

Suitable People, Employment and Staffing Policies



**Clockhouse
Preschool**
Learning through play

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2.1 Employment

Policy statement

We meet the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensuring that our staff and volunteers are appropriately qualified, and we carry out checks for criminal and other records through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in accordance with statutory requirements, following DfE statutory guidance in the event a DBS check shows a conviction or caution. We follow the Safer recruitment guidance from Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership (www.bromleysafeguarding.org).

Procedures

Vetting and staff selection

- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
- All our staff have job descriptions, which set out their roles and responsibilities.
- We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered based on their suitability for the post, regardless of disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex, age, marriage or civil partnership. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by our imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.
- We follow the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (2025) and Ofsted guidance on checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers who will ultimately have unsupervised access to children. This includes, but is not limited to;
 - Obtaining a reference before employment is offered.
 - Ensuring further references are obtained before being unsupervised.
 - Obtaining a satisfactory enhanced criminal records check with barred list(s) check before being unsupervised. This is in accordance with requirements under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) and the Protection of Freedoms Act (2012) for the vetting and barring scheme.
 - Following DfE statutory guidance to review any convictions or cautions in the event a DBS check is returned with declaration of convictions or cautions.
 - Using evidence from references, employment history, interviews, social media and any other checks undertaken, for example medical suitability.
- Where an individual is subscribed to the DBS Update Service, we carry out a status check of their DBS certificate, after checking their identity and viewing their original enhanced DBS

certificate to ensure that it does not reveal any information that would affect their suitability for the post.

- We keep all records relating to the employment of our staff and volunteers; in particular those demonstrating that suitability checks have been done, including the date of issue, name, type of DBS check and unique reference number from the DBS certificate, along with details of our suitability decision.
- We suggest that all staff and volunteers acquiring a new DBS check keep it up to date by subscribing to the DBS Update Service.
- Our 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.
- Where an employee or volunteer has a DBS on the update service, we obtain consent to carry out on-going status checks of the Update Service to establish that their DBS certificate is up to date for the duration of their employment with us.
- 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. In the event of disqualification, that person's employment with us will be terminated.

Notifying Ofsted of changes

- We inform Ofsted of any changes to our Registered Person who include our trustees and our manager.
- No trustee acts as such until their suitability is confirmed by Ofsted, in which case, outgoing trustees, may be required to remain in their post to ensure enough trustees remain in place.

Training and staff development

- Our manager and deputy hold at least the CACHE Level 3 Diploma for the Children and Young People's Workforce or an equivalent qualification and at least half of our other staff members hold the CACHE Level 2 Certificate for the Children and Young People's Workforce or an equivalent or higher qualification.
- We provide regular in-service training to all our staff - whether paid staff or volunteers - through the Pre-school Learning Alliance, local authority and external agencies.
- Our budget allocates resources to training.
- We provide our staff with induction training in the first week of their employment. This induction includes our Health and Safety Policy and Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy. Other policies and procedures are introduced within a longer induction plan.
- We support the work of our staff by holding supervision meetings each term.
- We are committed to recruiting 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. Our 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 always be stored securely and kept out of reach of the children.
- If we have reason to believe that a member of our 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 usually take their holiday breaks when the setting is closed. Where a staff member may need to take time off for any reason other than sick leave or training, this is agreed with our manager with sufficient notice.
- Where our staff are unwell and take sick leave in accordance with their contract of employment, we organise cover to ensure ratios are maintained.
- Sick leave is monitored, and action is taken where necessary, in accordance with the individual's contract of employment.
- We have several members of staff who can cover additional sessions to cover unplanned absences.

Staff undertaking Babysitting or other work outside of our provision.

We will not be held responsible for any private arrangements or agreements that are made between members of staff and parents/carers of pre-school children.

Our staff or their family members may be asked to carry out babysitting, or other duties outside their working hours at a parent's home or place of work or their own home and are free to do so, but must declare this to the manager before beginning the arrangement.

We take no responsibility for recommending staff or for being responsible whilst staff members or other members of their household are working in a private arrangement with the parent(s) of children from our provision. This includes, but is not limited to health and safety issues, conduct issues or grievances.

When a staff member takes a child home with the parents' consent, as either a childminder or babysitter, the child is no longer the responsibility of the preschool once they have left the preschool building.

We have a rigorous recruitment procedure to ensure that we employ competent and professional members of staff and uphold our duty to safeguard children whilst on our premises and in the care of our staff. This procedure includes interviews and vetting such as DBS checks and checks on references and qualifications. Furthermore, whilst in our employ, all staff members are subject to ongoing supervision, observation, and assessment, to ensure that standards of work and behaviour are maintained in accordance with our policies. We have no such control over the conduct of staff outside of their position of employment, and our duty to safeguard children as above does not extend to private arrangements. If private babysitting duties are viewed to interfere with any aspect of the staff member's employment, we may require that the agreement be terminated.

The Preschool will keep staff and parent contact details confidential in line with our confidentiality policy. To arrange babysitting the parties must arrange communication between them outside of our session times. Both parties must remain highly conscious that confidentiality must always be paramount, and staff cannot discuss any details of the preschool.

2.2 Student placements

Policy

We recognise that qualifications and training make an important contribution to the quality of the care and education we provide. As part of our commitment to quality, we offer placements to students undertaking early years qualifications and training. We also offer placements for school pupils, from year 10 onwards, on work experience.

We aim to provide for students on placement with us, experiences that contribute to the successful completion of their studies and that provide examples of quality practice in early years care and education.

Procedures

Students

- We require students to meet the Suitable Person requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and to provide a satisfactory enhanced DBS check with barred list check(s) if 16+ years old.
- We agree the aims and expectations of the placement with the student's tutor prior to the placement commencing.
- We require students in our setting to have a sufficient understanding and use of English to contribute to the well-being of children in our care.
- We require schools, colleges or universities placing students under the age of 17 years with us to vouch for their good character.
- We always supervise students under the age of 17 years
- Students who are placed in our setting on a short-term basis are not counted in our staffing ratios.
- Students who are undertaking 'Full and Relevant' qualifications, may be counted in ratios if they are 17+ years old if deemed competent by the setting manager.
- Apprentices aged 16 or over, may be included in staffing ratios if deemed competent by the setting manager.
- We hold employers' liability insurance and public liability insurance, which covers employees, students and voluntary helpers.
- We require students to keep to our Confidentiality and Client Access to Records Policy.
- We co-operate with students' tutors to help students to fulfil the requirements of their course of study.
- Student inductions include how the setting and sessions are managed, and policies and procedures, in particular safeguarding, confidentiality and health and safety.
- We communicate a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
- The needs of the children and their families always remain paramount, and students are only admitted in numbers that do not hinder the work of the setting.
- The setting communicates a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
- The setting manager ensures that students and apprentices on placement are engaged in bona fide early years training, which provides the necessary background understanding of children's development and activities.

