

Child Protection

Safeguarding: Safer Recruitment and Staffing Policy

Intention

The staff of Handsworth Pre-school will be well qualified, professional, and suitable to work with children.

The Preschool will:

- Recruit staff who are suitable to work with children.
- Establish a clear expectation of professionalism in the Preschool including a Code of Conduct.
- Develop and train staff in their roles and help them understand setting policies and procedures.
- Work within the statutory framework set out by the EYFS and relevant employment law.
- Manage health and safety risks for staff whilst working on the premises.

Legal and Policy Framework

The requirements of the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021** in relation to staff includes (but is not limited to) the following requirements. The Preschool must ensure that:

- The people looking after children must be suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles (Suitable People)
- Statutory responsibilities set out in the Equalities Act 2010 with the respect of fair and equal treatment of staff are met;
- All staff receive induction training and appropriate training and professional development to maintain and improve the quality of learning and development opportunities for children;
- Appropriate arrangements are in place for the supervision of staff; and for the support, coaching and training for practitioners
- Specified child: adult ratios are maintained
- Reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of staff on the premises
- Staff have access to a place away from the children to facilitate confidential discussions with parents and/or take breaks
- Reasonable steps are taken to ensure staff are not exposed to risks and to show that risks are managed
- Required documentation is held and evidences statutory checks
- Records are maintained to ensure the safe and efficient running of the setting

The Preschool must also meet legal obligations for staff arising from the **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** and other relevant health and safety legislation as listed in the Health and Safety Policy. The Preschool must also meet the legal obligations for all employers.

Scope and Definitions

This policy looks at how we deliver the statutory requirements set out above. This policy should be read alongside other Preschool policies including (but not limited to):

- Teaching and Learning
- Safeguarding: Protecting Children from Abuse
- Data Protection and Confidentiality
- Whistleblowing and Staff Complaints
- Parental Involvement and Behaviour
- Parental Complaints
- Health and Safety

Definition of “staff”: In general, the term ‘staff’ refers to individuals who have either a permanent or temporary contract of employment with the Preschool. Where arrangements are different for staff on temporary contracts, this is made clear. We also work with a number of other adults including volunteers, cover staff etc. In general, the term ‘staff’ refers also to them, unless otherwise specified.

Implementation

Safer Recruitment

Under the Equalities Act 2010, it is illegal to discriminate against others on the grounds of protected characteristics. These include disability; race; gender re-assignment; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; age; pregnancy or maternity; paternity; marriage and civil partnerships. The Preschool welcomes staff, and applications for staff roles, from all sections of the community. Applications for staff roles will be considered on the basis of their suitability for the post against the advertised job description and the given requirements of the post.

Job vacancies at Pre-school will be advertised. They may be advertised internally, that is within the existing staff team and/or the Committee, before being advertised publicly. Selection procedures may include an initial sift of applications against the advertised requirements and/or other activities such as a trial worked session.

Interviews will be held for all job vacancies. Interviews will be held by a minimum of two members from the Pre-school Leadership Team and/or the Chair of the Committee. At least one member of the interview panel will be trained in Safer Recruitment. Applicants will be informed of the selection procedures after they are successful in the initial sift of applications.

Job offers will be made on the basis of suitability for the role following the outcomes of the selection procedures. Applicants will be asked to provide evidence against the information given in their application. Prior to a job offer being confirmed, references (from at least two referees) will be taken up; and criminal records (DBS) checks made.

Job offers may be revoked if references, identity, or other checks, and/or DBS checks are found to raise concerns about, or identify disqualifications in, the suitability of the

individual to work with children. Additional checks may be undertaken on staff who have lived and/or worked abroad.

Staff Development: Induction and Probation

All new staff, or staff undertaking a significantly new role, will receive an induction, tailored to the job role and the individual's needs and experiences.

New staff receive an induction pack which includes:

- Their job description.
- Conditional offer of employment.
- Their contract of employment.
- The Code of Conduct: Employers and Employees and the Code of Conduct: Safe Use of Technology
- Disciplinary procedures.
- The Pre-school's Staff Complaints and Whistleblowing policy and procedures.
- Copies of the Pre-school's policies (by email) and a link to the policies on the website.
- Equal Opportunities statement.

Staff undertaking induction will be supported by a named member of the Pre-school Management Team.

