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## Staffing, Employment and Development Policy

### Staffing and Employment

**A high adult/child ratio is essential in providing good quality care and education. We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and follow the procedures set out in the West Sussex Early Years document “Recruiting and Retaining your Staff Team”, following Safer Recruiting guidelines.**

In our Playgroup:

- All staff will undergo an enhanced DBS check, be registered with DBS Update service and sign an annual declaration that they remain fit to work with children.
- New staff must complete a standard application form and identify reasons for any gaps in employment. They will be interviewed by at least two people and be required to produce evidence, preferably photographic, of their identity and provide a minimum of two references which will be followed up. They will not be allowed unsupervised contact with children until these checks, including the DBS check and references have been received and reviewed.
- All staff and committee members will sign a Child Protection Code of Conduct.
- All staff must complete full Paediatric First Aid, Safeguarding and Child Protection training (including the Prevent Duty) within their first term with us (where training opportunities allow) and have these updated at least every three years (or every 2 years for those staff members who are Designated Persons).
- Safeguarding knowledge should be refreshed at least annually, and this may be done online, in-house at staff meetings or supervisions or by attending a training course.
- If a staff member is unable to gain a Paediatric First Aid Certificate due to a disability preventing them from carrying out all of the practical tasks required, they should still attend the relevant training and obtain written evidence of attendance, as their First Aid knowledge and skills are still a valuable asset to the setting.
- All staff dealing with food, must undertake a recognised Food Hygiene course and update it every 3 years, as recommended by the Food Standards Agency.
- New staff will be subject to a minimum 3 month probationary period, which will include a comprehensive induction and training period, including the reading and understanding of all Policies.
- Staff must produce copies of their qualifications in order for them to be verified. This can include digital copies.



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- Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol, or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If a member of staff is found to be in breach of this, immediate suspension will follow, while the misconduct is investigated, following the Disciplinary Procedure.
- Staff taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children should seek medical advice and will only be allowed to work directly with children if the medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly. Staff should declare any medication they are taking and any staff medication kept on the premises must be securely stored out of reach of children at all times.
- At every session, we will have at least one member of staff to eight children aged 3 and over and one member of staff to 5 children aged under 3. Work placement students will not be used to make up staff ratios, unless they are on a long term placement and the Manager assesses them as suitable, in which case they can be included in the ratios at the level below that which they are studying.
- Regular staff meetings, planning meetings and supervisions provide opportunities for staff to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss the children's progress and any difficulties or concerns they may have.
- We seek to offer job opportunities equally to both women and men, with and without disabilities, from all religions, social, ethnic and cultural groups.
- 80% of our staff hold a relevant Early Years qualifications at Level 3 and if we recruit someone without either a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification, they will be encouraged and supported to undertake qualification training alongside their work at the Playgroup.
- We support the work of our staff by means of regular (termly) monitoring and supervision sessions and all members of staff are expected to complete an annual evaluation form and to take part in an annual appraisal meeting with the Manager.
- The Manager is expected to engage in termly supervision sessions with at least one member of the Management Committee or other suitable person e.g. the Manager of another setting providing a reciprocal arrangement and is also expected to complete an annual evaluation and appraisal.
- Peer observations will be carried out termly, where possible, focusing on a specific area of practice as determined by the Manager.
- Any Disciplinary or Grievance Procedure will follow the ACAS Code of Practice and follow the guidance set out in the Pre-School Learning Alliance (now Early Years Alliance) publication on Managing Staff (copy attached).



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## **Staffing, Employment and Development Policy**

### **Staff Development**

**Staff development and training is an important part of extending personal skills and contributes to the continuing improvement, quality and development of the setting. Training also enhances the quality of care, learning opportunities and experiences we provide for the children.**

#### **Aims:**

- To improve the quality of care, learning opportunities and experiences for the children attending Playgroup;
- To aid the group in developing its overall aims and principles;
- For workers to develop professionally and increase self confidence;
- For workers to share any experience or knowledge gained, with colleagues;
- To enable workers to develop a personal career structure.

#### **Identifying Needs:**

- Through regular staff meetings and supervisions;
- Through peer observations;
- Through annual staff evaluations/appraisals;
- Through the setting's Training Needs Analysis and Development Plan
- From key issues in reports from OFSTED etc.;
- Following changes and requirements to receive Childcare funding, in childcare legislation or to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

#### **Training may be:**

- 'In house' for all staff with an external input;
- Individual members of staff attending extended courses leading to a recognised qualification;
- Individual staff attending day courses, evening courses, workshops, conference days and cascading to others, what has been learned;
- All staff attending a course/workshop;
- Cover for staff to visit another group or network group meeting;
- Opportunities to observe each other and particular activities;
- Online and cascaded to others.

Whilst every effort will be made for staff to undertake appropriate training, this will need to be within financial constraints of the group. The setting subscribes annually to the online training resource Flick Learning; utilises the West Sussex Early Years Training provision and benefits from a selection of free or reduced cost online Educare training courses as part of our subscription to the Early Years Alliance.



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### Peer Observations

Peer observations take place once a term, where possible to help improve practice. The Manager will decide the focus of the observation, and this may be as a result of recommendations or in order to evaluate or highlight a particular aspect of practice.

Staff members can choose who observes them, when and where and if they are happy to be filmed using the Playgroup camera or tablet. The member of staff being observed will have the opportunity to view a filmed observation privately before deciding whether they are happy for it to be shared with the Manager or staff team. If they wish, they may choose to delete the recording without it being viewed by anyone else. Any filmed observations will not be made public and the devices on which they are stored should not be removed from the premises.

Permission should be obtained from someone with Parental Responsibility for their child to be filmed as part of a peer observation, with parents being informed that it is the adult, not the child who is the focus of the filming. Any footage containing images of children will be deleted when the child leaves the setting, if not before. Similarly, if a staff member leaves the setting, any footage of them will also be deleted.

### Homeworking

**On occasion it may be necessary for staff to work from home, undertaking online training, updating Learning Journals, researching information, completing online or paper administration etc.**

- The Playgroup will provide a homeworking risk assessment, which individual members of staff should adhere to.
- An agreed number of hours or tasks to be completed should be made.
- For longer term homeworking, the Manager will keep in touch with staff via telephone and email.
- Staff should contact the manager to report any periods of illness whilst they are due to be homeworking or any concerns over the work or hours to be completed.

This Policy will be reviewed at least annually.