2.3 Induction and Supervision of employees and volunteers

Policy statement

We carry out induction, regular training and supervision for all employees and volunteers to ensure they meet the requirements of the role, are fully supported and have regular opportunity to discuss concerns confidentially.

Procedures

Induction

- We have a written induction plan for all new staff, which includes the following:
 - Introductions to all employees and volunteers.
 - Familiarisation with the building, health and safety, and fire and evacuation procedures.
 - Familiarisation with our safeguarding procedures, including the need for the new member of staff to be supervised while awaiting safeguarding checks.
 - Ensuring our policies and procedures are read and adhered to.
 - Introduction to the parents, especially parents of allocated key children where appropriate and familiarisation with confidential information in relation to key children where applicable.

- Information about the setting, the families we serve, our policies and procedures, curriculum, and daily practice.
- Details of the tasks and daily routines to be completed.
- Review of training completed and needed and planning for this to be completed.
- The induction period usually lasts twelve weeks. The manager and deputy induct new employees and volunteers. Our chair inducts new managers.
- During the induction period, the individual must demonstrate understanding of and compliance with policies, procedures, tasks, and routines.
- Successful completion of the induction forms part of the probationary period.
- Following induction, we continue to support our staff to deliver high quality performance through regular supervision of their work and discussion.

Supervision

- Supervision meetings are held every term for all staff, long term students and regular volunteers.
- Supervisions are carried out by the manager or deputy.
- Supervision meetings are held in a confidential space suitable for the task.
- Key persons should prepare for supervision by having the relevant information to hand.

Content

The supervision meeting includes discussion about:

- the development and well-being of the supervisee's key children and offer staff opportunity to raise concerns in relation to any child attending. Safeguarding concerns must always be reported to the designated person immediately and not delayed until a scheduled supervision meeting.
- reflection on the journey a child is making and potential well-being or safeguarding concerns for the children they have key responsibility for
- promoting the interests of children.
- coaching to improve professional effectiveness based on a review of observed practice/teaching.
- reviewing plans and agreements from previous supervisions including any identified learning needs for the member of staff
- During supervision, staff can discuss any concerns they have about inappropriate behaviour displayed by colleagues but must never delay until a scheduled supervision to raise concerns.
- Staff are reminded of the need to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children that have occurred during their employment. New information is referred immediately to the designated officer.
- Supervisors check with staff if there is any new information pertaining to their suitability to work with children.

Recording

- All supervision discussions are recorded, signed and retained by the supervisor and supervisee.
- Each member of staff has a supervision file that is stored securely at all times.
- Concerns raised during supervision about an individual child's welfare may result in safeguarding concerns not previously recognised as such, these are recorded in the child's concerns file. The reasons why the concerns have not previously been considered are explored.

2.4 Grievances procedure

1. Introduction

The following procedure should be followed to settle all grievances concerning any employee(s) of Clockhouse Pre-School Playgroup.

2. Principles

- The key objective of the procedure is to allow grievances to be settled quickly, fairly and at the lowest possible level within Clockhouse Pre-School Playgroup, whilst allowing employees the opportunity to appeal to a higher level if necessary.
- The procedure covers all employed staff in Clockhouse Pre-School Playgroup who have a grievance.
- It covers all matters which may become a source of grievance, excluding:
 - those concerned with disciplinary action unless the disciplinary action amounts to discrimination, or the action was not taken on the grounds of the employees conduct or capability
 - decisions on strategic business issues, which are taken by the Management Committee, but not excluding the operational impact of those decisions
- Employees are encouraged to raise concerns verbally with their manager prior to raising a formal grievance.
- Employees are entitled to be accompanied to a grievance meeting and appeal, by a trade union representative or by a work colleague.

3. Procedure

- The Pre-school's policy is to encourage free interchange and communication between managers and the staff they manage. This ensures that questions and problems can be aired and resolved quickly and that grievances are settled informally.

4. Informal Procedure

- If an employee has a complaint about their individual circumstances at work, then they are entitled to raise a grievance. Employees are expected to discuss ordinary day to day issues informally with your line manager through supervision meetings or if necessary, request a separate meeting. Where this is not possible employees should raise their concerns verbally with the next level of management, prior to raising a formal grievance.
- If after seeking to resolve concerns informally employees are not satisfied, then they should write to the early years setting, explaining their grievance.

5. Formal Procedure

- Employees must provide in writing the nature of the alleged grievance and send the written complaint to the manager.
- Where the grievance is against the manager the matter should be raised with Allison Pendergast, Chair of our committee.
- Normally within 5 working days of receiving a grievance, the manager will write to the employee, inviting them to attend a meeting where the alleged grievance can be discussed. The meeting should be scheduled to take place as soon as reasonably possible, and normally at least 5 working days' notice of this meeting should be provided to the employee.
- Employees are required to take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. However, should, for a reasonably unforeseen reason, either the employee, the manager or their companions are unable to attend the meeting, it must be rearranged.
- Should an employee's companion be unable to attend then the employee should make contact within 5 days of the date of the letter to arrange an alternative date that falls within 10 days of the original date provided. These time limits may be extended by mutual agreement.
- At the meeting the employee must inform the manager hearing the grievance what the basis for the complaint is.

- After the final meeting, the manager hearing the grievance must write to the employee informing them about any decision and offering the right of appeal. This letter should be sent within 10 working days of the grievance meeting and should include the details of how to appeal.
- Should the employee consider that the grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, then they must set out their grounds of appeal in writing within 7 working days of receipt of the decision letter, confirming that they wish to appeal against the decision or failure to make a decision.
- Within 5 working days of receiving an appeal letter, the employee should be written to invite her/him to attend an appeal hearing where the alleged grievance can be discussed. The appeal meeting should be scheduled to take place as soon as reasonably possible.
- Employees are required to take all reasonable steps to attend the appeal hearing. However, should, for a reasonably unforeseen reason, either the employee, the line manager or their companions be unable to attend the meeting, it must be rearranged.
- Should an employee's companion be unable to attend then the employee should make contact within 5 days of the date of the letter to arrange an alternative date that falls within 10 days of the original date provided. These time limits may be extended by mutual agreement.
- After the appeal meeting, the appeal hearing manager must write to the employee informing them of the employer's final decision. This letter should be sent within 10 working days of the appeal hearing.
- This is the final stage of the procedure.

2.5 Disciplinary procedure

1. Introduction

This procedure is designed to encourage all employees to achieve high standards of conduct and work performance and aims to provide a fair, effective, and consistent method of dealing with disciplinary matters.

2. Key principles

- employees are expected to know the standard of conduct or work performance expected of them.
- employees will be provided with a management statement of the case prior to any disciplinary meeting and will be allowed to respond to any alleged fault or failing at the meeting.
- an employee is entitled to be accompanied by a trade union representative to a disciplinary meeting or work colleague employed by the setting. Other external representatives may not accompany an employee.
- for minor or isolated infringements of rules or expected behaviour, managers and supervisors should give employees informal advice, coaching and counselling as part of their supervisory duties.
- where an employee's conduct or performance fails to improve because of advice, coaching or counselling, or where the offence is more serious, then the disciplinary procedure will be applied.
- except in cases of gross misconduct, no employee will be dismissed for a first offence.