New permanent staff (that is, generally, Pre-school Assistants, Deputy Pre-school Leader, Pre-school Leader or Business Manager) will be subject to the successful completion of a probationary period of one (1) calendar year from their start date.

New temporary staff roles (that is, generally, Learning Support Assistants) will be offered subject to the successful completion of a probationary period of six (6) months from their start date not including holidays.

In addition, or alongside regular staff supervisions and appraisals, an end of probation review will be held. The outcome of this review may include:

- Confirmation of appointment to the role;
- Further extension of probationary period for a specified time;
- The issuing of notice for the end of the contract of employment.

Staff who are dissatisfied with the outcome of the end of probation review may follow the procedures set out in the Whistleblowing and Staff Complaints policy.

Staff Development: Supervisions, Appraisal, and other Staff Reviews

Staff development is supported through:

- Discussion of good practice; Preschool policies and procedures and other aspects of professional practice during staff meetings and INSET days.
- Regular supervisions. Two supervisions are undertaken each academic year.
- An annual appraisal

Supervisions, appraisals and end of probation reviews are, in general, led by the Preschool Leader, who line manages all staff. In exceptional circumstances, these meetings may be held by the Deputy Preschool Leader.

The Preschool leader's appraisal is undertaken by the Chair of the parent committee, in partnership with the Deputy Preschool Leader.

Additional ad hoc discussion with individuals may take place in the light of needs arising. In general, all discussions between an individual and the Preschool Leader concerning the staff member's professional conduct will be noted. The notes will be shared with the staff member and placed on file.

Staff Training

All staff are required to undertake training sufficient to their role and responsibilities. Staff who take on additional, specific responsibilities – for example (but not limited to) SENCO, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Health and Safety Lead – will receive specific, tailored training. All permanent staff (excluding the Business Manager) will be trained in Paediatric First Aid, and this training will be refreshed every three years (or in line with statutory requirements).

The Pre-school will book and pay for training that is required for a specific role or is agreed as part of staff supervision or reviews.

Other training or development opportunities may be offered by the Pre-school as they arise if they are relevant to the Pre-School's needs and are within budget. The Preschool Leader may make decisions about who can attend courses and when, subject to the needs of the Preschool at the time.

For training organised by the Pre-school that takes place during session time, staff will be released to attend. Staff will be paid for the time when they are attending face-to-face training; and when undertaking agreed online training or elements of training either at home or in the setting. This includes when online training is undertaken out of usual working hours.

Staff will be released and paid for the time taken to attend meetings, conferences or other activities required to undertake and maintain good practice in specific named roles (e.g.: SENCO Forum; DSL Forum etc) including if these meetings take place outside usual working hours.

Staff Ratios and Qualifications

With respect to our permanent staff team, the Preschool maintains as a minimum the ratios and staff qualification requirements set by the Early Years Foundation Stage. That is:

- For children aged 2: One adult to four children
- For children aged 3 and above: One adult to eight children.

The Pre-school Leader will hold the qualifications required by the EYFS and will meet the requirements for experience prior to taking on the role. A Deputy Pre-school Leader will be named and will be capable and qualified to take charge in the Leader's absence.

The Pre-School staff will meet the legal requirements for qualifications as set out in the EYFS. Staff members will also have sufficient understanding and use of English.

At least one person with a current Paediatric First Aid Certificate will be on the premises at all times and will accompany the children on outings. New, permanent staff or newly qualified staff will also meet the requirements for Paediatric First Aid training, as set out in the EYFS.

Either or both the Pre-school Leader or Deputy Pre-school Leader will be on the premises during session hours.

Suitably qualified cover staff will be counted within the ratio. In general, Learning Support Assistants will not be considered as part of the ratio. However, in emergency or extraordinary situations LSA's may temporarily be included in the ratio. Other temporary staff, volunteers or adults who may work with us from time to time will not be counted within the ratio.

In line with the EYFS, only staff aged 17 or over will be considered as part of the ratio.

Apprentices (aged 16 or over) or students on long term placements are unlikely to be considered part of the ratio.

The staff structure and staff qualifications are published on the website.

OFSTED are informed of the name of the Pre-school Leader and are also given a Nominated contact from within the leadership team. OFSTED are informed of changes to the Pre-school Leader and/or Nominated contact within 14 days.

