

Privacy Policy

At Hearth Childcare, I take the privacy and security of your family's information seriously. I provide flexible, personalised childcare in your child's own home. To provide safe, reliable and appropriate care, I need to collect and use some personal information about you and your child.

This Privacy Notice explains what information I collect, why I need it, how I use and protect it, who I may share it with, how long I keep it and your rights under UK data protection law.

Who is responsible for your information?

The data controller for Hearth Childcare is:

Holly Muse, trading as Hearth Childcare

Email: hearthchildcare@gmail.com

Hearth Childcare is operated as a sole trader business.

If you have any questions about how your information is handled, or wish to exercise your data protection rights, please contact me at:

hearthchildcare@gmail.com

What information do I collect?

The information I collect depends on the childcare you request and your child's individual needs.

Parent or guardian information

This may include:

- Your name
- Home address
- Email address
- Telephone/mobile number
- Emergency contact information
- Booking information
- Communication preferences
- Information relating to payments and bookings

Child information

This may include:

- Child's name
- Date of birth or age

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- Home address
- Emergency contact information
- Attendance and booking information
- Routines and preferences
- Interests and activities
- Dietary requirements
- Allergies
- Medication information where relevant
- Relevant medical conditions
- Developmental or additional-needs information
- Behavioural, emotional or sensory information where relevant to providing appropriate care
- Accident, incident or safeguarding information where necessary

I aim to collect only information that is relevant and necessary for providing safe and personalised childcare.

Information about health, medication and additional needs

Some information about your child may be considered special category data under UK data protection law.

This can include information about:

- Physical or mental health
- Medical conditions
- Allergies
- Medication
- Developmental needs
- Additional support needs
- Sensory needs

I may need this information to understand your child's needs, provide appropriate care and keep them safe.

For example, I may need to know whether your child:

- Has a medical condition
- Has an allergy
- Takes prescribed medication
- Has medication that may be required in an emergency
- Has specific instructions that I need to be aware of to keep them safe

Hearth Childcare does not routinely administer medication such as Calpol, ibuprofen or other non-emergency medicines as part of its standard childcare service.

Where a child has prescribed emergency medication or specific medical requirements, relevant information may need to be included in their care information so that I can respond appropriately if an emergency occurs.

Any administration of medication, where agreed or necessary, will be handled separately from this Privacy Notice and will be subject to appropriate parental/guardian instructions, consent and procedures.

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Health and medication information will only be processed where I have an appropriate lawful basis under Article 6 of the UK GDPR and an applicable condition under Article 9 for processing special category data. The specific basis and condition will depend on why the information is being processed, such as providing safe childcare, responding to an emergency or meeting safeguarding responsibilities.

You are not required to provide information that is not relevant to your child's care. However, if important information about a child's health, allergies, medication or support requirements is not provided, this may affect my ability to provide childcare safely.

Why do I use your information?

I use personal information for the following purposes.

Providing childcare

To understand your child's needs, routines, preferences and requirements and to provide safe, personalised care.

Managing bookings

To arrange childcare sessions, confirm bookings, manage availability, record attendance and administer payments.

Communicating with you

To contact you about:

- Bookings
- Changes to arrangements
- Your child's care
- Daily updates
- Emergencies
- Important information relating to Hearth Childcare

Depending on your preference, communication may take place by:

- WhatsApp
- Email
- Telephone call
- Text/message

Emergencies

Where necessary, I may use or disclose relevant information to protect your child's or another person's vital interests, including contacting emergency services or healthcare professionals.

This may include providing relevant medical or medication information where doing so is necessary to protect the child's health or life.

Safeguarding

I may collect, use or share information where necessary to protect a child from harm, abuse or neglect, or where I have a legal safeguarding responsibility.

Legal and business requirements

I may process information where necessary to:

- Comply with legal obligations
- Meet tax and accounting requirements
- Meet insurance requirements
- Maintain appropriate business records
- Respond to legitimate legal requests
- Establish, exercise or defend legal claims

What are my lawful bases for using information?

UK data protection law requires me to identify an appropriate lawful basis before processing personal information. I do not rely on one single lawful basis for all processing. The lawful basis I use depends on the type of information and the purpose for which it is being processed.

Contract

I may process personal information where this is necessary to provide the childcare services requested by a parent/guardian, manage bookings and arrangements, communicate about childcare, and take steps at the request of a parent/guardian before entering into a childcare agreement.

This may include information such as names, contact details, booking information, attendance information and information necessary to organise the requested childcare.

Legal obligation

I may process personal information where necessary to comply with a legal obligation that applies to Hearth Childcare.

This may include maintaining financial and accounting records, complying with tax requirements, responding to lawful requests from authorities, and retaining or providing information where required by law.

Legitimate interests

I may process personal information where this is necessary for legitimate interests pursued by Hearth Childcare, provided that those interests are not overridden by the rights, freedoms or interests of the individual.

