



Roundabout Pre-School and Playgroup

Policy documents

Adopted at a meeting of the Pre-School held on 20th January 1998;
as revised, expanded and agreed at a meeting of the Pre-School
held on 31st March 2004

Revised, expanded and agreed at a meeting on 15th March 2006
Revised and agreed at a meeting on 27th June 2007

UNDER FIVES ROUNDABOUT
ST LUKE'S CHURCH CENTRE, VICTORIA ROAD, CAMBRIDGE CB4 3DZ
Registered Charity No 1027240

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Admissions policy

Statement of intent

It is our intention to make our Pre-school/Playgroup accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community.

Aim

We aim to ensure that all sections of our community have access to the Pre-school/Playgroup through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures.

Methods

In order to achieve this aim, we operate the following admissions policy:

1. We ensure that the existence of the Pre-School/Playgroup is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.
2. We ensure that information about our Pre-School/Playgroup is accessible - in written and spoken form - and, if appropriate and possible, in different languages.
3. We keep a place vacant in both groups, if this is financially viable, to accommodate an emergency admission .
4. We describe our Pre-School/Playgroup and its practices in terms which make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including childminders.
5. We describe our Pre-School/Playgroup and its practices in terms of how it treats individuals, regardless of their gender, special educational needs, disabilities, background, religion, ethnicity or competence in spoken English.
6. We describe our Pre-School/Playgroup and its practices in terms of how it enables children with disabilities to take part in the life of the Pre-School/Playgroup.
8. We monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the group to ensure that no accidental discrimination is taking place.
9. We make our equal opportunities policy widely known.
10. We consult with families about the opening times of the Pre-School/Playgroup to avoid excluding anyone.
11. We are flexible about attendance patterns to accommodate the needs of individual children and families.

Playgroup Admissions

1. Children can begin our Playgroup from 2 years 9 months, Children with birthdays in the autumn term start in September, those with Spring term birthdays begin in January and those with Summer term birthdays after Easter.
2. We arrange our waiting list on a time on list basis, within each intake period (school term).
3. In addition our policy may take into account the following:
 - previous attendance at Under Fives Roundabout Toddler Group;
 - siblings at Under Fives Roundabout Toddler Group;
 - siblings previously or already attending the Pre-School/Playgroup;
 - the balance of the group as a whole; and
 - the vicinity of the home to the Playgroup.
4. Children attend for a minimum of 2 days. Children already attending the Playgroup have priority for a 3rd session over the waiting list. Once all children have been offered a 3rd session, spaces will be allocated to waiting list children. Should there be no eligible children on the waiting list, a 4th day will be offered to children already attending.

Pre-School Admissions

1. Children join our Pre-School Group in their pre school year (beginning in the September before they turn 4).
2. For the Pre-School we arrange our waiting list on a time on list basis, within each school year.
3. In addition our policy may take into account the following:
 - previous attendance at Under Fives Roundabout Playgroup and/or Toddler Group;
 - siblings at Under Fives Roundabout Toddler Group/Playgroup;
 - siblings previously or already attending the Pre-School/Playgroup;
 - the balance of the group as a whole; and
 - the vicinity of the home to the Pre-School.

4. Children start with a minimum of 2 sessions a week.
5. Children already attending the Pre-School have priority for new sessions over the waiting list. Up to five sessions are available if space allows.

Behaviour management policy

Statement of intent

Our Pre-School/Playgroup believes that children flourish best when they know how they are expected to behave and should be free to play and learn without fear of being hurt or unfairly restricted by anyone else.

Aim

We aim to provide an environment in which there is acceptable behaviour and where children learn to respect themselves, other people and their environment.

Methods

1. We have a named person, Zoe Norman, who has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour.
2. We require the named person to:
 - keep her/himself up-to-date with legislation and research and thinking on handling children's behaviour;
 - access relevant sources of expertise on handling children's behaviour; and
 - check that all staff have relevant in-service training on handling children's behaviour. We keep a record of staff attendance at this training.
3. We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
4. We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any conflict by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development - for example distraction, praise and reward.
5. We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the Pre-School/Playgroup's behaviour policy and its rules for behaviour.
6. We expect all members of the Pre-School/Playgroup - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the rules, requiring these to be applied consistently.
7. We praise and endorse desirable behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
8. We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.
9. We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of - and respect - those used by members of the Pre-School/Playgroup.
10. When children behave in unacceptable ways, we help them to see what was wrong and how to cope more appropriately.
11. We never send children out of the room by themselves.
12. We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with these.
13. We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children.
14. We only use physical restraint, such as holding, 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 Pre-School/Playgroup leader and are recorded in our Incident Book. A parent is informed on the same day and signs the Incident Book to indicate that he/she has been informed.
15. 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.
16. We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's behaviour.
17. We handle children's unacceptable behaviour in ways which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development - for example by distraction, discussion or by withdrawing the child from the situation.
18. We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person. We work with parents to address recurring unacceptable behaviour, using objective observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

Bullying

Bullying is when a child or group of children make an individual feel less important or inferior, it involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. We take bullying very seriously.

If a child bullies another child or children:

- we intervene to stop the child harming the other child or children;
- we explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is inappropriate;
- we give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied;
- we help the child who has done the bullying to say sorry for her/his actions;
- we make sure that children who bully receive praise when they display acceptable behaviour;
- we do not label children who bully;
- when children bully, we discuss what has happened with their parents and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour; and
- when children have been bullied, we share what has happened with their parents, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving, what action has been taken and what the child or children can expect to happen when they next go to Playgroup/Pre-School.

