



GRACE PARK MONTESSORI PRE-SCHOOL

SAFETY STATEMENT

**For the attention of all Staff, Parents,
Contractors and Other Visitors**

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Safety Statement

Health and Safety Policy of Grace Park Montessori

1. Policy Statement

Grace Park Montessori Pre-School is committed to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all who attend the service and procedures and practices are in place to ensure that we provide a safe place for children, staff, parents and visitors to be. The contents of this statement and of our safety policy will be made known to all stakeholders.

This document sets out the Safety, Health and Welfare policy of Grace Park Montessori and indicates the means provided to achieve this policy.

The designated Safety Officer at Grace Park Montessori is Ms Jozefa Chrobak.

2. Principle

This policy is underwritten by the *Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016* and the *Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Act, 2005*. Our aim is to comply with the requirements of the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005*.

3. Rationale and Scope

Our objective is to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all our children, employees, parents, students and visitors. In so far as is reasonably practicable, Grace Park Montessori is committed to providing:

- safe workplace
- a safe means of access and egress
- a safe equipment
- safe systems of work
- appropriate information, training and supervision
- protective equipment, if necessary, and
- emergency plans

The success of the policy will depend on the co-operation of everyone involved. It is therefore important that you read and understand our safety policy and understand your role in our overall arrangements for health and safety.

A copy of the Safety statement is available on the premises. It is our intention to review this statement regularly and/or in the light of experience and/or a change in legislation.

4. Review of Statement

In accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, on completion of a risk assessment Grace Park Montessori will review this Safety Statement where there have been significant changes and where there is reason to believe this Statement is no longer valid. Where an inspector who in the course of an inspection, investigation, examination, inquiry directs that this Safety Statement be amended, such amendment will be made within 30 days of the giving of that direction.

5. Safe Systems of Work

It is the policy of Grace Park Montessori to ensure that tasks undertaken are within the competence and capacity of our staff. The training provided to employees identifies areas where care and skill must be exercised. It is our policy, when purchasing equipment or altering existing systems of work, to ensure that purposed purchases or changes ensure are without significant hazard in so far as this reasonably practicable.

Systems of work will be reviewed on request from any employee or parent.

6. Duties of Employer

At Grace Park Montessori Pre-School, the safety, health and welfare of all our employees is important. Our duties include: -

- managing and conducting work activities in such a way as to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of our employee;
- managing and conducting work activities in such a way as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health or welfare at work of our employee at risk;
- ensuring that the place of work is maintained in a condition that is safe and without improper risk to health;
- ensuring that the place of work has a safe means of entering and exiting;
- ensuring fire exits are not blocked and employee, parents and contractors know their location;
- proving systems of work that are planned, organised, preformed, maintained and revised, as appropriate;
- providing and maintaining facilities and arrangements for the welfare of staff;
- providing appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision to our employee;
- where risks cannot be eliminated or adequately controlled, providing suitable protective clothing and equipment as is necessary to ensure the safety, health and welfare of our employee;
- preparing and revising, as appropriate, adequate plans and procedures to be followed and measures to be taken in case of emergency or serious and imminent danger;

- reporting accidents and dangerous occurrences to the Health and Safety Authority; and
- ensuring that any measures taken in relation to health, safety and welfare at work do not involve financial cost to an employee.

7. Duties of Employee

It shall be the duty of an employee to:

- read and understand the Pre-School's Safety Statement;
- co-operate with the Directress to enable compliance with statutory provisions;
- take reasonable care for her own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person who may be affected by her acts or omissions while at work;
- ensure that she is not under the influence of an intoxicant that endangers her own safety, health or welfare or that of others;
- refrain from improper conduct or behaviour that is likely to endanger her own safety, health or welfare at work or that of any other person or child;
- refrain from playing dangerous or practical jokes;
- attend and have regard to any relevant training and/or instructions relating to health, safety and welfare at work;
- make proper use of equipment provided at work, including, protective clothing or equipment;
- report to the Directress any defects in equipment which might cause a hazard
- report to the Directress any work being carried on, or likely to be carried on, in a manner which may endanger the safety, health and welfare at work of any person;
- report to the Directress any defects in the systems of work or any article or substance which may endanger the health, safety and welfare of any person;
- report to the Directress any contravention of the relevant statutory provisions which may endanger the safety, health, and welfare at work of any person; and
- be vigilant for safety and, where possible, to suggest or indicate safer methods of work.

