

## 2.02 Employment

(Including suitability, contingency plans, training and development)

### Policy statement

Our staff, long term volunteers and committee members are vetted for suitability to work with children. We meet the Safeguarding and Welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensuring that our staff are appropriately qualified (qualifications checked via <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-qualifications-finder>). We carry out suitability checks for criminal and other records through the DBS (via Capita Vetting Recruitment Service) by the manager in accordance with statutory requirements. All committee members complete and EY2 form and are checked for suitability by Ofsted. We maintain appropriate ratios in line with EYFS (2014)- updated 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2021

### Procedures

#### Ratios

- We ensure that the following ratios are adhered to at all times in line with EYFS (2014): updated 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2021
  - Children aged 2 years
    - 1 adult to 4 children
    - 1 staff member minimum level 3
    - At least half the rest of staff level 2
  - Children aged 3-4 years
    - 1 adult to 8 children
    - 1 staff member minimum level 3
    - At least half the rest of staff level 2
- A minimum of 2 staff are on duty at any time and at least one of the staff members will hold a first aid certificate.
- Children will be in sight and hearing of staff at all times.
- A key person is assigned to each child dependent and matched based on need with the relevant key person. This ensures that each child has someone to build a key connection with and parents have a key point of contact at the preschool.
- We hold Termly staff meetings to review children's progress, self-evaluate our practice and discuss training opportunities for self-development.

#### Safe Recruitment

- We have a rigorous recruitment process which ensures rigorous assessment of the suitability of candidates and ensures that safe recruitment is in place.
- When recruiting for new staff members we produce adverts that are distributed by vetted and specialist recruitment platforms.
- Our adverts state that DBS checks will be required for qualification for the role.
- We recruit using application forms but request applicants share CVs in addition.

- Our adverts state that positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation Offenders Act 1974.
- All applicants are interviewed face to face by at least two qualified members of staff and/or committee members.
- All application forms are reviewed by at least two qualified members of staff or committee members and any omissions or discrepancies in dates of employment are investigated further at interview stage.
- At least two references are requested for each applicant. References should be provided by previous employers only. Written references are followed up by phone calls with the referees from a member of the committee to cross check details and to explore questions in further depth.
- We check ID in the form of passport/driving licence and proof of address (utility bill) before employment.
- Early years qualifications are checked and a copy of the certificate provided is kept on our personnel file.
- All applicants where a role is offered will have an enhanced DBS check carried out via Capita before the applicant starts in role.
- All staff are required to complete a 'Suitability to Work with Children' form which is completed annually and kept on the personnel file.
- All staff undergo a probation period of three months. During this three months a formal 6 week assessment will take place and a 3 month probation assessment completed. This is documented and kept on the personnel file.
- All committee members (Chair, Secretary & Treasurer) are required to undertake an advanced DBS check carried out by Capita before starting in role.
- All committee members are required to notify and register with Ofsted via an EY2 form. Committee members can only begin in role when they have received a letter of suitability from Ofsted.
- All committee members are required to notify and register with the Charity Commission and Companies House before starting in role.
- Students over the age of 16 on placement from a college/university that are with us for more than two weeks, will be DBS checked due to the length of placement (long term). Students on work experience aged 16 or over from local schools/ colleges, who are with us for less than two weeks, will not have a DBS check, however their school/ college must vouch for their suitability to be with young children and they will be supervised by a member of staff at all times. All students will be given an induction.

### **Vetting and staff selection**

- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
- All staff have job descriptions which set out their staff roles and responsibilities.
- We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered on the basis of their suitability for the post, regardless of marital status, age, gender, culture, religious belief, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by our imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.

- We use Ofsted guidance on obtaining references and enhanced criminal record checks through the DBS for staff and volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children. This is in accordance with requirements under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 for the vetting and barring scheme.
- We keep all records relating to employment of staff and volunteers, in particular those demonstrating that checks have been done, including the date and number of the enhanced DBS check.
- Staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children – whether received before or at any time during their employment with us.
- All staff are issued with a permanent contract (apart from Bank Staff who work on zero hours contracts). Staff are also issued with an Employees Handbook which outlines expectations, policies and procedures and statutory information. Staff are required to sign to indicate they have read and understood the contents of the handbook. A copy of the signed declaration is kept on the personnel file.