Child protection policy

Statement of intent

Our Pre-School/Playgroup will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Aims

Our aims are to:

1. create an environment in our Pre-School/Playgroup which encourages children to develop a positive self image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or home background;
2. help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults;
3. encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
4. enable children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches; and
5. work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our children.

The legal framework for this work is:

- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Children (NI) Order
- The Children (Scotland) Order

Guidance

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (2004)

Liaison with other bodies

1. We work within the Area Safeguarding Children Committee guidelines.
2. We have a copy of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' available for staff and parents to see and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
3. We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which affect the wellbeing of children.
4. We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of the local Social Services (Office of Children and Young People's Services) teams, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the Pre-School/Playgroup and social services to work well together.
5. Details of the local NSPCC contacts are also kept.
6. If a referral is to be made to the authorities, we act within the Area Safeguarding children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

Methods

Staffing and volunteering

1. Our named person (a member of staff or a committee member) who coordinates child protection issues is Ludmila Stanleyova. *Staff are aware that in Ludmila's absence they can speak to the group leader.* Our designated committee member who oversees this work is Rebecca Barber.
2. We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
3. Applicants for posts within the Pre-School/Playgroup are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced

disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureau before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

4. We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Criminal Records Bureau checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the Pre-School/Playgroup or has access to the children.
5. Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
6. We abide by the Protection of Children Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
7. We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the Pre-School/Playgroup.
8. We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the Pre-School/Playgroup so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

1. We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.
2. When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say or through changes in their appearance, behaviour, or in their play.
3. Where such changes evidence is apparent, the member of staff makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the group leader and Child Protection Co-ordinator (Ludmila Stanleyova). This information is stored on the child's personal file.
4. Staff in the Pre-School/Playgroup take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.
5. Where a child shows signs and symptoms of 'failure to thrive' or neglect, we make appropriate referrals *with parental knowledge*.

Allegations against staff

1. We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
2. We follow the guidance of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
3. We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
4. We refer to any complaint immediately to the local authority's social service department to investigate.
5. We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.
6. Our policy is to suspend the member of staff on full pay for the duration of the investigation; this is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary Action

Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the Pre-School/Playgroup or internally disciplined because of 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.

Training

We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the Pre-School/Playgroup to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.

We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the Pre-School/Playgroup.

Planning

The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door is left ajar.

Curriculum

1. We introduce key elements of child protection into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be 'strong, resilient and listened to' and so that they develop understanding of why and how to keep safe.
2. We create within the Pre-School/Playgroup a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
3. We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for children.

Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

1. offers reassurance to the child;
2. listens to the child; and
3. gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

The member of staff does not question the child *and will immediately inform the named member of staff, Ludmilla Stanleyova, or the group leader in her absence, or the disclosure.*

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff make a record of:

- the child's name;
- the child's address;
- the age of the child;
- the date and time of the observation or the 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; and
- the names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file.

All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.

Informing Parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the local Area Safeguarding Children Committee does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

Confidentiality

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee.

Support to families

1. The Pre-School/Playgroup takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers in the group.
2. The Pre-School/Playgroup makes clear to parents its roles and responsibilities in relation to Child Protection, such as the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local Social Services Department.
3. The Pre-School/Playgroup continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation.
4. Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child only if appropriate under the guidance of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee.
5. We follow the Child Protection Plan as set out by the Social Services Department in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting the child and family, subsequent to any investigation.

Useful Telephone Numbers/Information

OFSTED Helpline No. 08456 404049

Social Services – Cambridge City Social Care Team No. 0845 045 5203

Cambridge Constabulary (non-emergency) No. 0845 456 4564

Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) <http://www.cambslscb.org.uk>

Procedure for allegations of abuse made against a member of staff

All members of staff are aware of our policies and procedures regarding child protection.

If an allegation of child abuse is made against a member of staff:

1. A written record should be kept detailing names and addresses of those involved, the date and time of the alleged incident, and all ensuing conversations and telephone calls.
2. The parent/carer making the allegation should be advised to contact either the police or social services and OFSTED. They should be informed that we will also be doing the same.
3. The Chair of the Committee and/or the Child Protection Coordinator should be informed of the allegation immediately and they will contact the police and/or social services, as well as OFSTED, and follow their advice.
4. It is our policy to suspend a staff member on full pay for the duration of an investigation, to protect the staff as well as the child and family involved.
5. Discussion with the alleged perpetrator should be kept to a minimum. Confidentiality should be maintained throughout the investigation.
6. If a child protection investigation proves inconclusive it may still be necessary to instigate disciplinary procedures. An offer of resignation by a member of staff cannot be accepted.
7. Support for all parties will be considered and set up, including the child, complainant, alleged perpetrator and other members of staff.

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Complaints procedure

Statement of intent

Our Pre-School/Playgroup believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our Pre-School/Playgroup and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the Pre-School/Playgroup. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff.

If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns.

Aim

We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our Pre-School/Playgroup to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

Methods

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure. We keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage 2 or beyond in the Complaints Summary Record. This is kept in the filing cabinet in the Pre-School. It is made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors. A blank copy of this form is kept at the back of the Operational Plan.

Making a Complaint

Stage 1

Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the Pre-School/Playgroup's provision talks over, first of all, his/her worries and anxieties with the Pre-School/Playgroup leader.

Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the Pre-School/Playgroup leader and the chair of the management committee.

For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, it may be completed with the group leader and signed by the parent.

Written complaints from parents are stored in the child's personal file.