3. Categories of gross misconduct

Gross misconduct is a category which can include:

- theft, fraud, and deliberate falsification of records
- physical violence
- serious bullying or harassment
- deliberate damage to property
- serious insubordination
- misuse of the settings property or name

- bringing the organisation into serious disrepute
- serious incapability whilst on duty brought on by alcohol or illegal drugs.
- serious negligence which causes or might cause unacceptable loss, damage, or injury.
- serious infringement of health and safety rules.
- serious breach of confidentiality (subject to the Public Interest (Disclosure) Act 1998)
- serious failure to comply with procedures that safeguard children.

This is not an exhaustive list.

4. Steps prior to deciding to take disciplinary action

- when any incident of misconduct or negligence or poor performance is alleged to have occurred, the manager must establish the facts to decide whether there is a need for a disciplinary interview.
- where appropriate/possible, signed written statements should be obtained as quickly as possible from the individual(s) concerned and should include where possible dates, times, details of those present and the issues of concern.

5. The key steps in taking disciplinary action – standard procedure

Step 1: management statement of grounds for action and invitation to a meeting

- following an appropriate investigation, the manager must prepare a written statement of the employee's alleged conduct or characteristics, or of the circumstance which have led to the contemplation of taking disciplinary action
the manager or supervisor must send the statement to the employee including any evidence that will be relied upon at the meeting and, and invite her/him to attend a disciplinary meeting to discuss the matter. The employee should also be informed of their right to be accompanied at the meeting. Employees should be given an appropriate amount of notice of the meeting in order to prepare their response.

Step 2: the disciplinary meeting

- a disciplinary meeting must take place before any disciplinary action is taken, (except where the action in question consists of suspension pending a disciplinary meeting)
- at the meeting, the manager or supervisor should ensure that the circumstances of the complaint against the employee are fully discussed, and that the employee is provided with an opportunity to respond to the management case. The manager will then decide whether to issue a disciplinary penalty. The outcome of the disciplinary meeting must be confirmed in writing within 7 working days, to include the right of appeal and to whom to address any appeal letter.

Step 3: the appeal

- any employee who feels they have been disciplined unfairly may appeal in writing to the person named in the disciplinary letter. All appeals must be submitted in writing, clearly set out the grounds for appeal, within 7 working days of the date of the disciplinary meeting letter.
- normally an appeal meeting will be arranged with the employee together with the chair of the committee, who issued the disciplinary penalty, within 15 working days of the employee's request.
- appeals will normally be held within 15 working days of the date of the original disciplinary meeting. A letter detailing the outcome of the appeal should be issued within 10 working days of the appeal meeting.

6. The key steps in taking disciplinary action – modified procedure

The setting has a modified procedure which applies where:

- the dismissal took place when the setting became aware of the conduct or immediately thereafter.

- it was reasonable to dismiss the employee without notice or any payment in lieu of notice, because of his/her gross misconduct.
- it was reasonable in the circumstances, to dismiss the employee before enquiring into the circumstances in which the gross misconduct took place.

The modified element of the procedure is only likely to apply in the rarest of circumstances, such as where an employee does not have a work permit or is guilty of gross misconduct in circumstances where immediate dismissal is necessitated.

Step 1: management statement of grounds for dismissal

- In most cases of gross misconduct, following a period of suspension of the employee and an appropriate investigation, the manager must send the employee a written statement which includes the following:
 - the employee's alleged misconduct which led to the dismissal
 - the basis for thinking, at the time of dismissal, that the employee was guilty of the alleged misconduct.
 - the employee's right of appeal

Step 2 – the appeal

- Any employee who feels they have been disciplined unfairly may appeal in writing, as set out in paragraph 5.
The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the disciplinary appeal meeting.

7. Disciplinary penalties

- Managers should not issue any disciplinary penalties without a formal meeting.
- There are five disciplinary penalties, which may result from misconduct:
 - formal verbal warning (first formal warning)
 - written warning
 - final written warning
 - dismissal with notice
 - summary dismissal
- The gravity of the offence will determine which disciplinary penalty is issued.

8. Formal verbal warning

Minor breaches of organisational discipline, misconduct or timekeeping, or failure to meet performance criteria, may result in a formal verbal warning given by the manager. The manager may give this at a disciplinary meeting with the employee. This warning should be confirmed in writing. If the warning relates to unsatisfactory performance, then it should set out:

- the performance required.
- the improvement required.
- the timescale for improvement
- any review dates.
- any support that can be offered to assist the employee to improve their performance.
- If the warning relates to conduct, then the nature of the misconduct and the change in behaviour required should be set out in the warning letter.
- The employee may be accompanied at the meeting by a work colleague or a trade union representative.
- The warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file. After a period of three months, if no further disciplinary action has been found necessary and the minor breach has been resolved, the warning will expire.

9. Written warnings

- If the infringement is regarded as more serious, or the employee's work or conduct are considered unsatisfactory after they have received a formal verbal warning and after a

period has elapsed in which the employee has had time to remedy their work or conduct, a disciplinary meeting conducted by the manager will be held.

- The employee will be informed of the nature of the complaint and such evidence as may exist and will be given an opportunity to respond. The employee will be told of the decision and given a letter of confirmation within 10 working days of the disciplinary meeting. The written confirmation will state:
the date of the disciplinary meeting and those present
 - the penalty imposed.
 - details of the misconduct, poor performance or poor time keeping that has occasioned a warning and the performance required or the change in behaviour required.
 - the timescales for performance improvement, where appropriate
 - details of any necessary action to remedy the situation, any period of review, extra training or supervision etc., or the possibility for redeployment / demotion.
 - that any further misconduct etc. will result in a further disciplinary meeting and will normally result in a confirmed final warning, which if unheeded will result in dismissal with appropriate notice.
 - that there is a right of appeal
- After a period of six months, if no further disciplinary action has been found necessary and the minor breach has been resolved, the warning will expire.

10. Final written warning

- If the employee's work or conduct fails to improve, or where the infringement is sufficiently serious, the manager will follow the same procedures as for issuing a written warning. If proven, a final warning, which will be in writing, will be given to the employee warning that any further misconduct will result in dismissal with appropriate notice.
- After a period of twelve months, if no further disciplinary action has been found necessary and the breach has been resolved, the warning will expire.

11. Gross misconduct

- Employees dismissed with notice will be paid for this notice period. An employee may be dismissed without notice if there has been an act of gross misconduct, or a major breach of duty or conduct that brings the organisation into disrepute. The employee will be suspended with pay while the circumstances of the alleged gross misconduct are investigated.
- A dismissal must be confirmed in writing within 10 working days of the date of the disciplinary interview. As well as covering the points in paragraphs 9.1 and 9.2, the letter should also include details of any outstanding money owed to the employee, how and when it will be paid and the final date of employment.
- Where a member of staff is dismissed from the organisation or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we inform the Department for Education and Skills, other relevant agencies and follow Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.

