and to support and manage our staff.

* Children’s records - We maintain two kinds of records about children attending our setting:

Developmental Records – These include observations of children in the setting, photographs, samples of their work and summary developmental reports. Each child’s journal will contain photographs of themselves plus their friends and may contain written observations including other children’s first names.

Personal Records – These include registration documents and admission forms, signed consent forms and correspondence concerning the child or family, reports or minutes from meetings concerning the child from other agencies, an ongoing record of relevant contact with parents, and observations by staff on any confidential matter involving the child, such as developmental concerns or child protection matters.

In addition to these records children’s names and photographs are shared amongst the setting when the setting is open on the following basis:

* Welcome board – Full name of each child and a photograph of each child. (The names are locked in a cupboard when the setting is closed and the photographs are stored away from the public eye when the setting is closed).
* Coat peg – First name of each child. (The names are on show at all times).
* Toilet list – First names of children are displayed on a list in the toilet area and stored away in a cupboard when the setting is closed.
* Parent/Carer’s records

Contact Details - We maintain an ongoing record of Parent/Carer contact details including names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses.

Personal information – We are required to collect and store information in order to organise Early Years Funded Entitlement for children within the setting. To enable us to process this funding we are required to maintain records including parent/carer’s National Insurance Numbers and date of birth. This information is requested on our registration document and again on the Early Years Funded Entitlement Parent Declaration form supplied to us by West Sussex County Council.

* Staff/volunteer records

We are required to maintain personal records relating to staff members, which include the following documents:

1. Application form
2. References
3. Certificates relating to qualifications
4. Copies of identification such as passport or driving license
5. P45
6. Records from Supervisory meetings and appraisals

Safeguarding - In order to adhere to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements we are also required to retain a record of DBS certificate numbers.

Salary payments - In order to process wages we are required to maintain a record of National Insurance Numbers and bank details. This information is held securely in paper form with the manager and is also used online to process wage payments. This requires the information to be input into the HMRC PAYE online system which is accessed via a password protected laptop and is also used to process wage payments through our bank account.

Health information- We are required to maintain an ongoing record of any regular medication taken by members of staff and contact details of their Doctor.

Emergency contact details – We are required to maintain an ongoing record of emergency contact details for each member of staff.

***Who the information is shared with***

We sometimes need to share personal information we process with the individual themselves and also with other organisations. Where this is necessary we are required to comply with all aspects of the Data Protection Act (DPA).

Below is a list of individuals or groups who we may share information with:

* Families attending our setting
* Healthcare professionals
* Social and welfare advisers or practitioners
* Financial organisations and professional advisers
* Debt collection and tracing agencies
* Local schools
* Current, past and prospective employees
* Local and central government
* Suppliers
* Service providers
* Other Early Years Providers
* Photographic development services
* The Methodist Church

***Retention periods***

Personal information is not held any longer than is necessary and complies with guidelines from local government and Ofsted\*.

***Your rights***

The GDPR has 7 individual rights:

1. **The right to be informed – you must be given clear information about data collection**

Rascals Pre-School Playgroup is a registered Childcare provider with Ofsted and as such, is required to collect and manage certain data. We need to know parent/carer’s names, addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, date of birth and National Insurance numbers. We need to know children’s full names, addresses, date of birth and Birth Certificate number. For parents claiming the free nursery entitlement we are requested to provide this data to West Sussex County Council; this information is sent to the Local Authority via a secure electronic file transfer system. We are required to collect certain details of visitors to our pre-schools. We need to know visitor’s names, and an appropriate emergency contact telephone number. This is in conjunction with our Health and Safety and Safeguarding Policies.

As an employer Rascals Pre-School Playgroup is required to hold data on its employees; names, addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers, date of birth, National Insurance numbers, photographic ID such as passport and driver’s license, bank details. This information is also required for Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS) and proof of eligibility to work in the UK. This information is sent via a secure file transfer system for the processing of DBS checks.

Rascals Pre-School Playgroup uses Cookies on its website to collect data, this data is anonymous and a cookie notices is attached to our website informing visitors.

1. **The right to access – staff and families are allowed to request access to their data**

Rascals Pre-School Playgroup is owned by Rustington Methodist Church and falls under the umbrella of the church charity registration no: 1134885. At any point an individual can make a request relating to their data and Rascals Pre-School Playgroup will need to provide a response (within 1 month). Rascals Pre-School Playgroup can refuse a request but we will inform the individual of the reasons for the rejection. The individual will have the right to complain to the ICO if they are not happy with the decision. The ICO can be contacted as follows: Tel: **0303 123 1113.**

1. **The right to rectification – if data is incorrect you have the right to ask for it to be updated**

Under Article 16 of the GDPR individuals have the right to have inaccurate personal data rectified. An individual may also be able to have incomplete personal data completed – although this will depend on the purposes for the processing. This may involve providing a supplementary statement to the incomplete data. We will reply to requests within 1 month.

1. **The right of erasure – You can ask for your data to be ‘forgotten’ once it’s use has expired.**

Under Article 17 of the GDPR individuals have the right to have personal data erased. This is also known as the ‘right to be forgotten’. The right is not absolute and only applies in certain circumstances. Individuals have the right to have their personal data erased if:

* the personal data is no longer necessary for the purpose which we originally collected or processed it for;
* we are relying on consent as our lawful basis for holding the data, and the individual withdraws their consent;
* we are relying on legitimate interests as our basis for processing, the individual objects to the processing of their data, and there is no overriding legitimate interest to continue this processing;
* we are processing the personal data for direct marketing purposes and the individual objects to that processing;
* we have processed the personal data unlawfully
* we have to do it to comply with a legal obligation; or
* we have processed the personal data to offer information society services to a child.