When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the leader meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.

When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3

The parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Pre-School/Playgroup leader and the chair of the management committee. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the leader should have the support of the chairperson of the management committee.

An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it.

This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

If at the Stage 3 meeting the parent and Pre-School/Playgroup cannot reach agreement, an external mediator is invited to help to settle the complaint. This person should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.

Staff or volunteers within the Pre-school Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.

The mediator keeps all discussion confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the Pre-School/Playgroup personnel (Pre-School/Playgroup leader and chair of the management committee) and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice s/he gives.

Stage 5

When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the Pre-School/Playgroup leader and the chair of the management committee is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice is used to reach this

conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.

A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

Feedback on any complaint will be given within 28 days either via the official complaints record or if appropriate by letter.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Area Child Protection Committee.

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the National Standards for Day Care are adhered to.

The address and telephone number of OFSTED are:

OFSTED

3rd Floor, Royal Exchange Buildings

St Ann's Square

Manchester

M2 7LA

The helpline number is 08456 404040.

The e-mail address is enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

These details are displayed on our Pre-School/Playgroup's notice board.

If a child appears to be at risk, our Pre-School/Playgroup follows the procedures of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee in our local authority.

In these cases, both the parent and Pre-School/Playgroup are informed and the Pre-School/Playgroup leader works with Ofsted or the Area Child Protection Committee to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint followed by appropriate action.

Records

A record of complaints against our Pre-School/Playgroup and/or the children and/or the adults working in our Pre-School/Playgroup is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.

The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaints Summary Record which is available to all parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

Confidentiality policy

Statement of intent

It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents and carers, while ensuring that they have access to high quality early years care and education in our Pre-School/Playgroup.

Aim

We aim to ensure that all parents and carers can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children.

Methods

To ensure that all those using and working in the Pre-School/Playgroup can do so with confidence, we respect confidentiality in the following ways.

1. Parents have ready access to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child.
2. Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs. Staff induction includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality in the role of the key person.
3. Any concerns/evidence relating to a child's personal safety are kept in a secure, confidential file and are shared with as few people as possible on a "need-to-know" basis.
4. Personal information about children, families and staff is kept securely in a lockable file whilst remaining as accessible as possible. These include registration and admission forms, signed consents, and correspondence concerning the child or family, reports or minutes from meetings concerning the child from other agencies, an ongoing record of relevant contact with parents, and observations by staff on any confidential matter involving the child, such as developmental concerns or child protection matters
5. Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
6. Students on Pre-school Learning Alliance or other recognised qualifications and training, when they are observing in the Pre-School/Playgroup, are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.

Access to personal records

Parents may request access to any records held on their child and family following the procedure below.

1. Any request to see the child's personal file by a parent or person with parental responsibility must be made in writing to the Pre-School/Playgroup leader.
2. The Pre-School/Playgroup leader informs the chairperson of the management committee and sends a written acknowledgement.
3. We commit to providing access within 14 days - although this may be extended.
4. The Pre-School/Playgroup leader and chairperson of the management committee prepare the file for viewing.
5. All third parties are written to, stating that a request for disclosure has been received and asking for their permission to disclose to the person requesting it. A copy of these letters are retained on the file.
6. 'Third parties' include all family members who may be referred to in the records.
7. It also includes workers from any other agency, including social services, the health authority, etc. It is usual for agencies to refuse consent to disclose, preferring the individual to go directly to them.
8. When all the consents/refusals to disclose have been received these are attached to the copy of the request letter.
9. A photocopy of the complete file is taken.
10. The Pre-School/Playgroup leader and chairperson of the management committee go through the file and remove any information which a third party has refused consent to disclose. This is best done with a thick black marker, to score through every reference to the third party and information they have added to the file.
11. What remains is the information recorded by the Pre-School/Playgroup, detailing the work initiated and followed by them in relation to confidential matters. This is called the 'clean copy'.

12. The 'clean copy' is photocopied for the parents who are then invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be gone through by the Pre-School/Playgroup leader, so that it can be explained.
13. Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file, especially where the parent has possible grounds for litigation against the setting or another (third party) agency.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the setting, which is to the safety and well-being of the child. Please see also our policy on child protection .

Equality and diversity policy

Statement of intent

Our Pre-School/Playgroup is committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families. We have a named Equal Opportunities representative (Karen Crane).

Aim

We aim to:

1. provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued;
2. include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
3. provide positive non-stereotyping information about different ethnic groups and people with disabilities;
4. improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of equality and diversity; and
5. make inclusion a thread which runs through all of the activities of the Pre-School/Playgroup.

The legal framework for this policy is:

- Race Relations Act 1976;
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000;
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986;
- Children Act 1989; and
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

Methods

Admissions

Our Pre-School/Playgroup is open to all members of the community.

1. We advertise our service widely.
2. We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
3. We base our admissions policy on a fair system.
4. We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our Pre-School/Playgroup on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion or social background, such as being a member of a travelling community or an asylum seeker.
5. We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our Pre-School/Playgroup because of any disability.
6. We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy.
7. We develop an action plan to ensure that people with disabilities can participate successfully in the services offered by the Pre-School/Playgroup and in the curriculum offered.
8. We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents. Displaying of openly racist insignia, distribution of racist material, name calling or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner.

Employment

1. Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
2. Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all.
3. The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Criminal Records Bureau. This ensures fairness in the selection process. All job descriptions include a commitment to equality and diversity as part of their specifications.
4. We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.

Training

1. We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop practices which enable all children to flourish.
2. We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for equality and diversity.