12. Suspension

- Suspension should be used sparingly in circumstances where the manager needs to conduct an investigation prior to a hearing where it is felt that the impact of not suspending the employee during the period would be likely to be more detrimental than suspending them.
- Cases which involve potential gross misconduct will usually result in suspension - particularly when relationships have broken down or where the setting's property or responsibilities to other parties are involved, or where the employee's presence may prejudice the inquiry.
- Suspension should be kept brief and reviewed to ensure that it is not unnecessarily protracted.

13. Timescales

- Employees are required to take all reasonable steps to attend the hearing. However, should, for a reasonably unforeseen reason, either the employee, the line manager or their companions be unable to attend the meeting, it must be rearranged.
- Should an employee's companion be unable to attend then the employee should make contact within 5 days of the date of the letter to arrange an alternative date that falls within 10 days of the original date provided.
- Time limits may be extended by mutual agreement.

14. Amendments to the Procedure

These procedures may not apply where there is a significant threat of violence or harassment. Under these circumstances the management committee should be contacted.

2.6 Retirement policy

1. Introduction

- The Retirement Policy aims to clarify the obligations that the setting and its employees have in relation to retirement. This policy details some options employees have available to them when considering retirement.
- This policy incorporates the statutes relating to the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

2. Principles

- The normal retirement age within the setting is, in line with the national "default retirement" age.
- The setting believes, wherever possible, that individuals should be able to continue working beyond this age and will therefore consider applications to work beyond the default retirement age on an individual basis, based on business need and merit.
- The setting will take all reasonable steps to accommodate an employee's request to continue working beyond their default retirement age and have a range of options for flexible or phased retirement programs. As each job role and individual's personal circumstances are different the options should assist in meeting the needs of individuals and the business.
- Employees nearing retirement age should advise their manager as early as possible as to their intentions for retirement. This will help the setting with its succession planning and assist employees who wish to continue working beyond the default age, by allowing managers to carefully consider any requests and possible employment options available to them.

3. Procedure

- Employees will receive notification of their default retirement age from managers between 6 and 12 months prior to this date, providing details of their right to request to work beyond this date.
- Employees should respond to this letter stating their intentions and providing details of any flexible working arrangements they wish to be considered (please see Flexible Retirement Guidance Notes) at this stage.
- Employee's requests to work beyond the default retirement age should be made to managers between 4 and 6 months prior to the default age.
- Requests should clearly specify whether their wish is to:
 - stay within the employment of the setting until the age of 70.
 - continue their employment with the setting until a specified date.
 - continue their employment on a fixed term period
- Employees should also state any flexible working options that they wish to be considered, alongside the above information.

- Once a request has been received by a manager the employee will be invited to attend a meeting, within 21 days, to discuss the feasibility of the request.
- Within 15 days of the meeting the manager will write to the employee, confirming their decision, after considering the representations made by the employee and the general business needs that might affect any decisions.
- Employees will have the right to appeal a decision not to authorise the request. An appeal letter should state the grounds of any appeal and be sent to the manager within 15 days of the decision letter being sent.
- The setting's decision in any request to work beyond the stated default date will be reasonable, based on individual circumstances and business needs.
- If following an appeal, the setting does not wish to authorise the decision to continue working then the decision will be final.

2.7 The role of the key person and settling in

Policy statement

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff, and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, our staff are committed, and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated, and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with our staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with our setting. We aim to make our setting a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

The key person role is set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each child must have a key person. These procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children.

Procedures

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- The key person is responsible for:
 - Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into our setting.
 - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
 - Working with the parents to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
 - Acting as the key contact for the parents.
 - Contributing to and updating developmental records and sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.
 - Having links with other carers involved with the child and co-ordinating the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our setting, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other adults and children.

Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend our setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information including our prospectus and policies, displays about activities available within the setting, information days, individual meetings, and home visits with parents.

- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting and we offer all families a home visit in the days before a child starts with us.
- The key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- We use home visits, pre-start visits and the first session at which a child attends to explain and complete, with his/her parents, the child's registration records.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- If a child would benefit from bringing a comfort item with them, such as a toy or blanket, this should be agreed between the key person and parent.
- We have an expectation that, if necessary, the parent, carer, or close relative, will stay for most of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child; increasing this time as and when the child is able to cope.
- Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be on hand to re-settle them.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person or other adults in the setting; for example, the child seems pleased to be in the setting. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when, using the easily understandable term 'after story time' if they will be returning at the end of the session.
- We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others, but that some children who appear to settle rapidly may not yet be ready to be left.
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle more quickly. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the setting.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
- Within the first two weeks of starting, we discuss and work with the child's parents to begin to create their child's learning journal.

The progress check at age two

- We carry out a progress check at age two for all children joining us before their third birthday. between 6-12 weeks after they start with us.
- The key person carries out the progress check at age two in accordance with any local procedures that are in place and referring to the guidance *A Know How Guide: The EYFS progress check at age two*.
- The progress check aims to review the child's development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their child's development.
- Within the progress check, the key person will note areas where the child is progressing well and identify areas where progress is less than expected.
- The progress check will describe the actions that will be taken by us to address any developmental concerns (including working with other professionals where appropriate) as agreed with the parent(s).
- The key person will plan activities to meet the child's needs within the setting and will support parents to understand the child's needs to enhance their development at home.

2.8 Staff ratios, deployment and space

We provide staffing and space ratios in line with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality. Our staff are appropriately

knowledgeable and qualified, and we carry out checks for enhanced criminal records and barred list checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service in accordance with statutory requirements.

All staff, students and volunteers are deployed in accordance with the procedures and are aware of our complaints and whistleblowing procedures. The setting manager ensures that volunteers and parent helpers are deployed to assist permanent staff.

Procedures

To meet this aim, members of staff and volunteers are deployed to meet the care and learning needs of children and to always ensure their safety and well-being.

- Two members of staff are on the premises before children are admitted in the morning and the end of the day; one of which must be a named session leader.
- The setting manager deploys staff to give adequate supervision of indoor and outdoor areas, ensuring that children are usually within sight and hearing of staff and **always** within sight or hearing of staff at all times.
- Staff are deployed according to the needs of the setting and the children attending.
- Staff are spread across all areas of the room and outdoors to best supervise children and to support their learning.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring that equipment in their area is used appropriately and that the area is tidy at the end of the session.
- There are usually two members of staff outside in the garden when it is being used, one of whom supervises any climbing equipment in use and one supervising the children while the other attends the gate.
- Other members of staff should join those outside, if the numbers of children warrant additional staff.
- Staff, students, and volunteers inform their colleagues if they must leave their area and tell colleagues where they are going.
- Our staff, students and volunteers always focus their attention on children whilst having a wider awareness of what is happening around them and do not spend time in social conversation with colleagues while they are working with children.
- Staff, students and volunteers allow time for colleagues to engage in 'sustained shared interaction' with children and do not interrupt activities led by colleagues.
- All staff, students and volunteers present are available at group and story times to join the activity, engaging children and supporting them to sit and listen.

