

WHITLEY LODGE UNDER FIVES

STAFFING AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY

Statement of intent

Our pre-school recognises that the staff team is a valuable asset and we aim to employ staff with a high degree of commitment and appropriate experience and training who will believe in the ethos of the pre-school and implement the policies and procedures well. We provide a high staffing ratio to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality. Our staff members are appropriately qualified and are checked for suitability through the Disclosure & Barring service in accordance with Ofsted's requirements.

Aims

To ensure that children and their parents are offered high quality pre-school care and education. To work together in harmony to provide a happy and safe environment in which children can develop and learn.

Methods

- To meet this aim we use the following ratios of adult to child:
 - children aged two years of age: 1 adult : 4 or 5 children
 - children aged three - five years of age: 1 adult : 8 children
- A minimum of two staff are on duty at any one time. A designated and qualified leader will supervise each session and have a designated deputy
- Staff are deployed according to which activities need constant supervision, which activities need observed re EYFS, which activities require scaffolding and ratios re inside/outside. Safeguarding is paramount at all times.
- We use a key person system to ensure that each child and each family has a particular member of staff for discussion and consultation.
- We hold regular staff meetings to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss children's progress, their achievements and if any difficulties which may arise from time to time. Minutes are kept on file for these meetings. Curriculum maps are displayed on the wall and information is shared with parents.
- We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.
- Vacancies are filled by either internal promotion or internal and external advertisements.
- Interested parties are requested to contact us for more information about the role e.g. job description.
- Interested parties are invited to apply for positions.
- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection. 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 imposing conditions or requirements, which are not justifiable.

- Shortlisted candidates are invited for an interview where they are asked a number of questions and scored appropriately.
- We use Ofsted and EYFS 2025 guidance on obtaining references and criminal record checks (DBS) through 'Know Your People'
- Do not accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern
- Do not rely on applicants to obtain their references
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer, training provider or education setting and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority
- Do not accept references from a family member
- Obtain verification of the individuals most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children) If the applicant has never worked with children then ensure the reference is from their current employer, training provider or education setting. References to be obtained in a timely manner
- Ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- Contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- Compare the information on the application form with that and the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate
- Establish the reason for the candidate leaving, their current or most recent post
- Ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed
- All permanent staff sign up to the DBS update service and Managers check this regularly (every term) and keep a record in the Know Your People file of the reference number, the date the check was obtained and details of who obtained it.
- All staff have job descriptions, which set out their roles and responsibilities and a contract of employment. A personal record sheet is completed and kept on file for each staff member.
- Our pre-school leaders hold the CACHE level 3 Diploma in Pre-school Practice, NVQ Level 3 or an equivalent qualification and a minimum of half of our staff holds the CACHE level 2 Certificate in Pre-school Practice or an equivalent qualification.
- We provide regular in-service training to all staff - whether paid staff or volunteers - through the Local Authority and other appropriate agencies. Records of training undertaken are kept in the Staff File and relevant certificates displayed in the cloakroom.
- Our pre-school budget includes an allocation towards training costs.
- We provide staff induction training in the first weeks of employment. This induction includes our Health and Safety Policy and Procedures and Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures. Other policies and procedures will be introduced within an induction plan.

- Staff have regular Supervisions which give them the opportunities to discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being, their own mental health and wellbeing, identify solutions to address issues as they arise; and receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness. It is also brought to their attention that it is their responsibility to inform the pre-school if they receive any convictions relevant to their employment or if they are disqualified from working with children.
- The Manager and deputy will meet annually to draw up a performance plan and training plan. As part of this process staff will carry out professional development reviews and appraisals. This process will identify training needs and ensure that all staff have access to relevant training.
- The committee and staff team work together to promote the aims of the group. Staff members attend regular committee meetings (minutes are kept in the Committee File) and there is additional informal liaison on a daily basis.
- It is recognised that disagreements or grievances may arise within the staff team or between staff and committee. These can usually be resolved informally by discussion, but if this is not the case the attached grievance and disciplinary procedure will be used.
- We use Ofsted guidance on obtaining references and criminal record checks (DBS) through 'Know your people' for volunteers who will have substantial access to children.

References should be provided for previous employees upon request, in a timely manner. When asked to provide references, providers should ensure the information confirms whether they are satisfied with the applicants suitability to work with children and provide the facts (not opinions) of any substantiated safeguarding concerns / allegations that meet the harm threshold. They should not include information about concerns/ allegations which are unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious. All references received will be confirmed by phone call to person providing the reference and this will be recorded in writing stating date and who confirmed reference.