Curriculum

The curriculum offered in the Pre-School/Playgroup encourages children to develop positive attitudes to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the

skills of critical thinking.

We do this by:

- making children feel valued and good about themselves;
- ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
- reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources;
- avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of materials;
- celebrating a wide range of festivals;
- creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
- helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable;
- ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities; and
- ensuring that children whose first language is not English have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning.

Valuing Diversity in Families

1. We welcome the diversity of family life and work with all families.
2. We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life into the Pre-School/Playgroup.
3. We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of the Pre-School/Playgroup and to contribute fully.
4. For families who have a first language other than English, we value the contribution their culture and language offers.
5. We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means.

Food

1. We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met.
2. We help children to learn about a range of food, cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating and to respect the differences among them.

Meetings

1. Meetings are arranged to ensure that all families who wish to may be involved in the running of the Pre-School/Playgroup.
2. Information about meetings is communicated in a variety of ways - written, verbal and in translation - to ensure that all parents have information about access to the meetings.

Equipment and resources policy

Statement of intent

We believe that high quality care and education is promoted by providing children with safe, clean, attractive, age and stage appropriate resources, toys and equipment.

Aim

We aim to provide children with resources and equipment which help to consolidate and extend their knowledge, skills, interests and aptitudes.

Methods

In order to achieve this aim:

1. we provide play equipment and resources which are safe and where applicable conform to the BSEN safety standards or Toys (Safety) Regulation (1995);
2. we provide a sufficient quantity of equipment and resources for the number of children;
3. we provide resources which promote all areas of children's learning and development, which may be child- or adult-led;
4. we select books, equipment and resources which promote positive images of people of all races, cultures and abilities, are non-discriminatory and avoid racial and gender stereotyping;
5. we provide play equipment and resources which promote continuity and progression, provide sufficient challenge and meet the needs and interests of all children;
6. we provide made, natural and recycled materials which are clean, in good condition and safe for the children to use;
7. we provide furniture which is suitable for children and furniture which is suitable for adults;
8. we store and display resources and equipment where children can independently choose and select them;
9. we check all resources and equipment regularly as they are set out at the beginning of each session and put away at the end of each session. We repair and clean, or replace any unsafe, worn out, dirty or damaged equipment;
10. we keep an inventory of resources and equipment. This will record the date on which each item was purchased and the price paid for it;
11. we use the inventory to:
 - review the balance of resources and equipment so that they can support a range of activities across all areas of play, learning and development; and
 - record the dates and results of checking the resources and equipment;
12. we provide adequate insurance cover for the Pre-School/Playgroup's resources and equipment;
13. we use the local library and toy library to introduce new books and a variety of resources to support children's interests; and
14. we plan the provision of activities and appropriate resources so that a balance of familiar equipment and resources and new exciting challenges is offered.

Food and drink policy

Statement of intent

This Pre-School/Playgroup regards snack and meal times as an important part of the Pre-School/Playgroup's session. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating.

Aim

At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. We aim to meet the full requirements of The National Standards for Day Care on Food and Drink (Standard 8).

Methods

1. Before a child starts to attend the Pre-School/Playgroup, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs, including any allergies.
2. We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record to signify that it is correct.
3. We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs, including any allergies, are up-to-date. Parents sign the up-dated record to signify that it is correct.
4. We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
5. We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink which is consistent with their dietary needs and their parents' wishes.
6. We provide nutritious food at all snacks, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
7. We include foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones during our cooking activities.
8. Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
9. We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy.
10. We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
11. We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
12. We provide children with utensils which are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and which take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
13. We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the session.
14. We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the Pre-School/Playgroup.
15. We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
16. We have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another in order to protect children with food allergies.
17. For children who drink milk, we provide whole and pasteurised milk.

Health and safety policy

Statement of intent

This Pre-School/Playgroup believes that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our Pre-School/Playgroup a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers.

Aim

We aim to make children, parents and staff aware of health and safety issues and to minimise the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

Methods

The member of staff responsible for health and safety is Liz Lord. She is competent to carry out these responsibilities. She has undertaken health and safety training and regularly updates her knowledge and understanding.

Risk assessment

Our risk assessment process includes:

1. checking for hazards and risks indoors and outside, and in our activities and procedures. Our assessment covers adults and children;
2. deciding which areas need attention; and
3. developing an action plan which specifies the action required, the timescales for action, the person responsible for the action and any funding required.

We maintain lists of health and safety issues which are checked:

- daily before the session begins;
- weekly; and
- termly - when a full risk assessment is carried out.

Insurance Cover

We have public liability insurance and employers' liability insurance. The certificate is displayed on the notice board outside the Pre-School room.

Awareness raising

1. We explain health and safety issues clearly to staff and volunteers so that all adults are able to adhere to our policy and understand their shared responsibility for health and safety. We cover matters of employee well-being, including safe lifting and the storage of potentially dangerous substances.
2. Health and safety issues are explained to the parents of new children so that they understand the part they play in the daily life of the Pre-School/Playgroup.
3. As necessary, health and safety training is included in the annual training plans of staff and health and safety is discussed regularly at staff meetings.
4. We have a no smoking policy.
5. Children are made aware of health and safety issues through discussions, planned activities and routines.

Children's safety

1. Only persons who have been checked for criminal records by an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau and are registered with Ofsted as child carers have unsupervised access to the children, including helping them with toileting.
2. Adults do not normally supervise children on their own.
3. All children are supervised by adults at all times.
4. Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults are present.