On entering into a contract of employment, an employee must not misrepresent herself to the employer with regard to the level of health and safety training received.

An employee shall not intentionally, recklessly or without reasonable cause, interfere with, misuse or damage any property of Grace Park Montessori.

8. Instruction and Training

Grace Park Montessori expects that its employee to co-operate in training provided. It is essential that no employee attempts a potentially hazardous task without permission and appropriate instruction.

Training is seen as an essential part of the work and development of an employee. Opportunities are provided within the service to enable an employee to develop her potential. In particular, an employee receives an introduction to any new work equipment or new work systems any change of equipment and/or any new technology. Time for training is accommodated into the employee's schedule (in as far as is practicable) and outside training courses are also funded where resources are available. An employee is encouraged to attend.

In relation to *the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005* the employer shall, when providing training/ instruction to her employee aim to ensure that:

- training and instruction are provided in a manner and, as appropriate, in language that is understood by the employee concerned;
- the employee's capabilities in relation to safety, health and welfare are taken into account when assigned a task; and
- an Induction training program and In-Service training is provided to any new employee so that they are aware of the job description, workload, codes of practice, procedures and health and safety issues.

The person responsible for instruction is the Directress or, when not available, her designated assistant teacher.

9. Stress

Care is taken so that the employee is not required to undertake a job which out- strips her skills resulting in qualitative overload.

Grace Park Montessori recognise the stress and responsibility involved in caring for young children. Unreasonable parental expectations and demands may also be a source of additional stress.

The Management of Grace Park Montessori recognises that in the caring/teaching profession there is a real danger of such stress. An individual may find herself in a situation where she cannot delegate her chores to another and may lose awareness of the limits of her responsibility. Management is particularly conscious of the underfunding and lack of statutory support available, generally, for early years educators and how this, too, may contribute to additional stress.

Management has frequent meetings with the employee where feelings are openly discussed, and conclusions reached. This ensures support and understanding.

To achieve a satisfied, efficient and motivated work force Grace Park Montessori:

- ensures its employee is informed of developments and progress;
- is a fair, just and reasonable employer;
- understands the psychology of small groups and the good that flows from a harmonious team;

- provides the means by which its employee can develop in her profession insofar as this is reasonably practicable; and
- offers support and feedback to alleviate stress levels by recognizing good performance and effort and offering helpful and constructive criticism, where necessary, to aim for improved performance.

10. Emergencies

At Grace Park Montessori we address safety concerns arising from emergencies and other dangers with particular care.

In accordance to the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005*, we:

- provide for First Aid, Fire Drills and evacuation of persons in relation to our place of work;
- maintain contact numbers for relevant emergency services – fire service, medical assistance, rescue services;
- designate a staff member (the Directress) as Safety Officer for certain areas of safety and welfare and ensure she has adequate training and the equipment available is adequate to the potential hazards;

In the event of an emergency or serious and imminent danger, the Directress (or, in her absence, her designated deputy officer) shall -

- alert all concerned of the risk involved and the steps to be followed to protect people from harm;
- discontinue all work where there is still a serious danger to the health and safety of any person; and
- ensure that an employee is trained to take the necessary steps to avoid the consequences of the danger.

11. Child Protection and Child Safeguarding

Grace Park Montessori recognises that working with children carries important responsibilities in terms of safeguarding and protecting them from foreseeable harm.

A comprehensive Child Protection Policy is in place and reviewed annually. Grace Park Montessori complies with its statutory obligations in this regard.

