Hellingly Preschool – Data Protection Policy

1. Statement of Intent

Hellingly Preschool is committed to protecting the rights and privacy of individuals in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. We collect and process personal information relating to our employees, children, parents, visitors, and job applicants to operate effectively, meet legal obligations, and provide high-quality early years education.

This policy outlines our procedures for collecting, storing, processing, and disposing of personal data to ensure compliance with the law and maintain confidentiality and integrity.

---

2. Data Protection Principles

Hellingly Preschool ensures that all personal data is:

- Obtained and processed fairly and lawfully
- Collected for specified, lawful purposes and not used in ways incompatible with those purposes
- Adequate, relevant, and not excessive for its intended purpose
- Accurate and kept up to date
- Not retained for longer than necessary
- Processed in accordance with the rights of the data subject
- Secured against unauthorized access, loss, or destruction
- Not transferred outside the European Economic Area without adequate protection

All staff and volunteers must comply with these principles.

---

3. Notification of Data Held and Processed

All individuals have the right to:

- Know what personal data Hellingly Preschool holds and why
- Access their personal data upon request
- Request corrections to inaccurate or outdated information
- Understand how we comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Act and GDPR

---

4. Data Controller and Designated Data Controllers

Hellingly Preschool is the **Data Controller** and is ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance with data protection legislation.

The **Designated Data Controllers** responsible for day-to-day management are:

- **Sara Sherrard – Manager and Director**

---

5. Definition of Personal Information

Personal information refers to any data that identifies a living individual. This includes, but is not limited to, information about:

- Children attending the preschool and their families
- Employees and volunteers
- Visitors and job applicants
- Professional contacts

Types of personal data we may collect include:

- Full names, addresses, email addresses, phone numbers
- Date of birth and medical information
- Emergency contacts
- Bank details and National Insurance numbers
- DBS check numbers
- Observations of children's progress (Learning Journeys)
- Photographs and videos
- Accident and incident reports
- Relevant family medical history (when necessary)

All personal data is collected and stored in line with EYFS Statutory Framework requirements.

---

6. Processing Personal Information

All staff and volunteers must ensure that:

- Personal data is always kept secure
- Information is only accessed by those authorised
- It is not disclosed to unauthorised individuals verbally, in writing, or electronically

Personal data should be stored in:

- A locked filing cabinet or cupboard
- A password-protected computer system
- Secure portable devices (if used), stored safely when not in use

Unauthorised disclosure or misuse of personal data is considered gross misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action.

---

7. Confidential Conversations and Meetings

Confidential information should only be discussed:

- In private settings
- Among authorised personnel
- Away from public or shared areas

Notes from meetings (where applicable) should be:

- Stored securely in a locked cupboard
- Retained for no more than 1 year (unless related to safeguarding)
- Shredded or destroyed securely after the retention period

---

8. Collecting Information

When collecting personal data, individuals will be informed:

- Why the information is being collected
- Who will access it
- The purpose of the processing

Consent will be obtained where required, or processing will be based on the preschool's legitimate interests or legal obligations.

---

9. Sensitive Information

Sensitive personal data includes details about:

- Ethnic origin
- Political or religious beliefs

- Trade union membership
- Physical or mental health
- Sexual orientation
- Criminal convictions or proceedings

Such data will only be collected and processed with explicit consent, unless required by law or necessary to protect the person's vital interests.

---

10. Disposal of Confidential Material

Personal and sensitive data will be:

- Shredded or securely deleted when no longer needed
- Permanently removed from devices before disposal
- Destroyed in accordance with statutory and retention guidelines

---

11. Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Ensure the accuracy of any personal data they provide
- Inform the management of any changes promptly
- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy
- Seek guidance if unsure about handling personal data

Staff have the right to access their own personal data upon request.

---

12. Duty to Disclose Information

Hellingly Preschool has a legal obligation to disclose certain information, including:

- **Child protection concerns** (to Children's Services)
- **Drug trafficking, terrorism, money laundering, or treason** (to the police)
- **Disqualification by association** (to the DBS)

---

13. Retention of Data

We retain personal information only as long as necessary in line with legal, regulatory, and operational requirements.

Records are stored in secure, lockable cabinets in the home office of the owner. After the retention period, data is destroyed securely.

---

14. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or when changes in legislation require updates. All staff will be informed of updates and trained accordingly.

Adopted by: Hellingly Preschool
Date: 1.09.2025
Next Review Due: 1.09.2026
Signed: Sara Sherrard – Manager and Director