Security

1. Systems are in place for the safe arrival and departure of children.
2. Our systems prevent unauthorised access to our premises.
3. Our systems prevent children from leaving our premises unnoticed.
4. The personal possessions of staff and volunteers are securely stored during Pre-School/Playgroup sessions.

Windows

1. Low level windows are made from materials which prevent accidental breakage or are made safe.
2. Windows are protected from accidental breakage or vandalism from people outside the building.
3. Windows above the ground floor are secured so that children cannot climb through them.

Doors

We take precautions to prevent children's fingers from being trapped in doors.

Floors

All surfaces are checked daily to ensure they are clean and not uneven or damaged.

Kitchen

1. Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.
2. All surfaces are clean and non-porous.
3. There are separate facilities for hand-washing and for washing up.
4. Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials are stored out of children's reach.
5. When children take part in cooking activities, they:
 - are supervised at all times;
 - are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water; and
 - do not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment.

Electrical/gas equipment

1. All electrical/gas equipment conforms to safety requirements and is checked regularly.
2. Our boiler/electrical switchgear/meter cupboard is not accessible to the children.
3. Fires, heaters, electric sockets, wires and leads are properly guarded and the children are taught not to touch them.
4. Storage heaters are checked daily to make sure they are not covered.
5. There are sufficient sockets to prevent overloading.
6. The temperature of hot water is controlled to prevent scalds.
7. Lighting and ventilation is adequate in all areas including storage areas.

Storage

1. All resources and materials which children select are stored safely.
2. All equipment and resources are stored or stacked safely to prevent them accidentally falling or collapsing.

Outdoor area

1. Our outdoor area is securely fenced.
2. Our outdoor area is checked for safety and cleared of rubbish before it is used.
3. Adults and children are alerted to the dangers of poisonous plants, herbicides and pesticides.
4. Where water can form a pool on equipment, it is emptied before children start playing outside.
5. All outdoor activities are supervised at all times.

Hygiene

1. We regularly seek information from the Environmental Health Department and the Health Authority to ensure that we keep up-to-date with the latest recommendations.
2. Our daily routines encourage the children to learn about personal hygiene.
3. We have a daily cleaning routine for the Pre-School/Playgroup which includes the Pre-School/Playgroup room, kitchen and toilets.
4. We have a schedule for cleaning resources and equipment, dressing up clothes and furnishings.
5. The toilet area has a high standard of hygiene including hand washing and drying facilities and the disposal of nappies.
6. We implement good hygiene practices by:
 - cleaning tables between activities;
 - checking toilets regularly;
 - wearing protective clothing such as aprons and disposable gloves, as appropriate;
 - providing sets of clean clothes;
 - providing tissues and wipes; and
 - ensuring sole use of flannels and towels.

Activities

1. Before purchase or loan, equipment and resources are checked to ensure that they are safe for the ages and stages of the children currently attending the Pre-School/Playgroup.
2. The layout of play equipment allows adults and children to move safely and freely between activities.
3. All equipment is regularly checked for cleanliness and safety and any dangerous items are repaired or discarded.
4. All materials - including paint and glue - are non-toxic.
5. Sand is clean and suitable for children's play.
6. Physical play is constantly supervised.
7. Children are taught to handle and store tools safely.
8. Children learn about health, safety and personal hygiene through the activities we provide and the routines we follow.

Food and drink

1. Staff who prepare and handle food receive appropriate training and understand and comply with food safety and hygiene regulations.
2. All food and drink is stored appropriately.
3. Adults do not carry hot drinks through the play area(s) and do not place hot drinks within reach of children.
4. Snack and meal times are appropriately supervised and children do not walk about with food and drinks.
5. Fresh drinking water is available to the children at all times.
6. We operate systems to ensure that children do not have access to food/drinks to which they are allergic.

Outings and visits

1. We have agreed procedures for the safe conduct of outings.
2. Procedures to be followed on outings are contained within our operational plan.
3. A risk assessment is carried out before an outing takes place.
4. Parents always sign consent forms before major outings.
5. Our adult to child ratio is high, normally one adult to two children.
6. The children are appropriately supervised to ensure no child gets lost and that there is no unauthorised access to children.
7. Records are kept of the vehicles used to transport children, with named drivers and appropriate insurance

cover.

For those children remaining at Pre-School/Playgroup, the adult to child ratio conforms to the requirements of the National Standards for Day Care.

Animals

1. Animals visiting the Pre-School/Playgroup are free from disease, safe to be with children and do not pose a health risk.

Fire safety

1. Fire doors are clearly marked, never obstructed and easily opened from inside.
2. Smoke detectors/alarms and fire fighting appliances conform to BSEN standards, are fitted in appropriate high risk areas of the building and are checked as specified by the manufacturer.
3. Our emergency evacuation procedures are approved by the Fire Safety Officer and are:
 - clearly displayed in the premises;
 - explained to new members of staff, volunteers and parents; and
 - practised regularly at least once every six weeks.
4. Records are kept of fire drills and the servicing of fire safety equipment.

First aid and medication

At least one member of staff with a current first aid training certificate (relevant to infants and young children) is on the premises or on an outing at any one time. The first aid qualification includes first aid training for infants and young children.

Our first aid kit:

- complies with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981;
- is regularly checked by a designated member of staff and re-stocked as necessary;
- is easily accessible to adults; and
- is kept out of the reach of children.

At the time of admission to the Pre-School/Playgroup, parents' written permission for emergency medical advice or treatment is sought. Parents sign and date their written approval.