The GDPR specifies two circumstances where we should tell other organisations about the erasure of personal data:

* the personal data has been disclosed to others; or
* the personal data has been made public in an online environment (for example on social networks, forums or websites).

If we have disclosed the personal data to others, we will contact each recipient and inform them of the erasure, unless this proves impossible or involves disproportionate effort.

1. **The right to restrict processing – You can object to your data being used in certain ways**

Article 18 of the GDPR gives individuals the right to restrict the processing of their personal data in certain circumstances. This means that an individual can limit the way that Rascals Pre-School Playgroup uses their data. This is an alternative to requesting the erasure of their data.

Individuals have the right to restrict the processing of their personal data where they have a particular reason for wanting the restriction. Rascals Pre-School Playgroup will respond to a request as soon as it is received or at the latest 30 days after the request.

1. **The right to data Portability – Our systems must move data safely and securely**

Rascals Pre-School Playgroup requires data to be transferred from one IT system to another; such as from Rascals Pre-School Playgroup to the Local Authority, to shared settings, to financial institutions, to other professionals for example. These recipients use secure file transfer systems and have their own policies and procedures in place in relation to GDPR.

1. **The right to object – you have the right to object to data being used in a way that runs counter to the original use.**

Article 21 of the GDPR gives individuals the right to object to the processing of their personal data. This effectively allows individuals to ask us to stop processing their personal data.

Individuals have the absolute right to object to the processing of their data if it is for direct marketing purposes. Rascals Pre-School Playgroup never passes your data onto marketing companies.

**\*Retention periods**

All records are held for a period of time as recommended or stipulated by either the Pre-School Learning Alliance or Ofsted. The main documents are shown below:

* Registration documents are kept for a period of 3 years after a child has left our setting.
* Funding forms are maintained for a period of 1 year after a child has left our setting.
* Staff/volunteer records are kept for 6 years following a member of staff leaving the setting.
* Accident records are kept for 3 years for adults and until the child has reached 18 years of age.

**Legal Framework**

* **Data Protection Act 1998**
* **General Data Protection Regulation 2018**
* **Human Rights Act 1998**

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| This policy was adopted at a meeting of | Rascals Pre-school Playgroup | name of setting |
| Held on | March 2025 | (date) |
| Date to be reviewed | March 2026 | (date) |
|  |  |
| Name of signatories | Tracey Hubbard |
| Role of signatories | Manager |

**8. Partnership**

**8.1 The role of the key person and settling-in**

**Policy Statement**

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed, and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the setting.

We aim to make the setting a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

The key person role is set out in the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must offer a key person for each child.

The procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children who are in settings.

**Procedures**

* We allocate a key person before the child starts.
* The key person is responsible for settling the child into our setting.
* The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
* The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child’s well-being, care and learning.
* The key person acts as the key contact for the parents/carers and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a childminder, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child’s development with those carers.
* A key person is responsible for developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child’s parents/carers to keep those records up to date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.
* The key person encourages positive relationships between children in her/his key group.
* We ensure that all staff are kept up to date with issues that may affect certain key children so that if a key person is absent any other member of staff can take over the care of that child and can speak to parents/carers confidently about current issues.
* We promote the role of the key person as the child’s primary carer in our setting, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.

*Settling-in*

* Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents/carers with information. These include written information such as our prospectus and policies and individual meetings with parents.
* During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we aim to provide an opportunity for the child and his/her parents/carers to visit the setting if possible. This visit provides us with the opportunity to discuss the child’s registration information before they start with us.
* We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend; the key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents/carers at the child's first session and during the settling-in process
* There will be occasions where visits to the setting are not possible and on these occasions, we will organise an open morning in order for parents/carers and children to meet each other and all the staff.
* When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents/carers and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
* Although we appreciate that dummies may be used at home, we request that dummies are not brought into the setting. Research has shown that dummies can lead to speech delays and can affect the normal development of children’s teeth. We ask that other comforters are brought into the setting instead such as a cuddly toy which can be safely stored in the child’s bag. If parents/carers need help and support with reducing the use of dummies we will offer this.
* We understand that the parent, carer or close relative, may want to stay during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child. We usually aim for this to be limited to 30 minutes, gradually reducing this time over the first few sessions.
* Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent/carer to be on hand to re-settle them.
* We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person; for example, the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
* When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when. We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left.
* We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker and children who are upset will always be closely looked after either by their key person or another member of staff who the child feels comfortable with alongside their parent/carer in order to build secure relationships.
* We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it too distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
* We do understand that some children may appear upset when they arrive for several months after starting the setting but in cases where practitioners have seen evidence of the child being settled once the parent/carer has left the premises, the key person will welcome the child each morning where possible, help the child to say goodbye to their parent/carer and ensure that they feel settled as quickly as possible. This will always be discussed with the parent/carer to ensure they feel happy with this arrangement.
* We always call or text parents/carers to confirm once their child has settled comfortably to prevent them feeling anxious.
* Within the first term of starting, we discuss and work with the child's parents/carers to start to create their child's record of achievement.

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| Date to be reviewed | March 2026 | (date) |
| Signed on behalf of Rascals | Tracey Hubbard  |
|  |  |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) | Manager |