There is also a comprehensive Child Safeguarding Statement that is applicable and relevant to our service.

12. Accident Prevention

At Grace Park Montessori we have frequent consultation regarding accident prevention. We review our accident prevention procedures and fire safety procedures, periodically. Accidents may occur irrespective of high vigilance and we have, therefore, established an accident investigation procedure. This is a statutory obligation whereunder we:

- identify the information that needs to be gathered so that suitable remedial action may be taken;
- prepare a report and retain it in our log book;
- prepare a report, where required, for the insurance purposes;
- inform a parent, promptly, if a child has been involved; and
- Retain a record is kept for future analysis.

Risk assessments are carried out by the Directress.

13. Accident Investigation

An Accident Investigation report shall include:

- the name and address of the injured person;
- the age of the person;
- the location of the accident;
- the precise date and time of the accident;
- details of the accident and how it occurred;
- how long they were present in Grace Park Montessori;
- the names of any witnesses to the accident;
- the weather conditions (if outside);
- the lighting conditions;
- a description of any injuries sustained;
- whether first aid was required and, if so, administered and by whom;
- whether the person was taken to hospital and, if so, whether her or she was detained; and
- the number of children and/or adults, if any, who were at the scene at the time the accident occurred.

14. Bullying and Harassment

Respect and courtesy are values that are cherished, observed and practised in Grace Park Montessori. Bullying, harassment and abusive behaviours are health and safety issues and are considered a workplace hazard.

Bullying, harassment or abusive behaviour from **any** source—parents, staff, visitors or any other persons on the premises—will not be tolerated at Grace Park Montessori.

A risk assessment is carried out to address it and to reduce its consequences should it ever occur.

An employee has a responsibility to ensure that she is not contributing to a bullying culture and to take reasonable care for her own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person who may be affected by her own acts or omissions while at work.

15. Fire Detection and Evacuation

Grace Park Montessori has a comprehensive fire evacuation plan in place. It covers matters such as raising the alarm, evacuation, fire-fighting materials, and the role of staff in an emergency.

Fire Detection and Fire Fighting Equipment are present on the premises. Smoke alarms and fire extinguishers are located at relevant point. Staff have been trained in using same. The extinguishers are checked annually. each year. The location of the nearest fire hydrant connection is known to staff.

Evacuation Procedures and those governing Fire Drill are set out in writing and displayed in the service. Fire Drill is conducted on a monthly basis.

16. Hygiene

The importance of hygiene at Grace Park Montessori is reflected on two fronts: - operational hygiene and structural hygiene. Staff observe a high level of hygiene both personally and operationally.

As far as infrastructural hygiene, there are daily, weekly and term cleaning programmes in place to ensure a high standard of hygiene. There are facilities for cleaning and disinfecting equipment and hands. Tables and chairs are wiped down daily after each sessional use. Equipment is washed at least once a week. Detergents, cleaning fluids and disinfectants are kept out of reach of children.

Particular attention is paid to hygiene around food. Fresh fruit and vegetables are washed thoroughly, and all utensils are kept clean and stored appropriately. All food areas are treated in an appropriate manner to ensure that conditions for the spread of bacteria are minimised. All spillages are cleaned immediately.

17. Waste

Waste is disposed of properly and out of reach of children. Bins are disinfected on a regular basis. In the case of children's toileting 'accidents' that may occur from time to time, disposable latex gloves are worn, and all areas are disinfected.

All toilets facilities are kept in a clean condition and well maintained. All cloths, delph, utensils are kept in a clean condition and regularly sterilised.

18. Safe Access

Entrance passageways are of sufficient width and are clearly marked. Passageways are kept clear of materials and equipment. Space between tables is sufficient for safe movement. Floors are free from slippery materials, loose objects, and are maintained in good condition.

19. Garden

The garden equipment is checked before use and anything that is broken or hazardous is removed. The outdoor play space is inspected for potential dangers prior to use. Wet surfaces (left from earlier rainfall) are dried before use. Sharp corners are covered with soft protective materials. Garden surfaces are also covered in outdoor soft protective tiles.