Our Accident Book:

- is kept safely and accessibly;
- all staff and volunteers know where it is kept and how to complete it; and
- is reviewed at least half termly to identify any potential or actual hazards.

Ofsted is notified of any injury requiring treatment by a General Practitioner or hospital, or the death of a child or adult.

Any injury requiring General Practitioner or hospital treatment to a child, parent, volunteer or visitor is reported to the local office of the Health and Safety Executive.

We meet our legal requirements for the safety of our employees by complying with RIDDOR (the Reporting of Injury, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations). We report to the local office of the Health and Safety Executive:

- any accident to a member of staff requiring treatment by a General Practitioner or hospital; and
- any dangerous occurrences (i.e. an event which does not cause an accident but could have done).

Children's prescribed drugs are stored in their original containers, are clearly labelled and are inaccessible to the children.

Parents give prior written permission for the administration of medication. The administration is recorded accurately and parents sign the record book to acknowledge the administration of a medicine.

If the administration of prescribed medication requires medical knowledge, individual training is provided for the relevant member of staff by a health professional.

Sickness

Our policy for the exclusion of ill or infectious children is discussed with parents. This includes procedures for contacting parents - or other authorised adults - if a child becomes ill at Pre-School/Playgroup.

- We do not provide care for children who are unwell, have a temperature, or sickness and diarrhoea, or who have an infectious disease.
- We ask that children are clear of the symptoms of sickness and diarrhea for 48 hours before returning to Pre-School/Playgroup.
- In addition, for Playgroup only, we ask that children do not attend where there is a case of sickness and diarrhoea in the family.
- Children with headlice are not excluded, but must be treated to remedy the condition.
- Parents are notified if there is a case of headlice in the Pre-School/Playgroup.
- Parents are notified if there is an infectious disease, such as chicken pox.
- HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) may affect children or families attending. Staff may or may not be informed about it.
- Children or families are not excluded because of HIV.
- Good hygiene practice concerning the clearing of any spilled bodily fluids is carried out at all times.
- Staff suffering from sickness and diarrhoea do not handle food.
- Ofsted is notified of any infectious diseases that a qualified medical person considers notifiable.

Safety of adults

1. Adults are provided with guidance about the safe storage, movement, lifting and erection of large pieces of equipment.
2. When adults need to reach up to store equipment or to change light bulbs they are provided with safe equipment to do so.
3. All warning signs are clear and in appropriate languages.
4. Adults do not remain in the building on their own or leave on their own after dark.
5. The sickness of staff and their involvement in accidents is recorded. The records are reviewed termly to identify any issues which need to be addressed.

Records

In accordance with the National Standards for Day Care, we keep records of:

- names and addresses of all staff on the premises, including temporary staff who work with the children or who have substantial access to them;
- names and addresses of all the members of the management committee;
- all records relating to the staff's employment with the setting, including CVs, references, results of checks undertaken etc.
- adults authorised to collect children from Pre-School/Playgroup;
- the names, addresses and telephone numbers of emergency contacts in case of children's illness or accident;
- the allergies, dietary requirements and illnesses of individual children;
- the times of attendance of children, staff, volunteers and visitors;
- accidents; and
- incidents.

In addition, the following policies and documentation in relation to health and safety are in place.

National Standard 6: Safety

- Risk assessment.
- Record of visitors.
- Fire safety procedures.
- Fire safety records and certificates.
- Operational procedures for outings.
- Vehicle records including insurance.

- List of named drivers.

National Standard 7: Health

- Administration of medication.
- Prior parental consent to administer medicine.
- Record of the administration of medicines.
- Prior parental consent for emergency treatment.
- Accident record.
- Sick children.
- No smoking.

‘Lost child’ policy

Procedures for when a child leaves the group unaccompanied

Statement of intent

A child should never leave the group unaccompanied, and we have systems in place and work together with parents for the safety of all children in the group. In the best regulated situations, however, accidents can and do happen, and in the event that we cannot find a child who is a member of the Pre-School/Playgroup, we will operate according to the procedure set out below.

1. Systematic search

The group is responsible for the missing child and also for the other children in the group. The remaining children will be gathered into one large group e.g. for a story with one adult, while the rest search for the missing child. The register is checked to make sure no other child has gone astray. Without alarming them, the children will be asked whether they have seen the child who is missing, as will all adults, so that we establish who last saw the missing child, when and where. Every room in the building and any accessible outside area will be checked. Doors and Gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security. Other people/organisations using the building will be informed and, if appropriate, asked to help.

2. Parents

The child’s parents will be contacted to warn them (alarming them as little as possible) that the child may be attempting to get home. If the child lives within walking distance of the group, one adult should make the journey on foot in order to catch up with the child if possible.

3. Police and Social Services

If the above steps do not locate the child, the police will be called in order to conduct a thorough search as swiftly as possible. If the police are contacted, the local Social Services department must also be contacted to inform them of the following:

- What systems are in place for preventing such occurrences
- What happened
- What the staff did, at what time and in what order
- Whom the staff informed, and when.

Social Services will want to conduct their own investigation.

The Chair of the Management Committee should also be informed (Eileen Hori 01223 512093), as should the PLA Insurance Manager (0207 833 0991).

4. Accident and Incident book

A record of the event will be made as soon as an adult has time to do so, and even if the child is found safe within a few minutes. This will include the last definite sighting of the child and anything unusual that day about the behaviour of that child or of any other children.

5. After the incident

A member of staff will be available to discuss with the child’s parents the events surrounding the disappearance of the child. The parents will need care and support; however our insurance also requires that we should not imply that we accept liability until the incident has been fully investigated by us and by Social Services. All staff and parents should be asked to refer any enquiries from the media about the incident to the Chair of the Committee for response.