Deployment of Staff

A weekly rota is prepared, setting out designated areas and activities for staff each week. The rota may be changed at short notice due to the needs of the children or to cover unexpected staff absences or changes. Staff must inform a colleague if they need to leave their designated areas of work. There are no circumstances when children may be left unsupervised. Children must be within sight and hearing of staff at all times.

The Pre-School Leader allocates key children across the staff team. In exceptional circumstances, a staff member may request that the Pre-School Leader reallocates a child from their key working list. Circumstances may include if a staff member has prior knowledge of a family and feels this may compromise their professionalism; or other issues shared with the Pre-School Leader. The Pre-School Leader may also review and reallocate key working lists, following discussion with staff members involved. Further information about the role of the key person is set out in the Teaching and Learning Policy.

Professionalism

Staff must maintain a polite, professional and respectful approach when interacting with colleagues, parents, other professionals, or any other adult who may be involved with the setting.

Staff must follow the Code of Conduct for Employers and Employees and the Code of Conduct: Safe Use of Technology when interacting with others either face-to-face or online; within the setting or out of working hours. Staff must be aware of their online reputation both professionally and personally. Breaches of these Codes of Conduct may result in disciplinary, civil or legal proceedings being taken by the Preschool.

The Codes of Conduct will be reviewed regularly. Staff will be consulted on and be able to contribute to these reviews.

Technology and Preschool Social Media

Staff have an individual Tablet, which allows them to access the Internet. The Pre-School provides the tablets and a Wi-Fi connection. The Pre-School also provides a Bluetooth speaker and a digital projector for staff use in support of teaching and learning. =The use of these facilities is bound by the Code of Conduct: Safe Use of Technology.

The Preschool maintains a public Facebook Page; a closed Facebook Group for parents; and a public Instagram page. In general, the Preschool Leader and Deputy Leader will upload posts to these sites. Staff may 'like' and 'follow' the Preschool social media and must continue to follow the Code of Conduct when commenting on or replying to posts on these pages or on groups where these pages may be shared.

The Preschool is establishing business email addresses and a closed area for permanent staff on the Pre-School website with effect from September 2022. Staff will be involved in developing procedures and expectations around the use of the closed area and email. In general, it is expected that the Pre-School Leader, Deputy, and Business Manager may routinely need to email parents. It is not expected that Pre-School Assistants will need routinely to email parents or to share their business email address with families. If/when email correspondence takes place, staff will follow the Code of Conduct: Safe Use of Technology in maintaining professional correspondence with others.

Suitability Checks and Disqualification, Staff Records

In addition to the checks made on recruitment, staff must disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children. Staff must confirm annually whether any changes have occurred in this respect and annual checks are made through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Temporary staff, Learning Support Assistants, volunteers, or other adults working with us, will not be left unsupervised with the children.

Staff may be dismissed if we are advised by the DBS, Police, or other Statutory Agency that they, or others in their household, are unsuitable to work with children or if we become aware of any relevant information, either disclosed or not previously disclosed, that would lead to their disqualification. The Pre-school will refer to the DBS, staff who are dismissed (or would have been dismissed) because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm in line with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

We will inform OFSTED as soon we become aware, or at the latest within 14 days, of any significant event or information that may affect the suitability of any adult in the setting to work with children.

The Pre-school maintains records on staff which includes (but is not limited to):

- Details of the recruitment and selection process.
- The identity checks and vetting processes completed, including references and DBS checks.
- Contract of employment.
- Records of attendance and absence.
- Training and development.
- Staff supervisions and appraisals.
- Annual disclosure checks.
- Disciplinary procedures.
- Grievance or staff complaint procedures, in line with our Staff Complaints and Whistleblowing Policy.

The Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy includes more information including how staff can access the information we hold.

Staff Health, Wellbeing and Safety

We aim to ensure that the Pre-school is a safe place to work. The Health and Safety policies, and the setting risk assessment set out more detail on how we do this in general terms.

Medicines and Illnesses (Sick Leave)

Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that may affect their ability to care for children. Staff who attend work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs will be subject to disciplinary action.

Staff are asked annually to declare whether they are taking any medication which may affect their ability to care for children. Staff may be asked to provide a letter from their doctor to confirm that their medication does not impair their ability to look after children properly. Staff might not be permitted to work in contact with the children until confirmation has been provided.

