



EMPLOYMENT, INDUCTION AND STAFFING POLICY

Policy Statement

We meet the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) by ensuring that our staff are appropriately qualified. We carry out checks for criminal and other records through the Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in accordance with statutory requirements.

We provide a staffing ratio in line with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality.

We provide an induction for all staff (including students and volunteers) in order to fully brief them about the setting, the families we serve, our policies and procedures, our curriculum and our daily practice.

EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES

Safer Recruitment: Vetting, Staff Selection and Ongoing Employee Procedures

- We comply with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure the fair and equal treatment of staff regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered on the basis of their suitability for the post regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by our imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.
- It is our usual policy not to employ more than one staff member from the same family.
- Candidates are usually interviewed by a representative of the Committee as well as the Pre-School Supervisor.
- All positions have job descriptions which set out their staff roles and responsibilities.
- We use Ofsted guidance on obtaining references (see below) and enhanced checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for all staff, including the Pre-School Supervisor, and regular volunteers.

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- We make decisions of suitability using evidence from:
 - Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) Check;
 - references;
 - full employment history;
 - approved qualifications (published on the Early Years Qualifications List 'EYQL' on GOV.UK);
 - interviews;
 - identity checks;
 - any other checks undertaken, for example medical suitability.
- We keep all records relating to employment of staff and regular volunteers, including staff qualifications, identity checks, references and vetting procedures that have been completed. This includes the Enhanced DBS Disclosure reference number, the date the disclosure was obtained and details of the company who obtained it.
- 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.
- We require all new staff and regular volunteers to join the DBS Update Service. If they have already subscribed to the online DBS Update service, we check the status of the disclosure. Where the check identifies there has been a change to the disclosure details, a new enhanced DBS disclosure is applied for. Before accessing the DBS update service, we obtain consent to do so from the member of staff or volunteer.
- For existing staff and regular volunteers, we obtain a new Enhanced DBS check after 3 years and then require them to join the DBS Update Service.
- We do not allow any potential new staff or regular volunteers to work with children before their suitability has been fully checked, including through an Enhanced DBS Disclosure. We check the disclosure and consider whether it contains any information that would suggest the person was unsuitable for the position.
- We inform Ofsted of any changes in the person responsible for managing our setting.

Disqualification

We will notify Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is regular contact with the children on our premises. The disqualification of an employee could be an example of a significant event. We will provide this information and grounds for disqualification to Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable but within 14 days of the date we became aware of the information from making reasonable enquiries.



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Where we become aware of any information which may lead to the disqualification of an employee, we will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children.

Obtaining References

As part of our commitment to safer recruitment, we will always obtain references from applicants for roles in our setting (including students and volunteers). Robust recruitment checks are essential to ensuring that unsuitable persons cannot have contact with children through employment with us.

Obtaining references is an essential element of our recruitment process. We will always obtain a reference prior to employment commencing in line with the requirements of the EYFS as follows:

- Our application process requires candidates to supply us with the contact details of a suitable referee from:
 - Their current employer, training provider or early years education and care setting.
 - A senior person within the organisation who is authorised to provide a reference.
- If the applicant is not currently employed, or is not currently working with children we will:
 - Obtain verification of the applicants most recent relevant employment if they are not currently employed.
 - Obtain a reference from the applicants most recent relevant employer from the last time they worked with children.
- If the applicant has never worked with children we will obtain a reference from their current employer, training provider or education setting.
- We do not accept references from the following
 - Family members
 - A generic reference i.e. 'to whom it may concern.'
- We do not rely on applicants to obtain their reference.

Once a reference is received:

- A reference received electronically will be checked to ensure that it originates from a legitimate source.

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- We will compare the information on the original application form against relevant information given in the reference, for example, checking that dates align, and roles and responsibilities listed are consistent. Where this is not the case, we will take up any discrepancies with the applicant.
- If information is incomplete or we feel it is insufficient for us to make an informed decision about the applicant's suitability, we will contact the referee for clarification.
- The reason for the applicant leaving their current or most recent post will be established.
- Before an offer of employment is made, we will ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily.
- In line with best practice, we will seek to gain explanations for any gaps in employment.

Micklands Pre-School Employee References

We will provide references a current or former employee in a timely manner. We will provide a factual reference stating the job title, dates of employment and whether we are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children. We will provide the facts (not opinions) of any substantiated safeguarding concerns/ allegations that meet the harm threshold.

