# Chicken Welfare and Management Policy

**Policy Statement**
At Cedar Park Day Nursery, we believe caring for chickens provides children with valuable opportunities to develop an understanding of the natural world, responsibility, empathy and respect for living things. Caring for animals also supports children's learning across many areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), including communication and language, understanding the world, personal, social and emotional development, and physical development.
Whilst keeping chickens provides many educational benefits, the welfare of the animals and the health and safety of children, staff and visitors will always be our priority.
This policy outlines the procedures for the safe care, management and welfare of the nursery's chickens.

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**Responsibilities**
Overall responsibility for the welfare of the chickens rests with the management team.
Day-to-day care may be delegated to designated members of staff who will ensure that:

- the chickens are healthy and well cared for
- food and fresh water are available at all times
- the coop and run remain clean and secure
- any concerns regarding the chickens' health are reported immediately.

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**Educational Opportunities**
Children are encouraged to participate in caring for the chickens where appropriate and under close adult supervision.
Activities may include:

- observing the chickens
- helping provide fresh food and water
- collecting eggs (where appropriate)
- discussing how to care for animals
- learning about habitats, life cycles and food production.

Children will always be supervised by an appropriate number of staff.

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**Feeding**
The chickens will be fed twice daily.
Food and fresh drinking water will always be available.
Children may assist with feeding under adult supervision.
The amount of feed provided will be controlled by staff to ensure the chickens receive an appropriate diet.
The nursery will ensure:

- feed is purchased from a reputable supplier
- chickens are provided with suitable poultry feed
- grit is available to aid digestion where required
- chickens are not fed inappropriate foods.

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**Chicken Coop**
The chicken coop will be maintained to ensure it is:

- clean
- dry
- warm
- well ventilated
- secure from predators
- spacious enough for the chickens to display natural behaviours.

The coop will contain:

- suitable nesting boxes
- dust-free absorbent bedding
- adequate ventilation
- food and water containers
- sufficient space for all chickens.

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**Cleaning and Maintenance**

The chicken coop and enclosed run will be cleaned at least weekly, and more frequently if required. Cleaning will be undertaken by designated members of staff.

Cleaning duties include:

- removing soiled bedding
- removing droppings
- replacing bedding
- cleaning food and water containers
- checking for parasites including red mite
- checking the general condition of the coop.

Cleaning products used will be suitable for animal environments and stored safely in accordance with the nursery's COSHH procedures.

All waste will be disposed of hygienically.

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**Handling the Chickens**

Only designated members of staff may remove or handle the chickens without supervision.

Children may hold or stroke the chickens only:

- under direct adult supervision
- where it is safe to do so
- where the welfare of the chickens is not compromised.

Children will be taught to:

- handle the chickens gently
- respect the animals
- avoid chasing or frightening them
- never throw objects at the chickens
- remain calm around the animals.

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**Hygiene and Infection Control**

To minimise the risk of infection:

- all children and adults must wash their hands thoroughly after touching the chickens, eggs, coop or any equipment
- alcohol hand gel must not be used as a substitute for handwashing
- food and drink must never be consumed whilst handling the chickens
- any cuts or broken skin should be covered before contact with the chickens.

The nursery will follow current UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance regarding contact with animals.

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**Chicken Welfare**

Designated staff will regularly check the chickens for signs of illness or injury.
Veterinary advice will be sought whenever concerns arise.
Routine health care will include:

- parasite checks
- worming where appropriate
- monitoring weight and behaviour
- ensuring suitable housing and nutrition.

If there is any concern that a chicken may be suffering from an illness that could affect human health, children will have no contact with the chickens until veterinary advice has been obtained.
Parents will be informed where appropriate.