If appropriate, a short meeting will be held at the end of the session or the start of the following session (or a note sent home with the children) to give other parents brief, accurate information about the incident as rapidly as possible and stop rumours circulating.

6. When the child is found

Two members of staff will care for and talk with the child, bearing in mind that he/she may be unaware of having done anything wrong, or alternatively may also have been afraid and distressed and may now be in need

of comfort. Other adults present will take the opportunity to speak to all the children to ensure that they understand that they must not leave the premises, and why.

Non-collection of children policy

Statement of intent

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a Pre-School/Playgroup session, the Pre-School/Playgroup puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child.

Aim

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult, we will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Procedures

1. Parents of children starting at the Pre-School/Playgroup are asked to provide specific information which is

recorded on our Registration Form, including:

- home address and telephone number - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour's;
 - place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable);
 - mobile telephone number (if applicable);
 - names, addresses, telephone numbers and signatures of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from Pre-School/Playgroup, for example a childminder or grandparent; and
 - information about any person who does not have legal access to the child.
2. On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they record how they can be contacted in our Register.
 3. On occasions when parents or the persons normally authorised to collect the child are not able to collect the child, they record the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child in our Register. We agree with parents how the identification of the person who is to collect their child will be verified.
 4. Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can begin to take back-up procedures. We provide parents with our contact telephone number. We also inform parents that - in the event that their children are not collected from Pre-School/Playgroup by an authorised adult and the staff can no longer supervise the child in our premises - we apply our child protection procedures as set out in our child protection policy.
 5. If a child is not collected at the end of the session, we follow the following procedures:
 - the Register is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines;
 - if no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work;
 - if this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from Pre-School/Playgroup - and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Registration Form - are contacted;
 - all reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents/carers, for example a neighbour is contacted or another member of staff visits the child's home;
 - the child stays at Pre-School/Playgroup in the care of two fully-vetted workers until the child is safely collected;
 - the child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in the daily Register;
 6. if no-one collects the child and the premises are closing, or staff are no longer available to care for the child, we apply the procedures set out in our Child Protection Policy. We contact:
 - our local authority social services department (telephone number 01223 718211);
 - Ofsted (telephone number 08456 404040); and
 - our local Pre-school Learning Alliance office (telephone number 01954 231951) or our Early Years Foundation Stage Advisor (Annina Human 07760178560).
 7. a full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file; and
 8. depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.

Parental involvement policy

Statement of intent

We believe that children benefit most from early years education and care when parents and settings work together in partnership.

Aims

1. To support parents as their children's first and most important educators.
2. To involve parents in the life of the Pre-School/Playgroup and their children's education.
3. To support parents in their own continuing education and personal development (e.g. behaviour management and food hygiene courses).

Method

In order to fulfil these aims:

1. we are committed to ongoing dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families;
2. through access to written information and through regular informal communication (e.g. Operational file, parent information folder, newsletters, phone calls, email, website), we inform all parents about how the group is run and its policies. We check to ensure parents understand the information which is given to them;
3. we encourage and support parents to play an active part in the governance and management of the Pre-School/Playgroup;
4. we inform all parents on a regular basis about their children's progress;
5. we involve parents in the shared record keeping about their children - either formally or informally - and ensure parents have access to their children's written records;
6. we provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the group;
7. we inform parents about relevant conferences, workshops and training;
8. we consult with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone;
9. we provide information about opportunities for being involved in the Pre-School/Playgroup in ways which are accessible to parents with basic skills needs, or those for whom English is an additional language;

10. we hold meetings in venues which are accessible and appropriate for all;
11. we welcome the contributions of parents, in whatever form these may take;
12. we inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions and check to ensure these are understood. All parents have access to our written complaints procedure; and
13. we provide opportunities for parents to learn about the Pre-School/Playgroup curriculum and about young children's learning, in the Pre-School/Playgroup and at home.

In compliance with National Standard 12, the following documentation is in place:

- admissions policy;
- complaints procedure;
- record of complaints; and
- activities provided for children.

Settling in Pre-School/Playgroup

Statement of intent

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the Pre-School/Playgroup and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well being and their role as active partners with the Pre-School/Playgroup.

Aim

We aim to make the Pre-School/Playgroup a welcome place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

Methods

1. Before a child starts to attend the Pre-School/Playgroup, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our group booklets and policies), displays about activities available within the setting, information days and individual meetings with parents if appropriate.
2. During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
3. **After the first half term, when the children have settled in we allocate a key person to each child and his/her family. They will communicate the child's progress to the parents/carers throughout their time at Pre-School/Playgroup.**
4. We may offer a home visit to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.
5. We use 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.
6. 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 **Pre-School/Playgroup.**
7. **Parents/carers are more than welcome to stay for the first few sessions until they feel their child is happy enough to be left,** gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
8. 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.
9. We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person; for example the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
10. When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
11. We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from Pre-School/Playgroup.
12. We reserve the right not to accept a child into the Pre-School/Playgroup without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
13. **After the first half term, we will start working on the child's personal diary which is used as a record of their progress within the Pre-School/Playgroup.**

Special educational needs/disability policy

Statement of intent

We aim to work in partnership with the child, its parents as well as any professional involved to enable a child to reach their full potential and take part in the daily activities in the setting.