Training and Staff Development

- Our Pre-School Supervisor and Deputy hold an approved level 3 qualification.
- At least half of all other staff in any session hold an approved level 2 qualification (or higher).
- A Pre-School Supervisor appointed on or after 1 January 2024 must have already achieved a suitable level 2 qualification in maths or must do so within two years of starting in the position.
- The Pre-School Supervisor is responsible for ensuring staff have the right level of maths knowledge to effectively deliver the EYFS curriculum.
- The Pre-School Supervisor must have at least two years' experience of working in an early years setting or have at least two years' other suitable experience.
- Our named Deputy Supervisor must be capable and qualified to take charge in the Supervisor's absence.
- All permanent members of staff are required to hold current certificates in Level 2 Food Safety in Catering and Universal Safeguarding Children.

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- Permanent qualified level 2 and level 3 members of staff are required to hold a current certificate in Paediatric First Aid (PFA) from a competent training provider.
- All staff who obtained a level 2 and/or level 3 qualification since 30 June 2016 must obtain a PFA qualification within three months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff:child ratios at level 2 or level 3 in our setting.
- To count in the ratios at level 3, staff holding an Early Years Educator qualification, and those who have received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status, must also have achieved a suitable level 2 qualification in English.
- All staff who have complete the experience-based route must obtain a PFA qualification before they can be included in staff:child ratios at level 3.
- To continue to be included in the ratio requirement, a PFA certificate must be renewed every 3 years.
- We provide effective supervision for all staff. This gives staff the opportunity to discuss any issues, identify solutions, to address issues as they arise and to receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.
- Effective supervision also provides support coaching and training for the practitioner and promotes the interests of children. It fosters a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.
- We ensure all staff have sufficient understanding and use of English to ensure the well-being of children in their care.
- We provide regular in-service training to all staff through Reading Borough Council Early Years, external agencies and in-house training.
- The pre-school budget allocates resources to training.
- We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervision/one-to-one meetings.
- We carry out regular staff appraisals to identify any training needs and secure opportunities for continued professional development for staff.
- We support staff to improve their qualification levels wherever possible.
- We support staff to undertake appropriate training and professional development opportunities to ensure they offer quality learning and development experiences for children that continually improves.
- We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.



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Staff Training Course Costs

We will cover the costs of approved training courses undertaken by staff. However, should a member of staff leave our employment within 3 months of undertaking an approved course, they will be required to repay the cost of the course to the pre-school. This includes, but is not limited to, the following training courses:

- Paediatric First Aid
- First Aid at Work
- Level 2 Food Safety in Catering
- Reading Borough Council Training Courses

The cost incurred by the pre-school in obtaining an Enhanced DBS Disclosure for any member of staff is also included within this policy.

STAFFING AND RATIOS

Staff Deployment

- We endeavour to inform parents about staff deployment.
- Our staff 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 should be the manager or deputy.
- A minimum of two staff are on duty at any one time. At least one of these holds an approved level 3 qualification.
- At least one Paediatric First Aider must always be on site when children are present, and at least one Paediatric First Aider must be present and within sight and sound of children when children are eating.
- We take into account the number of children, staff and layout of our premises to ensure that a paediatric first aider is able to respond to emergencies quickly.
- At least one member of staff who holds a current Paediatric First Aid certificate must accompany children on outings.
- We deploy staff to give adequate supervision of indoor and outdoor areas, ensuring that children are always within sight or hearing of staff. Children must usually be within sight and hearing of staff but always within sight or hearing.

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- Staff inform colleagues if they must leave the room for any reason.
- We use a key person approach to ensure that each child has two named members of staff with whom to form a relationship and who plans with parents for the child's well-being and development in the setting. The key persons meet regularly with the family for discussion and consultation on their child's progress and offer support in guiding their development at home.
- We hold regular staff meetings to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss children's progress, their achievements and any difficulties that may arise from time to time.

Ratios

The ratio and qualification requirements below apply to the total number of staff available to work directly with children. Exceptionally, and where the quality of care and safety and security of children is maintained, changes to the ratios may be made.