My legitimate interests may include administering and improving my business, maintaining appropriate business and safeguarding records, protecting the security of Hearth Childcare systems, preventing misuse, dealing with complaints or disputes, and establishing, exercising or defending legal claims.

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Where I rely on legitimate interests, I will consider whether the processing is necessary, whether there is a less intrusive way of achieving the same purpose, and whether the individual's interests and rights override my legitimate interests.

Vital interests

I may process personal information where necessary to protect the vital interests of a child or another person, particularly where there is an emergency involving a risk to life or serious harm and the individual is unable to provide consent.

This may include using or sharing relevant emergency contact, health or medical information with emergency services or healthcare professionals where necessary.

Vital interests is intended to apply only in limited circumstances and is not used as a general basis for routine childcare administration.

Consent

I may rely on consent where I specifically ask for permission for an optional use of personal information and consent is the appropriate lawful basis.

For example, this may apply to certain uses of photographs or videos for public promotional purposes.

Where consent is used, it will be voluntary, informed and specific to the purpose for which it is requested. Consent can be withdrawn at any time, although withdrawal does not affect processing that took place before consent was withdrawn.

I will not rely on consent simply because it is convenient where another lawful basis is more appropriate.

Photographs and children's images

Photographs may sometimes be taken during childcare to provide parents with appropriate updates about their child's day.

Where photographs are taken for this purpose, I will send them using the communication method agreed with the parent.

I intend to delete photographs from my personal device after they have been sent to the parent, unless there is a separate lawful reason to retain them.

Website, advertising and social media

I will only use identifiable photographs of your child on the Hearth Childcare website, Facebook, advertising or other public promotional material where I have obtained appropriate permission from the parent or legal guardian.

Permission for public use of photographs will be handled separately from this Privacy Notice.

Permission can be withdrawn for future use at any time.

I will not assume that permission to send a photograph privately to a parent also gives permission to publish that photograph publicly.

Testimonials and reviews

I may ask parents to provide feedback about their experience with Hearth Childcare.

I will only publish a testimonial on the Hearth Childcare website or other promotional material where I have permission to do so.

Where appropriate, testimonials may be published anonymously, for example:

“Thank you so much for looking after George this weekend, he was so happy to see you.”

— Parent of a 1-year-old

I will not publish a child's full name or other identifying information in a testimonial without appropriate permission.

Payments

Payments are made through the payment services available through the Hearth Childcare website and booking system. Payment processing may be provided by Wix Payments or another payment provider connected to the booking system.

Hearth Childcare receives information necessary to manage and reconcile bookings and payments.

Full payment card details are not intentionally collected or stored directly by Hearth Childcare. Payment providers process card information using their own secure payment systems and applicable security requirements.

I may retain information such as:

- Customers Name
- Transaction amount
- Payment status
- Payment method
- Transaction information including references
- Payment dates
- Amounts paid
- Booking information

where necessary for accounting, tax, business and record-keeping purposes.

Who may I share information with?

I do not sell or rent your personal information.

I may share relevant information where necessary with:

- Website and booking service providers, including Wix

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- Payment service providers
- Email and communication providers
- Professional advisers, such as an accountant, where applicable
- Insurance providers where necessary
- HM Revenue & Customs where legally required
- Ofsted or other relevant regulatory authorities where applicable
- Emergency services
- Healthcare professionals where necessary for your child's safety or wellbeing
- Safeguarding agencies or other authorities where I have a legal or safeguarding responsibility

This may include sharing relevant medical or medication information with emergency or healthcare professionals where necessary to protect a child's health or safety.

I will only share information that is relevant and necessary for the particular purpose.

Communication services

Parents can choose their preferred communication method for communicating with Hearth Childcare.

This may include WhatsApp, email, telephone or text messaging.

These services are operated by separate companies and have their own privacy and security arrangements.

Where you choose to communicate with Hearth Childcare through one of these services, information may be processed by that provider in accordance with its own privacy policy and terms.

I will take reasonable steps to protect information stored on my devices and accounts.

The Hearth Childcare website

The Hearth Childcare website is hosted through Wix.

The website may collect information when you:

- Complete a booking or enquiry form
- Contact Hearth Childcare
- Make or arrange a payment
- Use website features

Wix may also use cookies and similar technologies to operate, secure and improve the website.

Where non-essential cookies or analytics technologies are used, they will be managed in accordance with applicable privacy and cookie requirements.

I will not intentionally use website analytics or tracking to collect sensitive information about your child.

How I protect your information

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I take appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect personal information against unauthorised access, accidental loss, misuse, alteration or disclosure.

As Hearth Childcare is currently operated by one person, I am the only person routinely accessing the personal information held by the business.

