

The Cygnet's Baby and Toddler Group

The logo for Cygnet's Nest, featuring a stylized teal cygnet swimming in a pond with lily pads.

The Signal Box Centre Charity, Glenalmond Avenue Cambridge CB2 8DB

General policies

- 1.1. The parent/carer is entirely responsible for their child/carer whilst attending the session.
- 1.2. In the event of adverse weather such as heavy snow. In these instances, any closure of the Signal Box will be announced by email and, where possible, on the website and verbally at the preceding sessions if there is sufficient notice. If the Signal Box Centre is unsuitable for a length of time, for example, following a fire in the building, alternative accommodation and arrangements will be sought to ensure that the group can continue.
- 1.3. Attendance by non members (e.g. Fund-raising stall, student researcher) can be agreed with permission of Cygnet's Nest and/or the Signal Box Committee.
- 1.4. From time to time parents may bring in a birthday cake to celebrate their child's birthday. If your child has any allergies it is your responsibility to ensure that your child does not eat anything, he or she may have an allergic reaction to.
- 1.5. All hot drinks from the kitchen, will be the responsibility of the person consuming them, to ensure the children do not have access to the drink from which they may scold themselves. Hot drinks should never be put down where a child may reach.
- 1.6. Children should not be allowed to go into the kitchen unless accompanied by their primary carer.
- 1.7. Children must be kept away from door areas and must not play in the blinds.
- 1.8. Keep potentially harmful or breakable items out of children's reach, particularly if you carry medicines or sharp items in your bags.
- 1.9. There are nappy disposal facilities at the Signal Box Centre. Nappy changing should take place in the toilet where there is a changing bench and disposal facilities.

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1.10. No photographs or videos may be taken at Cgynet's Nest without the permission of the primary carer.

1.11. Cgynet's Nest complies with health and safety regulations making our setting a no-smoking environment - both indoor and outdoor. Please do not smoke either in the Signal Box Centre or close to the entrance doors.

1.12. Any broken or damaged toys or equipment must be removed from play and handed to the session leader or who will then make a decision as to whether they should be mended or discarded.

1.13. Please remember that should your child vomit or have diarrhoea, they must not attend any session for 48 hours after the last time they were ill. Should your child have any infectious disease, they should not attend until they are fully recovered.

Valuing diversity and promoting equality

We ensure that Cygnet's Nest is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children. We recognise that children and their families come from diverse backgrounds and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity. Cgynet's Nest welcomes all children and their parents/carers from all backgrounds and recognises its importance in fostering good relations between all communities.

All families have needs and values that arise from their social and economic, ethnic and cultural or religious backgrounds. Children grow up in diverse family structures. Some children have needs that arise from disability or impairment or may have parents that are affected by disability or impairment. Some children come from families who experience social exclusion or

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The logo for Cygnet's Nest, featuring a stylized teal cygnet (swan) with its neck curved upwards, flanked by two smaller teal swan heads.

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severe hardship; some have to face discrimination and prejudice because of their ethnicity, the languages they speak, their religious or belief background, their gender or their impairment. We understand that these factors affect the well-being of children and can impact on their learning and attainment. Cygnet's Nest is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families.

2.1. Cygnet's Nest is open to all members of the community. Admission is on a drop-in basis. We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of a protected characteristic as defined by the Equalities Act 2010. These are:

- ◆ o disability
- ◆ o race
- ◆ o gender reassignment
- ◆ o religion or belief
- ◆ o sex
- ◆ o sexual orientation
- ◆ o age
- ◆ o pregnancy and maternity
- ◆ o marriage and civil partnership

2.2. We will develop and carry out an action plan to ensure that people with impairments can participate successfully in the services offered by the setting and in the activities offered.

2.3. Cygnet's Nest makes inclusion a thread that runs through all activities of the setting, including welcoming ideas for activities and songs from all cultures, nationalities and communities.

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2.4. We will provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form, and provide information in any language if possible within our means. For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion.

2.5. Cgynet's Nest will challenge and eliminate any discriminatory actions by parents/carers whether by:

- ✧ o *direct discrimination* - someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic e.g. preventing families of some racial groups from using the service;
- ✧ o *indirect discrimination* - someone is affected unfavourably by a general policy e.g. children must only speak English in the setting;
- ✧ o *association* - discriminating against someone who is associated with a person with a protected characteristic e.g. behaving unfavourably to someone who is married to a person from a different cultural background;
- ✧ o *perception* - discrimination on the basis that it is thought someone has a protected characteristic e.g. assuming someone is gay because of their mannerism or how they speak.

2.6. 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.

Behaviour

Parents and carers are responsible for their children at all times. Cgynet's Nest encourages children and adults to be kind to and considerate of each other and we ask for your help to ensure that your child's behaviour does not affect other children's enjoyment of the group. We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and respect all

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those used in the setting. All members and volunteers will provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents, carers and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy. We expect all members of our setting - children, parents/carers, staff, committee members, volunteers - to keep to the following guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.

3.1. Cgynet's Nest encourages 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. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgment of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable and supporting children to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.

3.2. 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.

3.3. If you are concerned about the behaviour of someone in the group please bring it to the attention of the group leader.

3.4. Cgynet's Nest will not tolerate violence, abusive or aggressive behaviour by parents or carers. Abusive or aggressive behaviour includes (but is not limited to) shouting, inappropriate language including swearing, and threats.

3.5. Following any instance of abusive or aggressive behaviour, the Cgynet's Nest committee reserves the right to exclude any parent, carer or visitor from the sessions. This will not affect a child's right to attend Cgynet's Nest, but they must be brought by a different parent or carer. All incidents of abusive or aggressive behaviour will be reported to the chair of the committee and dealt with appropriately. In the event of physically violent behaviour the police will be called.