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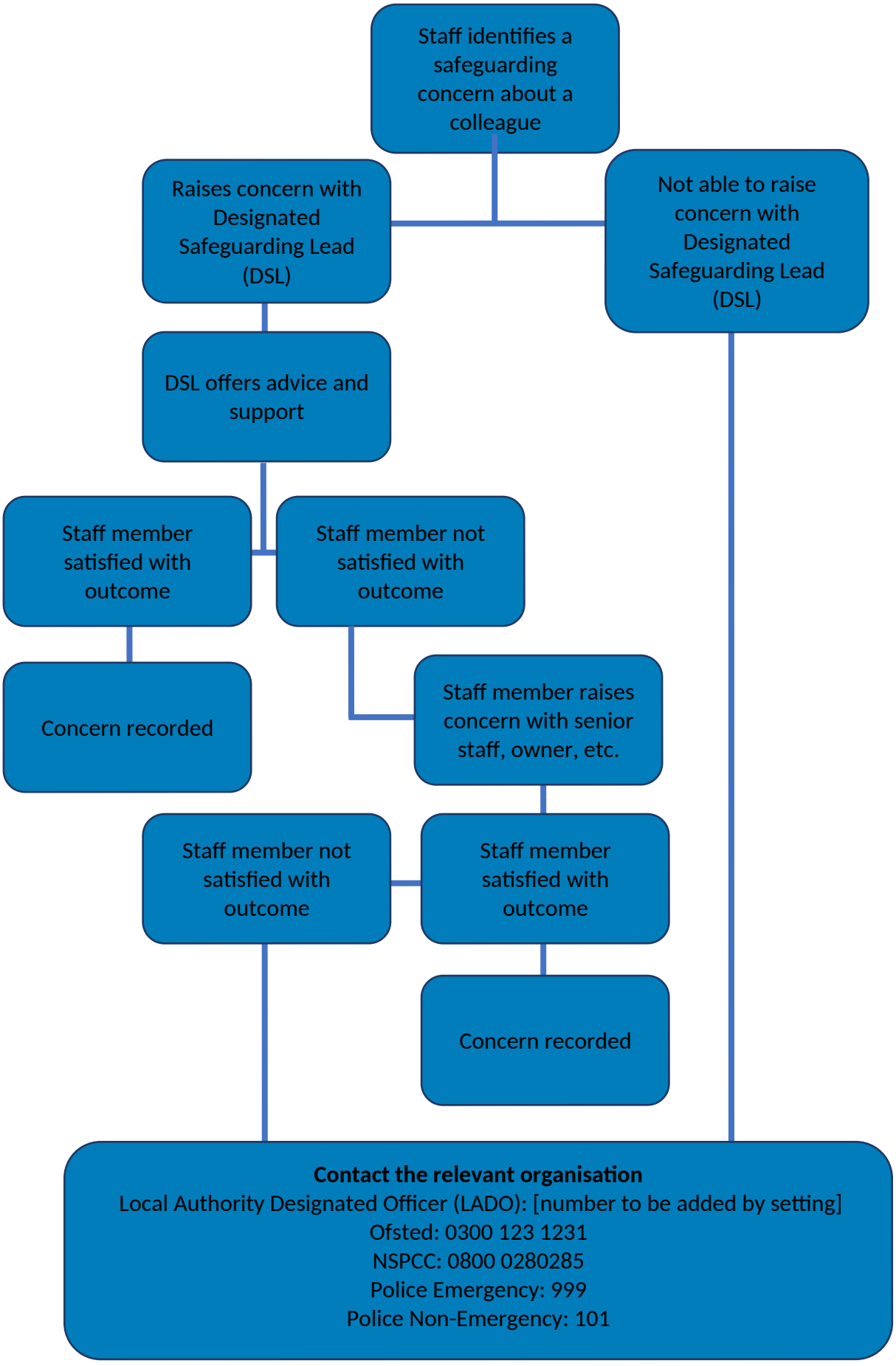
**Signs of Ill Health**

Staff will monitor for signs including:

- hunched posture
- raised feathers
- reluctance to move
- reduced appetite
- hiding away from the flock
- discharge from the eyes or nose
- breathing difficulties
- unusual droppings
- weight loss
- head tucked beneath the wing for prolonged periods.

Any concerns will be reported immediately to the management team and veterinary advice sought.

**Dated: July 2026**


Staff identifies a safeguarding concern about a colleague
Raises concern with Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Not able to raise concern with Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
DSL offers advice and support
Staff member satisfied with outcome
Staff member not satisfied with outcome
Concern recorded
Staff member raises concern with senior staff, owner, etc.
Staff member not satisfied with outcome
Staff member satisfied with outcome
Concern recorded
Contact the relevant organisation
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): [number to be added by setting]
Ofsted: 0300 123 1231
NSPCC: 0800 0280285
Police Emergency: 999
Police Non-Emergency: 101