Where personal information is accessed or stored on my personal devices, such as my laptop or mobile phone, I will take appropriate steps to protect it. This may include:

- Password, PIN or biometric protection
- Automatic screen locking
- Device or storage encryption where appropriate
- Keeping operating systems, applications and security software appropriately updated
- Using reputable and appropriately secured online services
- Mandatory Two-Step Verification (2FA) - Access to the Hearth Childcare administrative booking dashboard is strictly protected by active 2-step verification, ensuring data cannot be accessed from unrecognized devices without secondary hardware authentication.
- Limiting access to Hearth Childcare information to myself
- Taking care when sending information to the correct parent, guardian or other recipient
- Using secure methods when transferring personal information
- Avoiding unnecessary storage of personal information on devices
- Deleting photographs from my personal device after they have been sent to the parent where appropriate
- Maintaining appropriate backups where necessary

I will take reasonable steps to keep personal information separate from unnecessary personal use and will not knowingly allow other people to access Hearth Childcare information.

No method of storing or transmitting information online can be guaranteed to be completely secure. I will nevertheless take appropriate measures to protect personal information in accordance with UK data protection requirements.

What happens if there is a data breach?

If personal information is lost, stolen, accidentally disclosed or accessed without permission, I will assess what has happened and take appropriate steps to contain and address the incident.

Where required by UK data protection law, I will report a personal data breach to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and/or notify affected individuals.

How long do I keep your information?

I will keep personal information only for as long as it is reasonably necessary for the purpose for which it was collected, unless a longer period is required or permitted by law.

Different types of information may therefore be kept for different periods.

For example, some financial and business records need to be retained for tax purposes.

Other records, such as childcare, accident, safeguarding, medical or medication records, may have different retention requirements depending on the circumstances and applicable rules.

I will review the information I hold and securely delete or dispose of information when it is no longer required.

- Retained only for as long as reasonably necessary... taking into account any applicable legal, safeguarding, regulatory and insurance requirements.
- Accident / Safeguarding / Incident Records: Retained only for as long as reasonably necessary for the purpose for which the record was created, taking into account any applicable legal, safeguarding, regulatory and insurance requirements. Retention periods may vary depending on the nature and circumstances of the record. Hearth Childcare will review these records and securely delete or dispose of them when they are no longer required.
- Inactive Client Forms: Deleted 6 months to 1 year after childcare services end (unless retention is required for accounting/legal defense).

Children's information

Hearth Childcare provides services to children, so protecting children's information is particularly important.

I collect children's information only where it is relevant to:

- Providing safe and appropriate childcare
- Understanding their individual needs
- Managing bookings and attendance
- Meeting legal obligations
- Protecting their wellbeing
- Responding to emergencies or safeguarding concerns

I will consider the child's best interests when handling their personal information and avoid collecting information that is unnecessary for their care.

Parents or legal guardians will normally provide information about their child and may exercise relevant data protection rights on their child's behalf, subject to the circumstances and applicable law.

As children become capable of understanding and making decisions about their personal information, their views and rights will also be considered where appropriate.

Marketing and the Hearth Parent Community

Hearth Childcare may promote its services publicly through channels such as:

- The Hearth Childcare website
- Facebook
- Google Business Profile
- The voluntary Hearth Parent Community on WhatsApp

The Hearth Parent Community is intended as a voluntary community for parents and may include information such as Hearth availability, childcare updates and other relevant business announcements.

Parents will not be added to the community without their knowledge.

Joining the Parent Community does not give permission for Hearth Childcare to use your child's personal information for marketing.

I will not use children's personal information for marketing purposes.

I will not routinely send marketing emails to parents.

If I introduce direct marketing by email, text message or another electronic communication method in the future, I will comply with the applicable data protection and electronic marketing rules and obtain consent where required.

Your data protection rights

Depending on the circumstances, you have rights under UK data protection law, including the right to:

- Request access to the personal information I hold about you.
- Ask me to correct inaccurate or incomplete information.
- Ask me to delete personal information where there is no lawful reason for me to continue keeping it.
- Ask me to restrict how I use your information in certain circumstances.
- Object to certain types of processing.
- Object to direct marketing.
- Request certain information in a portable format where the right applies.
- Withdraw consent where processing is based on consent.

These rights are subject to certain legal conditions and exceptions and are not always absolute.

To exercise a right or ask a question about your information, contact:

Hearth Childcare

Data Controller: Holly Muse, trading as Hearth Childcare

Email: hearthchildcare@gmail.com

How to make a complaint

If you have any concerns about how Hearth Childcare has handled your or your child's personal information, please contact me first so I can try to resolve the issue for you:

- **Email:** hearthchildcare@gmail.com

You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the UK's independent supervisory authority for data protection:

- **Website:** ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint
- **Helpline:** 0303 123 1113
- **Post:** Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Changes to this Privacy Notice

I may update this Privacy Notice from time to time to reflect changes to:

- Hearth Childcare
- The information I collect
- The services and systems I use

- How I provide childcare
- Data protection requirements

The latest version will be made available on the Hearth Childcare website.

Last Updated: August 2026

Next Review: January 2027 (Yearly)