Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy

At Muddy Puddles Childcare we are committed to taking all necessary steps to keep children safe and well. This includes making sure that children are not exposed to adults who may be under the influence of alcohol or other substances that may affect their ability to care for them.

This policy is in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. This should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding children and child protection policy, Disciplinary procedure and Suitability of staff policy.

Alcohol

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, companies have a legal requirement to provide a safe working environment for all of their employees.

Anyone who arrives at the nursery clearly under the influence of alcohol will be asked to leave. If they are a member of staff, the nursery will investigate the matter and will initiate the Disciplinary procedure, as a result of which, action may be taken, including dismissal. Staff can still be under the influence of alcohol the following day and staff should be aware of this, ensuring this is not the case when starting work.

If they are a parent, the nursery manager and/or designated safeguarding lead will judge if the parent is suitable to care for the child. This may involve calling the second contact on the child's registration form to collect them. If a child is thought to be at risk the nursery will follow the Safeguarding children and child protection procedures. If anyone arrives at the nursery in control of a car under the influence of alcohol the police will be contacted.

Staff, students, parents, carers, visitors, contractors etc. must not bring alcohol onto the nursery premises.

Substance misuse

Anyone who arrives at the nursery under the influence of illegal drugs, or any other substance including medication, that affects their ability to care for children, will be asked to leave the premises immediately.

If they are a member of staff, an investigation will follow which may lead to consideration of disciplinary action, as a result of which dismissal could follow.

If they are a parent, the nursery manager and/or designated safeguarding lead will judge if the parent is suitable to care for the child. This may involve calling the second contact on the child's registration form to collect them. If a child is thought to be at risk the nursery will follow the Safeguarding children and child protection procedures.

The nursery manager will contact the police if anyone (including staff, students, volunteers, contractors and visitors) is suspected of being in possession of illegal drugs or if they are driving or

may drive when under the influence of illegal drugs. If they are a member of staff, Disciplinary procedures will be followed.

If a member of staff is taking medication that may affect their ability to care for children, they must seek medical advice and inform the nursery manager as soon as possible to arrange for a risk assessment to take place. This will ensure that staff members only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after the children properly.

Any medication on the premises is stored securely, and out of reach of children, at all times.

If the nursery suspects there may be an issue with drugs or alcohol (such as from observations, poor performance, changes in behaviour, sickness and/or staff feedback) but there is no evidence that it is happening during working hours or that they are arriving at work under the influence of drugs or alcohol a meeting will be held with the member of staff and manager to investigate the health concerns.

Support and referral to appropriate services may be offered to the staff member, if this is considered appropriate.

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

The staff member will be reminded that Disciplinary procedures will apply if they attend work under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Safeguarding and child protection

If a parent is clearly over the alcohol limit, or under the influence of illegal drugs and it is believed the child is at risk, we will follow our Safeguarding children and child protection procedures, contacting the local authority children's social care team and the police.

Staff will do their utmost to prevent a child from travelling in a vehicle driven by a parent suspected of being over the alcohol limit or under the influence of illegal drugs. If necessary, the police will be called.

Where an illegal act is suspected to have taken place, the police will be called.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
24/01/2026	Heather Black	24/1/2027