- Children aged two years: 1 adult: 5 children:
 - at least one member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification; and
 - at least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification.
- Children aged three years and over: 1 adult: 8 children:
 - at least one member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification; and
 - at least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification.
- Students on long term placements (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios at the level below their level of study, if we are satisfied that they are competent and responsible, and if they hold a current and valid PFA qualification. (Staff under 17 should be supervised at all times).
- We are able to follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements if we need to where a Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or other suitable level 6 qualified person is working directly with children aged three and as follows:
 - there is at least one member of staff for every 13 children; and
 - at least one other member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification.
- No more than 50% of staff included in the ratios at level 3 can be included on the basis of experience-based route status at any one time. The remaining 50% or more of those included in the staff:child ratios at level 3 must have an approved level 3 qualification or higher.
- Our staff ratios are normally more than those shown above.

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INDUCTION OF STAFF AND REGULAR VOLUNTEERS

Procedures

- We provide staff induction training in the first week of employment to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. This induction includes but is not limited to our:
 - Health and Safety Policy: 1) Risk Assessment, 2) General Standards, 3) Health & Safety in the Workplace, 4) Fire Safety & Emergency Evacuation and 5) Food Hygiene
 - Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy
 - Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality Policy
 - Confidentiality and Information Sharing Policy
 - Emergency Evacuation Procedure
- Other policies and procedures will be introduced within our induction plan (see below).
- All new permanent members of staff are required to undertake the following courses as part of their induction training:
 - Approved Level 1 Health and Safety in the Workplace eLearning Course.
 - Local Authority approved Safeguarding Children and Prevent eLearning Courses.
 - Approved Level 2 Food Safety in Catering Course.
- We have an induction plan for all new staff, which includes the following:
 - Introductions to all staff, students and volunteers, including management committee members.
 - Familiarising with the building, health and safety and fire procedures.
 - Ensuring our policies and procedures have been read and are carried out.
 - Introduction to parents, especially parents of allocated key children where appropriate.
 - Familiarising with confidential information where applicable in relation to any key children.
 - Details of the tasks and daily routines to be completed.
- The induction period lasts at least two weeks. The Pre-School Supervisor inducts new staff and regular volunteers. The Chair of the Committee inducts a new Pre-School Supervisor.
- 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.



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Managing Staff Absences and Contingency Plans for Emergencies

- Our staff take their holiday breaks when the setting is closed. Where staff may need to take a day off for any reason other than sick leave or training, this is agreed with the manager with sufficient notice.
- Where staff are unwell and take sick leave in accordance with their contract of employment, we organise cover to ensure ratios are maintained.
- If a staff member is unable to work because of illness or injury (or any other reason), they must inform the Pre-School Supervisor (or Deputy or the Pre-School Administrator if they are unable to contact the Pre-School Supervisor) by a telephone call as soon as possible and by 7.30am at the latest on the first and each subsequent day when they are unable to work. A text message is not acceptable.
- Self-certification is allowed for a maximum of 7 days after which a Statement of Fitness for Work ("Fit Note") from a GP must be provided straightaway. A new Fit Note must be provided every week thereafter for as long as sickness prevents a staff member from working.
- Sick leave is monitored and action is taken where necessary in accordance with the contract of employment.
- We have contingency plans to cover staff absences, as follows: we have qualified bank staff, regular volunteers and committee members we can call upon. We use suitable external agencies for qualified temporary staff.

Staff Secondary Employment

For most members of staff, Micklands Pre-School is their sole employer. However, we recognise that staff may sometimes wish to undertake additional work. In these circumstances, staff are requested to inform and seek the permission of the pre-school committee before undertaking any secondary work (on a paid, voluntary or self-employed basis). Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- A private babysitting arrangement with the parent of a pre-school child;
- Volunteering at another setting or school

Whilst permission will not normally be denied, staff must be aware that the additional work:



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- is a completely private agreement between themselves and the other party;
- has absolutely no bearing on or connection with Micklands Pre-School;
- must be undertaken in the staff member's own time;
- must not be undertaken when the member of staff is absent from the pre-school on sick leave, whether or not they are in receipt of sick pay. (Staff wishing to continue with voluntary work whilst on sick leave must seek the permission in writing from the Pre-School Supervisor). Failure to adhere to this policy whilst on sick leave may result in disciplinary action.
- must not affect the staff member's attendance and performance at pre-school;
- must not bring the pre-school into disrepute;
- must not be in conflict or competition with the pre-school;
- must not contravene the Working Time Regulations.

Failure to comply with this "Staff Secondary Employment" policy may result in disciplinary action.

Staff Taking Medication or 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. 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.
- All medication, prescribed or otherwise, must be stored safely by staff or volunteers in their locker and kept out of reach of the children at all times.
- If we have reason to believe that a member of 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 with the children and further action will be taken.