

Libra Children Services



Toys and Play Materials Policy 2025 Edition

1. Purpose and Scope

Libra Children Services (LCS) is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for children and families using our supervised contact services. The toys and play materials we provide must be clean, well maintained and appropriate for use in a supervised setting.

This policy sets out how LCS selects, maintains, cleans and reviews all toys and play equipment used within our contact rooms.

2. Aims

This policy is designed to help staff and volunteers:

- ensure all toys and play materials are safe, complete and suitable
 - maintain high standards of cleanliness and hygiene
 - check toys at the start and end of each session for damage or wear
 - store toys safely and appropriately
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3. Introduction

Play is an essential part of contact work. Toys and play materials support positive interaction between children and parents, help create a welcoming environment and provide age appropriate ways for families to connect.

LCS provides a range of toys and games that:

- reflect different ages, needs and abilities, including children with additional needs
- support imaginative play, creative activities and shared games
- meet relevant British Standards for toy safety
- are easy to clean and maintain in line with hygiene expectations

We avoid items that cannot be hygienically cleaned or pose unnecessary risk.

4. Responsibilities

Volunteers and Staff

All LCS volunteers and staff must follow this policy and report damaged, faulty or unsafe toys immediately.

Coordinators / Duty Leads

The Contact Coordinator or Duty Lead is responsible for:

- ensuring volunteers understand this policy
- designating volunteers to check and clean toys at each session
- maintaining a clear system for regular cleaning and recording
- ensuring safe storage and replacement of toys
- reviewing this policy and practice annually

5. Criteria for Selecting Toys and Equipment

When choosing toys and play materials, LCS applies the following criteria:

- hard surfaced toys (plastic, wood, metal) must be fully cleanable
- fabric items must be machine washable or otherwise able to be sanitised
- electrical toys must undergo annual PAT testing
- toys must be appropriate for supervised contact and free from hazards
- toys supporting developmental needs and inclusive play are prioritised

Donations

Toys donated by members of the public will be accepted only if:

- they are clean, safe and appropriate
- fabric toys can be laundered
- electrical items pass PAT testing before use

LCS may decline donations that do not meet safety or hygiene standards.

6. Session Checks

Before and after each session, volunteers will inspect toys and equipment for:

- broken, loose or missing parts
- loose wiring or flat batteries
- sharp edges or splintered wood
- visible dirt, spills or contamination

Items that are unsafe are removed immediately.

Toys used by babies and young children should ideally be cleaned after every session.

7. Cleaning Procedure

The Coordinator or Duty Lead will organise a monthly deep cleaning rota and ensure toys are cleaned according to best practice.

General principles

- check manufacturer instructions before cleaning
- use warm water and detergent, or approved wipes
- air dry thoroughly before storage
- do not store damp toys
- refresh detergent solutions as required

Cleaning Guidance

Toy Type	Cleaning Method
Wooden toys	wipe with cloth and mild detergent; check for splinters or flaking finish
Books	inspect for soiling; wipe covers with detergent wipes
Construction toys (e.g. Lego)	wash in warm detergent solution; rinse and air dry
Plastic toys	wash in soapy water; rinse and dry
Metal toys	wipe with a damp cloth using mild detergent
Electronic handheld items	these are not permitted in LCS contact rooms
Board games and cards	wipe surfaces with approved detergent wipes

Anti bacterial wipes may be used where suitable. If wipes are unavailable, fresh detergent solution must be used.

8. Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if guidance or operational needs change. Toy hygiene processes may be updated in line with Public Health recommendations, infection control guidance or safeguarding requirements.