Aims

1. We have regard for the DfES Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.
2. We include all children in our provision.
3. We provide practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational needs (SEN)/disabilities.
4. We identify the specific needs of children with SEN/disabilities and meet those needs through a range of strategies.
5. We work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting individual children's needs.
6. We monitor and review our practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.

Methods

1. We have a designated member of staff to be Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and give her name to parents. The SENCO is currently Sam Capes.
2. We provide a statement showing how we provide for children with SEN/disabilities.
3. We ensure that the provision for children with SEN/disabilities is the responsibility of all members of the setting.
4. Prior to admission the Pre-school/Playgroup will seek consultation regarding any special educational needs and will consider the potential role of the parent/carer. There will be some flexibility to ensure that the setting is ready and able to include the child successfully. For general admissions see the admissions policy.
5. We ensure that our physical environment is as far as possible suitable for children with disabilities.
6. We work closely with parents of children with SEN/disabilities to create and maintain a positive partnership.
7. We ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education.
8. We provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
9. All information is treated as confidential and permission will be requested from the parent before records are shared with other professionals. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be passed onto the school to enable continuation of strategies that have been successful in the setting.
10. We liaise with other professionals involved with children with SEN/disabilities and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools. Ensuring any written reports are shared with the new setting/school as necessary.
11. We use the graduated response system for identifying, assessing and responding to children's special educational needs.
12. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children with SEN/disabilities.
13. We provide a differentiated curriculum to meet individual needs and abilities.
14. We use a system of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing individual educational plans (IEPs) for children with SEN/disabilities.
15. We ensure that children with SEN/disabilities are appropriately involved at all stages of the graduated response, taking into account their levels of ability.
16. We use a system for keeping records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with SEN/disabilities.
17. We provide resources (human and financial) to implement our SEN/disability policy.
18. We ensure the privacy of children with SEN/disabilities when intimate care is being provided.
19. We provide in-service training for practitioners and volunteers.
20. We raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer, e.g. Makaton trained staff.
21. We ensure the effectiveness of our SEN/disability provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. IEP reviews, staff/management meetings, parental/external agencies' views, inspections and complaints.
22. We provide a complaints procedure.
23. We monitor and review our policy as and when necessary following new legislation.

Staffing and employment policy

Statement of intent

We provide a staffing ratio in line with the requirements of the National Standards for Day Care (or higher) to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality. Our staff are appropriately qualified and we carry out checks for criminal and other records through the Criminal Records Bureau in accordance with statutory requirements.

Aims

To ensure that children below school age and their parents are offered high quality early years care and education.

Methods

1. To meet this aim we use the following ratios of adult to child:
 - children aged two years of age: 1 adult : 4 children
 - children aged three - seven years of age: 1 adult : 8 children
2. A minimum of two staff/adults are on duty at any one time.
3. We hold regular staff meetings to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss children's progress, their achievements and any difficulties which may arise from time to time.
4. We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
5. All staff have job descriptions which set out their roles and responsibilities.
6. We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered on the basis of their suitability for the post, regardless of marital status, age, gender, culture, religious belief, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by us imposing conditions or requirements which are not justifiable.
7. Our Pre-school and Playgroup leaders and their deputy's hold the CACHE level 3 Diploma in Pre-school Practice or an equivalent qualification and a minimum of half of our staff hold the CACHE level 2 Certificate in Pre-school Practice or an equivalent qualification.
8. We provide in-service training to all staff, whether paid staff or volunteers, through the Pre-school Learning Alliance and external agencies.
9. We provide staff induction training in the first week of employment. This includes our Health and Safety Policy and Child Protection Policy. Other Policies and Procedures are introduced in the first half term.
9. We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervision meetings and appraisals.
10. We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.
11. We use Ofsted guidance on obtaining references and criminal record checks through the Criminal Records Bureau for staff and volunteers who will have substantial access to children.

Student placement policy

Statement of intent

This Pre-School/Playgroup recognises that qualifications and training make an important contribution to the quality of the care and education provided by early years settings. As part of our commitment to quality, we offer placements to students undertaking early years' qualifications and training, including those studying for the CACHE level 2 Certificate in Pre-school Practice and CACHE level 3 Diploma in Pre-school Practice.

Aim

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

Methods

1. We require students to meet the 'suitable person' requirements of Ofsted.
2. Students who are placed in our Pre-School/Playgroup on a short term basis (under half a term) are not counted in our staffing ratios. Students who are placed for longer periods may be counted in our staffing ratios provided we consider them to be competent.
3. We take out employers' liability insurance and public liability insurance which covers both trainees and voluntary helpers.
4. We require students to keep to our confidentiality policy.
5. We co-operate with students' tutors in order to help students to fulfil the requirements of their course of study.
6. We provide students, at the first session of their placement, with a short induction on how our Pre-School/Playgroup is managed, how our sessions are organised and our policies and procedures.
7. We communicate a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
8. We make the needs of the children paramount by not admitting students in numbers which hinder the essential work of the Pre-School/Playgroup.
9. We ensure that students placed with us are engaged in bona fide early years' training which provides the necessary background understanding of children's development and activities.

Important Contact Details

- OFSTED Helpline 08456 404040 www.ofsted.gov.uk
For Complaints, ask for the Complaints Unit
- Cambridge County Council
Early Years Foundation State Advisor Annina Human 07760178560
- Local Authority Social Services Team 01223 718211
- Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) <http://www.cambslscb.org.uk>
- Police, Non-Emergency No. 0845 456 456 4
- PLA Insurance Manager 0207 833 0991

Committee Officers

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Treasurer	Richard Powell	312344	
Secretary	Celia Cobb	350036	