Signage is displayed in the front garden prohibiting children from climbing on to walls. Parents are obliged to ensure the safety of their child prior to entering the pre-school and from the moment the child is returned to them on discharge from pre-school.

20. Storage

Materials, articles, and pre-school equipment are stored in properly designed areas. All storage space is kept within safe maximum heights. There is safe means of access to every storage area and sufficient storage containers are provided.

21. Electricity and Lighting

We in Grace Park Montessori employ only electrical experts to install any electrical equipment or to make any changes to the electrical wiring or appliances which may be required, from time to time.

Lighting is satisfactory at all points and the distribution of natural light or artificial light is not impaired. Defective or missing bulbs are replaced immediately.

Electrical sockets, outlets and switches are properly maintained and serviced. Children have no access to electrical sockets.

We also recognise the problem of potential overload and attention is paid to the capabilities of sockets and plugs. Trip switches are deployed in Grace Park Montessori.

22. Contractors

When considering a contractor for any task required, Grace Park Montessori checks that the contractor has appropriate knowledge of safety standards in his/her speciality and that the appropriate insurance cover is in place.

The contractor's compliance with all Grace Park Montessori in house safety rules and with the Health and Safety Legislation is required. In principle, contractual works are carried out after school hours or at weekends.

Where the presence of a contractor is necessary, attention is taken to ensure that the whereabouts of the children is observed.

Hazards brought on-site by the contractor must be revealed, controlled and minimised by the contractor. Work is inspected on completion of the contract.

23. Students and Volunteers

Students and volunteers may, from time to time, request work experience at the pre-school. They are never used in place of a paid employee or in achieving essential staff ratios. Students are carefully selected in conjunction with the relevant Training College. Both students and volunteers are informed of this Safety Statement and of their responsibilities.

A student or volunteer is supervised at all times. No student or volunteer is permitted to be in sole charge of any child.

24. Disabilities and Additional Needs

Insofar as it reasonably can, Grace Park Montessori will seek to accommodate the additional needs of children and adults who may visit the service. Attention is drawn to the fact that regard must be had to the size and capacity of the service, the needs of the individual in question, the physical space available to staff of the service, the pupil teacher ratio, the safety risk arising in respect of the children within the service and the allocation of the time involved in discharging responsibilities to all users of the service.

25. General Health and Welfare

There is a qualified person in charge of First Aid and the First Aid Box is readily available and complete. No staff member is permitted to take hot liquid out of the staff kitchen area.

All necessary statutory notices are displayed.

26. Insurance

Grace Park Montessori holds appropriate third-party insurance cover in order to comply with statutory insurance responsibilities. It also has insurance cover to protect its property and to protect the service in the event of a valid claim being brought against it.

Conclusion

This Safety Statement should be read in conjunction with several of the pre-schools policies, including, its

- Child Protection Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Infection Control Policy
- Authorization to Collect a Child Policy
- Risk Management Policy and
- Staff Training, Staff Absence and Staff Supervision Policies.

Józefa Chrobak

Directress

Reviewed on:	25 January 2023

Appendix 1

Sample Risk Assessment Template

Potential Risk	Potential Impact	Potential Risk Mitigation Steps
Children Climbing on Garden Wall	Accident causing injury	<p>Newsletter includes reminders that parents must prohibit their children from climbing on garden wall.</p> <p>Signage posted outside and visible.</p>
Sharp Corners	Injury to child	Coverage of corners with appropriate protective covers.
Spread of Infection	Injury to others	<p>Hygiene Protocol is in place.</p> <p>Infection Control Policy is implemented and observed.</p> <p>Parents requested not to bring child to school if the child is unwell.</p>
Unsecured egress	Child wanders out	<p>Protocol in place to ensure front door is secured by adult when last used.</p> <p>Any parent who remains on in the pre-school with a child (e.g. during settling in period) is obliged to inform staff when leaving so that front door may be secured.</p>