Staff children

- Where members of staff have their own children with them at the setting, the age of the child must fall within the stipulated ages of the setting's Ofsted registration.
- Where members of staff are likely to be working directly with their own children, this is subject to discussion before commencement with the setting manager.
- Where it is agreed that a member of staff's child attends the setting, it is subject to the following:
 - the child is treated by the parent and all staff as any other child would be
 - the child will not be in the parent's key group of children
 - the key person and parent will work towards helping the child to make a comfortable separation from the parent to allow the parent to fully undertake their role as a staff member of the setting.
 - the key person will take responsibility for the child's needs throughout the day, unless the child is sick or severely distressed.
 - time and space are made for the parent to breastfeed during the day, if that is their chosen method of feeding.
 - the situation is reviewed as required, to ensure that the needs of the child are being met, and that the parent can fulfil his/her role as a member of staff.

If it is the setting manager's child, then their line manager ensures the criteria above is met.

Space requirements:

- We arrange our spaces and equipment in a way that best meets the needs of the children.
- We hold regular staff meetings to reflect upon our practice, including the environment.
- We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements to ensure adequate ratios of indoor space:
- We access our outdoor area on a free flow basis, for most of every session unless circumstances make this inappropriate, for example in unsafe weather conditions.

2.9 Whistleblowing

Policy statement

We are, as an organisation, committed to delivering a high-quality pre-school service, promoting organisational accountability, and maintaining public confidence.

This policy provides individuals in the workplace with protection from victimisation or punishment where they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice in the organisation. The policy is underpinned by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which encourages people to raise concerns about misconduct or malpractice in the workplace, to promote good governance and accountability in the public interest. The Act covers behaviour, which amounts to;

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with any legal obligation.
- A miscarriage of justice
- Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment
- Deliberate concealment of information about any of the above.

It is not intended that this policy be a substitute for, or an alternative to the formal Grievance Procedure, but is designed to nurture a culture of openness and transparency within the setting, which makes it safe and acceptable for employees and volunteers to raise, in good faith, a concern they may have about misconduct or malpractice.

Procedures

An employee or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise such a concern should normally report the matter to the pre-school manager, Rosie White, in person or on 02086636149 who will advise the employee or volunteer of the action that will be taken in response to the concerns expressed. Concerns will be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible.

If an employee or volunteer feels the matter cannot be discussed with the pre-school manager, he or she should contact the Chair of the management committee Allison Pendergast, via email to allisonpendergast1@gmail.com.

A disclosure in good faith to the pre-school manager or Chair will be protected. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible, and the employee or volunteer will not suffer any personal detriment because of raising any genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice within the organisation.

The pre-school manager or chair will listen to your concern and decide if action is needed. This may involve you or other people being asked to provide further information. You must make it clear if you do not want anyone else to know it was you who raised the concern.

You will not have a say in how your concern is dealt with but you will be informed about the action that has been taken, whilst maintaining confidentiality.

If an employee or volunteer feels the matter cannot be discussed with the pre-school chair, they can contact

- The [NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line](#), on 0800 028 0285.
- The [Children's Commissioner for England](#), on 020 7783 8330, or by email info.request@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk.

2.10 Staff personal safety including home visits

Policy statement

This setting believes that the health and safety of all staff is of paramount importance and that all staff have the right to work in a safe environment. We support safe working both on and off the premises, acknowledging the needs and diversity of children and their family.

Procedures

General

- All staff in the building early in the morning, or late in the evening, ensure doors and windows are locked.
- Where possible, at least the first two members of staff to arrive in the building arrive together, and the last two members of staff in the building leave together.
- Visitors are generally only allowed access with prior appointments and only admitted once their identity has been verified.
- Minimal petty cash is kept on the premises.
- Members of staff share the information of meetings they are attending, who they are meeting and when they are expected back.
- Managers have good liaison with local police and ask for advice on safe practice where there are issues or concerns.

Home visits

Where staff members conduct home visits, this is done at the manager's discretion and the following health and safety considerations apply:

- Prior to a home visit the key person and manager undertake a risk assessment that is specific to the visit being undertaken.
- Members of staff normally do home visits in pairs – usually the manager/deputy manager with the key person.
- Each home visit is recorded with the name and address of the family being visited, prior to the visit taking place.
- Staff alert an agreed contact person in the setting when they are leaving to do the home visit and advise on their expected time of return.
- If there is any reason for staff to feel concerned about entering premises, they do not do so, for example, if a parent appears drunk.
- Members of staff carry either the setting mobile phone or their own when going out on a home visit.
- Staff identify an emergency word/phrase, which is made known to all staff in the setting, so that if they feel extremely threatened or in danger on a home visit, they can covertly alert other members of staff via a telephone call to the situation.
- Use of the agreed word/phrase will initiate an immediate 999 call to be made.
- If staff do not return from the home visit at the designated time, the contact person attempts to phone them and continues to do so until they make contact.
- If no contact is made after a reasonable amount of time has passed, the contact person rings the police.

Dealing with agitated parents in the setting

- If a parent appears to be angry, mentally agitated, or possibly hostile, two members of staff will lead the parent away from the children to a less open area but will not shut the door behind them.
- If the person is standing, staff will remain standing.
- Members of staff will try to empathise and ensure that the language they use can be easily understood.
- Staff will speak in low, even tones, below the voice level of the parent.
- Members of staff will make it clear that they want to listen and seek solutions.
- If the person makes threats and continues to be angry, members of staff make it clear that they will be unable to discuss the issue until the person stops shouting or being abusive, while avoiding potentially inflammatory expressions.
- If threats or abuse continues, members of staff will explain that the police will be called and emphasise the inappropriateness of such behaviour in front of children.
- After the event, details are recorded in the child's personal file together with any decisions made with the parents to rectify the situation and any correspondence regarding the incident.

2.11 Staff Handbook and Code of Conduct

Children come first at Clockhouse

Established in 1990, we are a registered charity, run by a committee. We aim to create a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere for our children, families, employees, and volunteers.

We are committed to the principles of Learning through Play

Welcome to Clockhouse Pre-school

We hope you will enjoy working here. We are a close and friendly team who are looking forward to working with you. This handbook sets out some of the first things you will need to know to get started in your role, including our code of conduct.

On your induction day you will also be given some more information and details about your training. Rosie and the team can support you with any questions you may have during your employment, so please do ask if you are unsure. Please read this handbook in conjunction with our latest Welcome guide for parents and our full policies which you can access on Tapestry.

Clockhouse preschool Code of Conduct

Clockhouse preschool is committed to promoting family friendly employment practises to help staff balance work and family commitments. The setting will make every effort to be flexible with staff to promote harmonious working relationships. The setting will work with staff to ensure that all employment legislation and regulation – including Statutory Maternity Pay, Statutory Paternity Pay, Parental Leave, Statutory Sick Pay and Working Time Regulations – are adhered to. In return the setting expects honesty, loyalty, and diligence from its staff.

