Staffing, Students and Volunteers

Our setting is managed by a parent committee who are responsible for employing and supervising the staff, voluntary helpers and student placements; the committee acts on behalf of all the parents and are elected at the Annual General Meeting. This is one of the most important elements of a community childcare setting. Committee members are obliged to look after the interests of the setting’s membership (families) and are answerable to the membership for their actions. Committee members are usually collectively responsible for the activities of the committee in the eyes of the law. Additional information about committee responsibilities can be found in the settings constitution and advice on these issues including committee procedures is available from Playgroup Network.

**Policy**

We seek to promote equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination as defined under the terms of the Equality Act in all our employment procedures and practices.

We are committed to ongoing personal learning and development for everyone involved in the work undertaken. We will take account of cost, timing, family responsibilities, cultural requirements, gender and age sensitivities, potential physical barriers in the built environment, or attitudes of others to personnel with different abilities.

**Procedures**

* We have an area where staff can take breaks away from areas used by children.

**Safe Recruitment**

* Advertise all vacant posts internally and externally to reach as wide a circulation as possible.
* Applicants will be given clear, concise and accurate information about posts through advertisements in order to enable them to assess their own suitability. This includes the need to have sufficient understanding and use of English (both written and verbal) to ensure the well-being of children.
* Language used will not deter any potentially disadvantaged applicant from applying.
* Advertisements and publicity on recruitment will state that we are working towards being an equal opportunity employer; and the position requires disclosure of any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings.
* Interview panels will be fully aware of our commitment to equality of opportunity in our employment practices, and will use the same questions for each applicant, assessed against the Person Specification.
* On appointment staff will have appropriate qualifications and experience for their positions, and will be assessed to identify relevant continuing training and development.
* Take up references.
* Carry out an enhanced DBS disclosure and health checks, recording the DBS number, date of issue and the counter signatory of the organisation that obtained the DBS.
* Keep individual records including qualifications, identity checks and vetting processes (references) of staff, volunteers and committee members.
* Induction training will be undertaken within the first two weeks of employment.
* Where appropriate, elected members of the committee will receive induction training and support from senior members of staff, accompanied by a job description.
* The person in charge and their deputy must have a level 3 qualification.
* Have a named deputy who will take charge in the absence of the manager.
* Keep a record of suitable staff that can cover in emergencies, if for some reason this is not possible our emergency closure policy will be put into action.

**Supervision**

* All staff will have a termly supervision meeting where they will be invited to discuss their performance, professional development, team issues and any concerns re children’s development and well-being.
* All staff members have a responsibility to perform to a satisfactory standard. Where issues of capability arise the staff member will be assisted through supervision sessions to reach the required standard.
* All staff must disclose convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings received during their employment which may affect their suitability to work with children.
* Have regular meetings to review our programme, plan future activities and monitor children's progress.
* Always have at least two members of staff present in each room when children are present.
* Always have a minimum of one adult to eight children for 3 -5 year olds and one adult to five children for 2 year olds.
* Ensure at least 50% of the rest of the staff present at all times have an appropriate level 2 qualification.
* Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children.
* Practitioners will not work directly with children if taking medication that may impair their ability to carry out their role. Staff taking prescription medicines must seek medical advice to confirm the medication will not impair their ability to work with children.

**Appraisals**

* All staff will have an annual review, followed by supervision meetings where they will be invited to discuss any issues, support needed and their training and development needs with their manager.
* Identified training and development needs will be recorded for recommendation to be discussed by those responsible for funding.
* Investigate ways to enable staff to access appropriate qualifications on the Integrated Qualifications Framework and on-going training appropriate to their job role.

**Students and Young People**

Students are welcomed into our setting as more than just an extra pair of hands, to safeguard everyone concerned we accept students’ if-

* They have written confirmation from their course provider that they are a student and need a placement.
* They attend an induction session informing them of our policies especially regarding Health and Safety, Safeguarding Children, Discipline and Confidentiality.
* They will not be allowed unsupervised access to children unless they have current evidence that they already have had the appropriate checks –DBS Enhanced Disclosure and health questionnaire.
* They will not make the number of adults present too great for the safety and benefit of children's learning.
* Only those aged 17 and over can be included in the ratios.

**Staff/Volunteer Inductions**

* New members of staff or volunteers will be inducted by the appropriate line manager. Introductions to other staff and volunteers will be made a priority.
* A general induction session will be carried out on the first day of employment.
* When all policies and procedures have been read, s/he will sign the appropriate form to confirm understanding and a willingness to abide by them.
* Specialised induction sessions will be carried out with the appropriate member of staff or committee at an agreed time and venue.
* The manager will carry out a review of the induction process within four weeks of the start date.
* A performance review will be carried out by the appropriate line manager at the end of the agreed probationary period.