If a staff member returns from sick leave and has been prescribed medication, they may be asked to provide a letter from their doctor confirming that the illness or medication does not impair their ability to care for children. Staff might not be permitted to work in contact with the children until confirmation has been provided.

All staff medications should be stored in the storage room, away from and out of reach of the children.

If it is suspected that a staff member may not be suitable for work when they arrive at the setting, or during session time, they must remain in the office and will not be allowed to be in contact with the children. They must return home if it is safe for them to do so. If it is considered unsafe for the staff member to travel on their own, they will be accompanied by a member of the leadership team as soon as cover can be arranged to maintain ratios. If the staff member's health is considered to present an emergency, an ambulance will be called.

Staff who are ill and unable to come into work must notify the Pre-school Leader directly or by phone, text or email, as soon as possible. Staff absence due to illness (sick leave) is monitored. Staff are entitled to statutory sick pay after being ill for at least four (4) days in a row (including non-working days) and if they earn on average £120 or more per week. A fit note is required from the doctor if you are off sick for more than seven (7) days in a row (including non-working days). Further information regarding SSP can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay/eligibility>. No provision has been made for contractual sick pay and it is therefore not applicable.

Attendance and Holidays, Compassionate Leave, Maternity Leave and Pay

Staff who may be absent for reasons other than illness or training must notify the Pre-school Leader directly or by phone, text or email, as soon as possible. Absences will be monitored, and action will be taken if they are sustained or frequent. If a staff member is absent for other reason h/she will not be paid.

Holidays must be taken outside the Pre-school term times, unless your contract specifies that this is allowable. In exceptional circumstances, the Pre-School leader will consider a request for a holiday during term time. Such requests should be made in writing no later than 21 days in advance. Staff should not assume that requests will be automatically granted. The Pre-school Leader will consider each request on a case-by-case basis and in light of the needs of the Pre-school. Authorised holiday leave during term time is unpaid.

Staff are entitled to statutory holiday pay, which is generally paid in August each year. Staff who leave the Pre-school mid-year will usually receive their statutory holiday pay in their last salary payment.

Compassionate leave is available to staff with less or short notice and is granted at the discretion of the Pre-school Leader. The Business Manager, Deputy Leader and/or Chair of the Committee may grant compassionate leave for the Pre-school Leader. Compassionate leave is considered generally in the context of a bereavement or serious, sudden illness in the staff member's immediate or close family. Compassionate leave is paid up to a maximum of five (5) sessions per academic year. Compassionate leave cannot be accrued or rolled forward.

Staff are entitled to statutory maternity leave and pay, should they become pregnant whilst employed by Pre-school, in line with the eligibility criteria established in law. <https://www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave>

Staff are entitled to statutory redundancy pay, in line with the eligibility criteria established in law. <https://www.gov.uk/redundancy-your-rights/redundancy-pay>

National or Local Emergencies and Exceptional Situations

In the instance of national or local emergencies or exceptional situations, the Pre-School will respond to guidance and statutory requirements set out by Government at the time. Staff will be involved in the process of risk assessment and management within the Pre-School, including any discussions about risks to themselves within the workplace. The Pre-School Leader may draw up temporary additional information, guidance, or practice guidelines for staff in response to the emergency or situation. Wherever possible, staff will be involved in discussions to develop the guidelines unless this is not possible due to the nature of the emergency. Once issued, staff are expected to know and follow the additional guidelines etc. Staff will be informed when temporary guidelines no longer apply.

Cover staff

We maintain a list of adults who can cover permanent staff when they are absent, in order to maintain ratios. Cover staff are subject to the suitability checks identified above.

Safety on site

Staff can expect to work within a safe environment. As a pack away setting, there are inherent risks to staff, in particular when moving furniture, setting up and tidying away each day. The health and safety policies and risk assessments set out the steps taken to maintain health and safety at work, and to minimise the risks that occur.

Home visits: staff do not undertake routine home visits.

Staff Complaints and Whistle-blowing

The Pre-school has a staff complaints and whistle-blowing policy in place should staff wish to raise concerns about any aspect of their employment.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Handsworth Pre-school	name of setting
Held on	14 June 2022	(date)
Date to be reviewed	13 June 2023	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee		
Name of signatory	Jonny Cooper	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	Chair	