This code must be read alongside your job description, your contract of employment and all setting policies and procedures.

For the purposes of this policy 'Staff' refers to all employees (managers and practitioners), trustees, volunteers, students, and parent helpers. This Code of Conduct applies to you if you are working at Clockhouse preschool, whether employed or on a voluntary or placement

basis. All staff must follow this Code; deliberate breaches of the Code may be treated as a disciplinary offence.

Our Aims

At Clockhouse it is our intent to:

- Promote the confidence and independence of each child.
- Support children's development in all the EYFS (2025) seven areas of learning.
- support children to develop into happy, kind, confident lifelong learners.
- support the development of children's intrinsic motivation to become positive members of their communities.

We implement this:

- By providing a warm, safe, loving, and caring environment. Using attachment-based methods to support children's wellbeing.
- Through nurturing and supporting individual children and enriching their experiences through play
- keeping children at the centre of all we do to ensure a child-centred, stimulating, and fun environment which the children cannot wait to attend.
- By using children's current level of development and interests, their experiences of the world, and continuous provision to provide highly engaging developmental play opportunities for unique children of all abilities.
- Through individually planned quality interactions using our understanding of how children learn and develop to support high levels of involvement.

We ensure this is impactful by:

- Continually observing and assessing children to ensure each child makes good progress.
- Reflecting on our experiences of teaching and learning situations.
- Reviewing and adapting our environment and provision to ensure it meets the needs of each individual child.

General behaviour

Members of staff are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, courteous, helpful, warm, and consistent manner, whether in or outside of work.

It is expected that staff will:

- safeguard and promote the welfare of children, ensuring that no action is taken, or omission made, which is detrimental to the welfare and safety of, or that hinders the development of, the child.
- value and respect each child as an individual, being aware of, and endeavouring to meet their individual needs to facilitate and promote their growth and development.
- nurture and educate young children as well as providing information and support to parents and families.
- see the child in the context of their community and family situation. Be aware of differences in family structures and valuing that the care of the child is a shared responsibility which must take account of the choices, customs, values and beliefs of the family or the main carers.
- work in a cooperative and collaborative manner with families to promote and safeguard the well-being of the child/ren in the wider context of their family and community.
- avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- be prepared to report any actions of another individual they deem inappropriate to the setting manager
- not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the preschool, the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the preschool.

- be a role model to the children in terms of their own health and hygiene. Leading by modelling a clean, neat and tidy appearance, awareness of physical development (exercise, diet, rest, challenges and managing risk), using 'good manners', clear purposeful language and no inappropriate or offensive language.
- inform the manager if they do not feel confident in undertaking any activities requesting appropriate training.
- declare all convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings, or changes of circumstance which may affect their suitability to work with children.
- If awaiting suitability checks, staff will never be left unsupervised whilst caring for children, take children to the toilet or change nappies, administer first aid or medication or have access to children's personal details and records.

Professional and reflective practice

We are fully committed to staff development and will advise and facilitate training courses that might be relevant. Training is also regularly provided at staff meetings and other in-house sessions. Supervision meetings are held each term with the manager. Staff should prepare for these meetings using the supervision preparation form. The purpose of supervision is to;

- give support and supervision,
- to further staff personal and professional development and improve our practice,
- to review training and development opportunities,
- to discuss any concerns relating to the setting

It is expected that staff will:

- display knowledge and understanding of safeguarding in the setting and in the wider context of the child's life, multi-cultural issues and a commitment to treating all children as individuals and with equal concern and respect. The same professional standards should be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- continually update their knowledge (of best practice and legislation) and skills through a life-long learning approach taking advantage of information in the media, in-house and other training.
- constantly evaluate and reflect upon their own methods, policies, and practices to maintain the highest possible standards of performance.
- be aware of the need for confidentiality within their professional practice. Confidential information received should not be disclosed unless required by law or to protect the interests or welfare of the child.
- contribute to the settings responsibility to protect children and encourage a 'safer working culture'
- contribute to the settings ongoing development, by continually thinking about and making suggestions for improvement:
 - What are we doing now and what are we aiming to do?
 - How well are we doing by comparison to previous years and to other settings?
 - What areas of quality practice need to be maintained and what need to be improved?
 - How do we plan to achieve our aims in the future?

Working with others

Staff must work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way with other members of the team and professionals from other agencies, acknowledging and respecting the contribution of their colleagues, to promote a care and learning environment that is conducive to safe and ethical practice. If the care environment deteriorates, staff must report this to the manager.

Staff should:

- avoid personal conversations with colleagues in view of other staff, children or parents, remaining professional and respectful at all times.
- seek to improve their understanding of the development of young children through ongoing education and collaboration with colleagues.

Staff are expected to treat others fairly and without discrimination. Staff should always behave respectfully, and inappropriate behaviour may lead to disciplinary action.

We will not tolerate:

- bullying, swearing, harassment or victimisation of another person whether in or out of the premises and whether related in any way to the setting.
- arguments or disagreements between members of staff occurring in the presence of children, parents or carers.
- offensive or discriminatory behaviour such as sexist or racist language or harassment

Whistleblowing

Staff are expected to:

- follow the safeguarding and whistleblowing policies and procedures, without fear of recrimination.
- swiftly bring to the attention of the Manager:
 - any deficiency in the standards of care.
 - that a criminal offence has been committed or is being committed or is likely to be committed
 - That a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which they are subject (e.g. The EYFS).
 - That the environment, has been, is being, or is likely to be, damaged.
 - That information tending to show any of the above, is being, or is likely to be, deliberately concealed
 - That the health or safety of any individual has been, is being, or is likely to be, endangered

If it is inappropriate to make such a disclosure to your manager (i.e. because it relates to the manager) you should speak to the chairperson. Staff will suffer no detriment of any sort for making such a disclosure in accordance with this procedure, unless proved to be made with malicious intent.

Communicating with other staff

Staff must communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing with each other. As required, they must share their knowledge, skills, and expertise cooperatively with other team members to improve practice, offer guidance and support.

There are several methods of communication that we use as a staff team.

In person communication–

- **Meetings:** The manager holds a staff meeting on the first Friday of each half term from 1.15–2.15pm. We ask that all staff make their best effort to come to this. At this meeting, all staff are able to discuss and contribute in a to the development and quality of our provision and be part of in house training.
- **Reflection sessions:** We hold a reflection session on the penultimate Friday of each half term from 1.15–2.15pm. This gives us a good opportunity to reflect on improving our practice.

Electronic communication–

- **Tapestry Profiles:** We use the ‘_Team Communication’ profile to share the weekly plans, general discussion between the team and minutes from our meetings. Along with sharing thoughts and reflections on what we do along with sharing ‘how to’ information about activities.
- **WhatsApp:** We have a WhatsApp group with most of the staff on it. We use this to

organise shifts and overtime, and to chat as a team, but it is not for any sensitive conversation or personal information – If you need to name a child, it must go onto Tapestry.