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The logo for Cynet's Nest, featuring the words 'Cynet's Nest' in a stylized, cursive font. The 'C' is large and ornate, with 'ynet's' in smaller letters. 'Nest' is written in a similar cursive style. The logo is in a teal color.

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3.6. In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, a member of the Cynet's Nest committee will make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame. However, under circumstances of serious misbehaviour, the Cynet's Nest committee reserves the right to exclude children and their parents/carers from the session.

Child protection

4.1. While Cynet's Nest makes every effort to ensure the safety and safeguarding of the children in attendance it stresses that the parents/carers are responsible for the children they bring.

4.2. Cynet's Nest has a designated child protection officer elected at the annual general meeting as a port of call for parents/carers with any concerns about their own, or other people's children's safety. Parents/carers may speak to the child protection officer in confidence about any concerns who will listen and be non-judgmental in their response. The child protection officer will give the best support within their means and, where appropriate, will suggest other people or organisations to contact for further support or information.

4.3. Cynet's Nest will not knowingly employ any member of staff, elect any member of the committee or invite any volunteer or other non-member of the group (e.g. photographers, general sales, craft sales) who is known to have previously engaged in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults.

4.4. Cynet's Nest ensures that the privacy of children is protected while they are in the session by limiting photographs or video recordings to invited professionals with consent of the parents/carers. No photographs or videos other than these may be taken at Cynet's Nest.

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4.5. No content will be added to the Cynet's Nest website or any other website (including social media) by Cynet's Nest staff or committee members that violates the privacy of the members or the reputation of the setting. Cynet's Nest strongly encourages its members to think about any content they add to the internet in connection to the group and does not permit them to add content which violates the privacy of the members or the reputation of the setting.

4.6. Useful numbers:

- o Cambridgeshire Children's Social Services: 0345 045 5203 or 01733 234724
- o Cambridgeshire Police: 101
- o Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board: 01480 37350 NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
- o Childline: 0800 1111
- o Samaritans: 08457 90 90 90

Child abuse

4.7. Cynet's Nest recognises that there are different forms of child abuse including physical, emotional, sexual and neglect, and these can manifest themselves differently in each child, e.g. changes in behaviour, physical signs such as bruising.

4.8. Cynet's Nest has a Safeguarding Children folder which contains detailed procedures for making a referral to the local children's social care team, as well as a template form for

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The logo for 'Cygnet's Nest' features a stylized, teal-colored nest with two small birds perched on either side. The nest is composed of several overlapping, curved lines that create a sense of depth and texture.

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recording concerns and making a referral. This is based on 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006), a copy of which is also held within the Safeguarding Children folder.

4.9. In the event of suspected child abuse the child protection officer will firstly speak to the relevant parent/carer in confidence, unless there is reason to believe this will make it worse in which case they will report the incident to Local Safeguarding Children Board. We will follow guidelines set out in 'What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).

4.10. We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, committee members, volunteers or any other person working with the children, which includes: inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.

4.11. If you have concerns about the behaviour of anyone towards a child, inform the child protection officer or another member of the committee.

4.12. We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, committee member or volunteer within the group has abused a child.

4.13. If an investigation into the behaviour of a member of staff, committee member or volunteer is needed the chairperson will suspend that person from attending Cygnet's Nest sessions 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 person under investigation as well as

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children and families throughout the process. We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.

4.14. Where a member of staff, committee member or volunteer has been excluded from Cygnet's Nest due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Abandoned child

4.15. In the event that a child is left alone at the end of a session with no parent or carer all reasonable attempts will be made to contact the parents or nominated carers.

4.16. If no contact can be made we contact our local authority children's social care team, Cambridgeshire Direct, tel. 0345 045 5203 (office hours 8.00am - 5.00pm). Out of these hours, Cambridgeshire Direct will transfer calls to the Emergency Duty Team. Social Care will aim to find the parent or relative if they are unable to do so, the child will become looked after by the local authority.

4.17. Under no circumstances will staff go to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them. The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than the parents or nominated carers or by a social care worker.

Missing child

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- 4.18. It must be stressed that children are in attendance at Cgynet's Nest under the supervision of their parents or carers. If a child is found to be missing it is not the responsibility of Cgynet's Nest to locate them.
- 4.19. As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the group should be alerted so that a search of the building and its surrounds can be carried out and the police alerted if necessary.
- 4.20. Parents/carers are asked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- 4.21. Doors and other openings are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- 4.22. Any committee members present should talk to parents/carers to find out when and where the child was last seen and record this information.
- 4.23. If necessary, the group will help the police in their investigation.

Health and Safety

Cgynet's Nest believes that the health and safety of children is of utmost importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers by assessing and minimising the hazards and risks. We identify risks taking in to account who is at risk, the likelihood of the risk happening and the severity and possible impact of the risk. We put in procedures to ensure that any risks that are identified can be minimised or eliminated; these procedures are reviewed to ensure they are effective.

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While Cynet's Nest is not responsible for the health and safety provision of the Signal Box Centre, we liaise with Signal Box Centre management to ensure that it meets our needs, for example, we request that doors be fitted with finger guards.

5.2. Cynet's Nest is a no-smoking environment - both indoor and outdoor. Please do not smoke either in the Signal Box Centre or close to the entrance doors.

5.3. We have public liability insurance and employers' liability insurance. The certificate for public liability insurance is displayed on our noticeboard. The equipment is also covered by adequate insurance.

5.4. No animals, other than registered guide dogs, should be brought to the Signal Box Centre.