08 Staff, Assistants, Volunteers & Students' Policy

Alongside associated procedures in 08.1-08.4 Staff, volunteers and students, this policy was adopted by *The Stacey Pre-School on 01.09.26*

Aim

Staff at The Stacey Pre-School are deployed to meet the care and learning needs of children and ensure their safety and well-being. There are effective systems in place to ensure that adults looking after children are suitable to do so.

Objectives

- Recruitment checks meet the requirements of the EYFS
- All staff and volunteers who work with the children have enhanced DBS disclosure checks. If any caution or convictions appear or are disclosed, then the DfE statutory guidance is followed.
- All staff and volunteers working with children have appropriate training, skills, and knowledge.
- All staff, students and volunteers are deployed in accordance with the procedures.
- There is a complaints procedure and staff, and volunteers know how to complain and who they complain to.
- There is a whistleblowing procedure for all staff, students and volunteers to raise any concerns they may have.
- Ofsted are notified of staff changes or changes to the setting's name or address.
- Parents/carers are involved with their children's learning and their views are considered.

Legal references

DfE Statutory guidance – Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006
Protection of Children Act 1999
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
Childcare Act 2006

Further guidance

Recruiting Early Years Staff (Alliance Publication)
People Management in the Early Years (Alliance Publication)

8. 1 Recruitment Checks

Obtaining references

As part of our commitment to safer recruitment The Stacey Pre-School will always obtain references from applicants for roles in our setting. Robust recruitment checks are essential to ensuring that unsuitable persons cannot have contact with children through employment with us.

Recruitment procedures prohibit new employees starting before the required DBS check is received, and require that a suitability-disclosure is confirmed at appointment and annually thereafter.

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:

To satisfy the EYFS statutory requirements, 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'.

Once a reference is received

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

Further information and guidance

Refer to "References & Employment Verification Policy"

08.2 Staff deployment

Members of staff, including assistants, bank staff and students (where eligible to be counted in ratios) at The Stacey Pre-School 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 will be the manager or deputy.**

Only those staff aged 17 or over are included in ratios. Staff working as apprentices (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios if the setting manager is satisfied that they are competent and responsible. Except in the cases of apprentices, only those aged 17 and over may be included in the ratios and only if the setting manager is satisfied, they are suitable, (staff under 17 should be supervised at all times).

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 at mealtimes. **Consideration will be given around staff breaks, lunchtimes and absences from the setting so that The Stacey Pre-School remains compliant with paediatric first aid requirements.**

The setting manager deploys staff to give adequate supervision of indoor and outdoor areas, ensuring that children are always within sight or hearing of staff.

Whilst eating, children must be within sight and hearing of a member of staff and **where possible the staff member will be sat facing children when eating.**

- All staff are deployed according to the needs of the setting and the children attending.
- In open plan provision, staff are positioned in areas of the room and outdoors to supervise children and to support their learning.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring that equipment in their area is used appropriately and that the area is tidy at the end of the session.
- Staff plan their focus on activities.
- Staff inform colleagues if they must leave the room for any reason.
- There are two members of staff outside in the garden when it is being used, one of whom supervises climbing equipment that has been put out.
- The setting manager may direct other members of staff to join those outside, if the numbers of children warrant additional staff.
- Staff always focus their attention on the children whilst having a wider awareness of what is happening around them.
- Staff do not spend working time in social conversation with colleagues.
- Staff allow time for colleagues to engage in 'sustained shared interaction' with children and do not interrupt activities led by colleagues.
- Sufficient staff are available at story times to engage children.
- Key persons spend time with key groups daily; these times are not for focussed activities but for promoting shared times and friendship.

Staff children

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

08.3 Deployment of volunteers and parent/carer helpers

Volunteers and parent/carer helpers are always under the supervision of a permanent member of staff at the Stacey Pre-School.

They are not included in staff ratios, or as the two members of staff needed on the premises before children are admitted in the morning or at the end of the day.

- The setting manager ensures that volunteers and parent/carer helpers are deployed to assist permanent staff.
- Volunteers and parent helpers assist staff in ensuring that the equipment in their designated area is used appropriately and that it is left tidy at the end of the session.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers give additional support for busy areas or to track or observe children.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers inform colleagues where they are going if they leave the room at any time.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers do not have unsupervised access to children; they do not take them into a separate room for an activity or toileting and do not take them off premises.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers are deployed in addition to two members of staff in the garden/outdoor area when in use.
- The setting manager can direct volunteers and parent/carer helpers to join those outside if the numbers of children warrant additional numbers of staff available.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers always focus their attention to children.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers do not spend time in social conversation with colleagues while they are with children.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers allow time for colleagues to engage in 'sustained shared interaction' with children and do not interrupt activities led by colleagues.
- Sufficient volunteers and parent/carer helpers are available to support staff at story and other circle times.

08.4 Student placement

Qualifications and training make an important contribution to the quality of care and education at The Stacey Pre-School. As part of our commitment, we may offer placements to students undertaking relevant qualifications/training.

We aim to provide students experiences that will contribute to the successful completion of their studies and provide examples of quality practice in early years care and education.

- The setting manager ensures that students meet the 'suitable person' requirements.
- The setting manager discusses the aim of the placement with the student's tutor prior to the placement commencing. The expectations of both parties are agreed at this point.
- The good character of students under 17 years old is vouched for by the establishment that places them, the setting manager must be satisfied that all relevant checks have been made.
- Students do not have unsupervised access to children.
- Suitable students on long term placements and volunteers (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 the provider is satisfied that they are competent and responsible and if they hold a valid and current PFA qualification.
- Public liability and employer's liability insurance is in place that covers students and voluntary helpers.
- Students are aware of confidentiality.
- Student induction includes how the setting and sessions are managed, and policies and procedures, in particular safeguarding, confidentiality and health and safety.
- Appropriate members of staff co-operate with students' tutors to assist them in fulfilling the requirements of their course of study.
- The setting communicates a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
- The needs of the children and their families remain paramount at all times and students are only admitted in numbers that do not hinder the work of the setting.
- The setting manager ensures that students and trainees on placement are engaged in bona fide early years training, which provides the necessary background understanding of children's development and activities.