- **Email:** The manager may email you, non-sensitive information, sometimes during non-working hours as may suit. Staff should not feel compelled to reply immediately, doing so at a convenient time for them.

Communicating with parents and families

Staff must

- always maintain a professional relationship with parents and carers.
- recognise that parents and carers need feedback regarding their children (including discussion of intimate care routines) and that this must be given in an open, honest, and friendly manner, at a mutually agreed time.
- not become overly familiar such that it clouds the impartiality of your judgement and action.
- avoid any conflict of interest or undue favouring of a child, particularly with children and families with a personal relationship with a member of staff.
- understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified.
- declare any personal relationship with the family of a preschool child to the manager either before entry of the child or if a relationship arises.
- be mindful of contact outside of preschool, whether in a social setting or in the community. Ensuring that they:
 - consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work
 - ensure confidentiality requirements are adhered to and respected during social contact
 - ensure all contact with existing families is of a professional and non-pre-school related nature
 - advise management of any contact they have with a preschool family, which may give rise to concern
- declare to the manager any babysitting or other duties for families of preschool children, before beginning the arrangement. Staff should be aware that:
 - the child is no longer the responsibility of the preschool once they have left the preschool building.
 - we may require that the agreement be terminated. If it is viewed to interfere with any aspect of the staff member's employment
 - the parties must arrange communication between them outside of our session times.
 - staff must remain highly conscious that confidentiality must always be paramount, and staff cannot discuss any details of the preschool.

Confidentiality

You have access to all our policies via Tapestry. These include our privacy policy which explains what information we collect and use about children, families and you and your rights and obligations regarding that information.

We have a 'confidential relationship' with families. We discuss children's general progress and well-being together with other staff, but more sensitive information is restricted and is shared with staff on a need-to-know basis.

Staff have a right to privacy, as do children and their families. Personal details should not be discussed except in exceptional circumstances.

Staff must respect confidentiality by not discussing:

- individual incidents, behaviour or information relating to children over the heads of children or in front of other parents/families or children.
- confidential matters about children, parents/families with or in front of other children, parents, or families.
- confidential information about any other staff member, unless in a lawful way.
- Any sensitive information, from preschool with any others including your friends and family.

In circumstances where staff have good reason to believe that a child is at risk, or is likely to be at risk, of child abuse or neglect, the Safeguarding Policy will override confidentiality on a 'need to know' basis.

If a staff member works in more than one setting, they must be aware that they must not share information regarding children and families between settings. If there are concerns about a child's protection, please refer to the Safeguarding Policy.

Under no circumstances should staff provide any information about children to any branch of the media. All media enquiries should be passed in the first instance to the Manager.

Electronic devices.

Personal devices must not be kept or used by our staff, volunteers, or visitors on the premises during operating hours except in the designated area in the kitchen or the office.

Our staff must ensure that:

- the setting telephone number is known people who may need to contact them in an emergency.
- if taking their mobile phones on outings, or home visits for use in case of an emergency, they are not used for personal calls or taking photographs of children.
- only devices provided by the setting are used to take photographs of children.
- if wearing smart technology into the setting, its connectivity is turned off and a declaration is signed at their supervision.
- visitors (including parents) are supervised and not allowed to use their mobile phones or other smart technology whilst on the premises.
- they do not bring their personal cameras or video recording equipment into the setting unless for an event pre-arranged by the manager.

Personal ICT use

Outside of work, staff must:

- manage their online personal security settings to ensure that their information is only available to people they choose to share information with.
- only share the name of the setting online in a way that is not detrimental to the organisation.
- never discuss issues relating to work online.
- never share information online that they would not want children, parents or colleagues to view.
- report any concerns or breaches to the designated person in their setting.
- avoid personal communication with the children and parents with whom they act in a professional capacity.
- declare prior relationships with a child or family coming into the setting.
- not copy, store, send or retrieve material that Breaches UK legislation or contravene the settings policies.

Working from Home

When accessing Tapestry or other information from home, as set out in our working from home policy, staff must:

- Only access, store and input information on preschool owned, cloud based or online services, when signed in.
- Sign out when using a shared device.
- Not download or store any information (photographs or text) related to children or families from preschool onto their own device.
- Securely store records – they are not to be left in a car or anywhere that they could more easily be stolen or lost.
- keep records away from family members and visitors and not share them with others under any circumstances.
- Return or securely shred hard copies of information regarding preschool children or families.

Uniform & Appearance

Members of staff will have regard for wearing appropriate clothes and shoes when working with children, clothing should be comfortable and functional, whilst remaining professional.

Permanent members of staff will be provided with a T-shirt and sweatshirt/hoodie in their choice of colour if they would like one. Staff should wear comfortable clothing that allows them to move around freely, that is not likely to be viewed as offensive or contentious.

All shorts, skirts, trousers and leggings must provide full coverage when bending or sitting. Short skirts, miniskirts, short-shorts, low-cut tops, spaghetti straps, halter tops, and midriff-baring shirts are not appropriate. Soft soled, low heeled shoes or trainers should be worn.

Clothing displaying inappropriate language, political statements, or adult themes must not be worn. Tattoos displaying inappropriate language, political statements, or adult themes must always be covered.

Hands and nails should be kept clean, with short nails to prevent accidents. Fragrances worn should be minimal.

Medication

- Staff must not be under the influence of any medication which may affect their ability to care for children. If a member of staff is prescribed medication by their doctor that may affect their ability to perform work, then this should be discussed with their doctor and the setting Manager. Staff must 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 must always be stored securely and kept out of reach of the children.

Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking (including e-cigarettes).

- No smoking, alcohol or drug use is allowed on the setting premises. Practitioners should not be under the influence, or suffering from the immediate aftereffects of, alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children.
- If we have reason to believe that a member of our 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 this may also lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- The possession, use or distribution of drugs for non-medical purposes on the premises sites is strictly forbidden

- Smoking is forbidden (including e-cigarettes) on the premises or in sight of the pre-school grounds. Any member of staff who is found smoking on the premises may face disciplinary action.
- Staff have a duty to ensure they do not smell of smoke at any time during working hours. If staff members do smoke away from the setting, hands must be washed, teeth cleaned, and clothes changed before attending to the care of any child.
- Members of staff who wish to smoke before their shift commences or at break times, must ensure that they are not identifiable by any uniform and are a reasonable distance from the building.
- Cigarettes, matches and lighters must be kept securely away from children.

Timekeeping & absence

All holidays should be taken out of term time when the setting is closed. If a member of staff needs planned time off for any reason, this must be agreed at least four weeks in advance by the manager in writing.