### **Disqualification**

- Where we become aware of any relevant information which may lead to the disqualification of an employee, we will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children.
- We will contact SPOA (single Point of Advice) to discuss any incidents relating to staff suitability.
- We will advise Ofsted with the following within 14 days of the date we became aware of any information or ought reasonably to have become aware of it, if we had made reasonable enquiries:
  - Details of any order, determination or conviction, or the date when the other ground for disqualification arose.
  - The body or court which made the order, determination or conviction and the sentence (if any) imposed.
  - A certified copy of the relevant order (in relation to an order or conviction).
- In the event of disqualification, that person's employment with us will be terminated.

### **Changes to staff**

- We inform Ofsted of any changes in the person responsible for our setting – the manager or Nominated Person.

### **Training and staff development**

- Our setting Manager and Deputy Manager hold the CACHE Level 3 Diploma in Pre-school Practice or an equivalent qualification and a minimum of half of our staff hold the CACHE Level 2/3 Certificate in Pre-school Practice or an equivalent or higher qualification.
- Our Manager, Linda Scott, who has overall responsibility for the staff and children also holds a Safeguarding qualification and is the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Our Deputy Manager, **Rebecca Cook**, is our Deputy Safeguarding Lead and holds a Child Protection and Safeguarding qualification.
- Our Deputy Manager, **Rebecca Cook**, is very experienced and capable of taking leadership in the absence of the Manager. The lines of communication between

Manager and Deputy are close and communicate on a daily basis in regards to status, requirements, issues and actions.

- Rebecca Cook, is our SENCO lead completing her training in 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022.
- **We have another member of staff who has recently completed her Level 3 Diploma for Early Years, Ella-May Freeman, and a new members of staff as of May 2022 and September 2023, Jenny Carr and Holly Holt, who are Level 3 qualified and had a number of years' experience in settings.**
- One member of staff is currently undergoing training for her Level 3 Diploma.
- We provide regular in-service training to all staff - whether paid staff or volunteers - through the Early Years Alliance and East Sussex County Council Training portal and external training agencies, where required.
- Our setting budget allocates resources to training.
- We provide staff induction training in the first week of employment. This induction includes our Health and Safety Policy and Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy. Other policies and procedures will be introduced within an induction plan.
- We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervision meetings and appraisals.
- We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.

#### **Staff taking medication/other substances**

- If a member of staff is taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, we ensure that they seek further medical advice. Staff will only work directly with the children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly.
- Staff medication on the premises will be stored securely and kept out of reach of the children at all times.
- If we have reason to believe that a member of staff is under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that may affect their ability to care for children they will not be allowed to work directly with the children and further action will be taken.

#### **Managing staff absences and contingency plans for emergencies**

- Our staff take their holiday breaks when the setting is closed. Where staff may need to take time off for any reason other than sick leave or training, this is agreed with the Manager with sufficient notice.
- Where staff are unwell and take sick leave in accordance with their contract of employment, we organise cover to ensure ratios are maintained.
- Staff are asked to complete a Self Certificate Form when they are off sick.
- Sick leave is monitored and action is taken where necessary in accordance with their contract of employment.
- We have contingency plans to cover staff absences, as follows;
  - As soon as it apparent a staff member will be absent they immediately contact St John's Preschool Manager (Linda Scott) or the Deputy Manager in charge (**Rebecca Cook**) who arranges appropriate cover. The staff member will update the manager of their length of absence and their date of return. In the case of the Manager needing to be absent the Deputy Manager (**Rebecca**

Cook) will be contacted to arrange appropriate cover. The correct staff ratios will be maintained at all times.

Date to be reviewed – by end August 2024