- If a staff member is ill and unable to come to work, they must inform the manager with as much notice as possible and at least an hour before their shift starts, by calling or messaging Rosie, indicating why they are unable to attend work and when they expect to return.
- When staff return from sick leave, they will be asked to take part in a return-to-work meeting as part of our absence monitoring procedure.
- Staff are required to arrive at work promptly and be in the room ready to start work at their contracted starting times. Staff are required to remain in the room and 'at work' until their contracted finishing times.
- Staff must accurately sign in and out on the register to ensure fire safety, calculation of salary, monitoring of absences and overtime.

Supporting Children's Behaviour (summary of policy)

We aim to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to understand the needs and rights of others.

Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour

We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable and supporting children to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.

- We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence and in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour. We try to catch them doing the right thing and praise this.
- When children behave inconsiderately, we help them to see the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to behave more appropriately to get what they want.
- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's inconsiderate behaviour. We never send children out of the room by themselves or use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with these.
- We use physical restraint, such as holding, only to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property.
- Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of our setting leader and are recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parent is informed on the same day.

- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.

Equal Opportunities & Inclusion (summary of policy)

We aim to:

- make inclusion a thread that runs through all the activities of the setting.
- provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued.
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity.
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups, and people with disabilities.
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity.

Our setting is open to all members of the community regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, age, socio-economic background and dis/ability and we act against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents. Displaying of discriminatory insignia, distribution of discriminatory material, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner.

We aim to create an environment of mutual respect and tolerance; creating a safe space for children to explore these topics, helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable and attempting to recognise, validate and understand the influence these factors have on a person's experience of everyday life and the extent to which a person is advantaged or disadvantaged.

We ensure that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities. We ensure that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning. We ensure that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages.

Fire safety

The Fire doors are clearly marked, they should never be obstructed and are easily opened from inside.

Procedure of Evacuation

The member of staff who discovers the incident must raise the alarm.

- The member of staff must inform the children which exit point to leave from. This will depend upon where the incident is. The main exit to be used is the rear entrance as it is the quickest. If, however, this exit cannot be used, fire doors at the bottom of the stairs or the top doors into Clock House Road should be used. Everyone should meet in the carpark.
- The member of staff should inform 3 of the staff as to their duties in the evacuation – 1 to inform other staff, 1 to collect the register and registration forms and one to check the toilets and shut all doors.
- The children and adults should be counted on the way out. One member of staff should be at the front of the line, at least one in the middle and one at the end of the line. On reaching the assembly point the leader will call the register and the children counted again.
- The Emergency Services should be called if necessary.

Lifting Technique

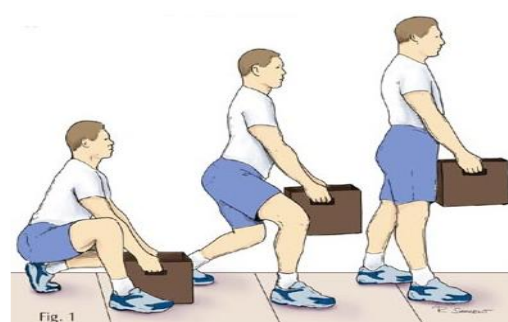
Proper lifting technique is critical to back safety. Before you lift a child, box or piece of equipment, take a moment to consider your action:

- Do you need to lift the item?
- How heavy is it?
- Where are you moving the item from?
- Where does it have to go?
- What route do you have to follow?
- If the load is too heavy or an awkward shape, is it possible to break it down into smaller parts?
- Once the load is lifted, will it block your view?



Before you lift a heavy object:

- Make sure you have a firm footing.
- Stand close to the object and centre yourself over it.
- With your feet shoulder width apart, squat down to the ground.
- To lift, straighten your knees and raise from the ground in a smooth, steady motion.
- Concentrate on keeping your back straight and let your legs do the lifting.
- To lower the object, once again position your feet shoulder width apart and lower to the ground by bending your knees in a smooth and steady action.
- Only release your grip when the load is securely set down upon a firm surface.



IF IN DOUBT, GET HELP!

Assessment, Planning & Teaching

The Early Years Foundation Stage (2025) underpins everything that we do. There are copies on site, or you can download one from www.foundationyears.org.uk/eyfs-statutory-framework where you can also find other useful information. All paid staff will be given a copy of 'Birth to Five Matters' to help you reflect on child development and our practice.

Teaching

1. In the moment, we take our idea or 'spark' from the child - What is the child doing or what have they done?
2. We then think of possible inspiration and next steps for them, using our knowledge of them, their interests and preferences and current level of development to extend their learning by:

Challenging	Modelling language	Providing narrative	Showing	Instructing	Modelling	Asking
Encouraging or Suggesting	Pondering or wondering	Supplying or facilitating	Reminding	Supporting	Explaining	Demonstrating

3. Reflect on how the child got on. What might make the experience better next time?

We use an online learning journal site called *Tapestry*, to write observations of children and assess them against the seven areas of learning. We use a 'Focus Child System', so every child has a 'focus week' at least once a term, where we ask for input from the family and write a snapshot of development during the week, using the EYFS 'flags' to demonstrate the areas covered in the activities we've seen, the **Characteristics of Effective Learning (COEL)** to show

children's dispositions towards their learning and the **Leuven Scales** to reflect on the child's levels of wellbeing and involvement. We use our professional judgement and knowledge of the child, to identify any areas of concern which may need additional support.

On tapestry, we also use the memo function to share with parents some of the spontaneous and planned activities we do a pre-school.

Safeguarding & Child Protection (summary of policy)

You will be checked for criminal records by an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau, until this is complete, you must not be alone with children in the setting at any time.

All children **MUST** always be supervised by adults, usually more than one. Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults must be present.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads (co-ordinating child protection issues) are Rosie White, Alan Kiernan & Sarah Campbell.

Abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual as well as neglect. When children are suffering from abuse, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play. Where such evidence is apparent, the member of staff should offer reassurance to the child; listen to the child; give reassurance that she or he will take action. The member of staff **MUST** not question the child.

The staff member must then record the child's name address and age; the date and time of the observation or disclosure; an objective record of the observation or disclosure; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time.

This information should be entered onto a YELLOW Record of Concerns form (found in the forms folder). In the event of further action being decided, the Leader should complete the Pre-school Referral form in order that correct information is passed onto the Duty Officer Social Services, which must be done using the contact details on the Safeguarding noticeboard.

Allegations (including those of abuse) against staff

We follow official guidance when responding to any complaint against a member of staff or volunteer. We record the details of the alleged incident and refer any such complaint immediately to Ofsted and social services to investigate & co-operate entirely with their investigation. We will suspend the member of staff on full pay during the investigation; to protect the staff, children, and families throughout the process. Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed or disciplined due to misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know.

Our accident & medication records:

- Are kept safely and accessibly in our forms folder or archived.
- Include records of any marks, cuts and bruises children have on arrival at Pre-school. *These must be brought to the attention of the Leader and be signed by yourself and a parent/guardian.*
- Contain written parental permission for every medicine to be given *before* any medication is given.

More information about Child Protection can be found on the Safeguarding Noticeboard outside the staff toilets.