

8. Staff, volunteers and students policy



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Staff, volunteers and students policy overview

The aim of the staff, volunteers and students policy is to ensure staff 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

- All staff and volunteers who work more than occasionally with the children have enhanced DBS disclosure checks.
- 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

- 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)

Staff, volunteers and students policies and procedures

1. Staff deployment

Members of staff, including bank staff and students (where eligible to be counted in ratios) are deployed to meet the care and learning needs of children and to always ensure their safety and well-being.

- A minimum of two members of staff are on the premises before children are admitted in the morning and at the end of the day; one of which should 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 at children's mealtimes.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 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 storytimes 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
 - 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.

2. Deployment of volunteers

Volunteers are always under the supervision of a permanent member of staff. 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 are deployed to assist permanent staff.
- Volunteers 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 give additional support for busy areas.
- Volunteers inform colleagues where they are going if they leave the room at any time.
- Volunteers 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 are deployed in addition to members of staff in the garden/outdoor area when in use.
- The setting manager can direct volunteers to join those outside if the numbers of children warrant additional numbers of staff available.
- Volunteers always focus their attention on children.
- Volunteers allow time for colleagues to engage in 'sustained shared interaction' with children and do not interrupt activities led by colleagues.

3. Student placement

Qualifications and training make an important contribution to the quality of care and education. 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.
- Students and apprentices who are undertaking L3 or above may be counted in ratios if the setting manager is convinced that they are suitably experienced.
- Employed trainee staff over the age of 17 may be included in staffing ratios if deemed competent.
- Staff working as apprentices (aged 16 or over) may be included in staffing ratios if deemed competent.
- 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.

4. Recruitment

Process

To ensure safer recruitment of staff within the setting Lechlade Little Learners has effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children are suitable.

The process is as follows:

- Advertise Position – Posts are advertised widely to ensure all members of the public are able to apply for any positions.
- Application Forms completed – Application forms are provided to each applicant. We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible. Applicants must detail their qualifications and employment history.
- Two stage interview process – Interviews are conducted by the settings management team. Interview questions are open-ended and provide opportunity for self-expression and individuality. Applicants are then given time within the pre-school to interact with the children.
- Position Offered on 6 month Probation – The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the DBS. This ensures fairness in the selection process. A full job description and probationary period contract are provided.
- DBS check and 2 references obtained – A full enhanced disclosure relevant to the childcare workforce MUST be completed along with two references before staff can be left unsupervised with any of the children. Any staff who have worked or lived abroad will be required to complete an enhanced DBS from the county in which they have worked or lived in.
- All newly qualified staff must complete a paediatric first aid course within three months of starting to be counted within ratios.
- Induction Training provided – Staff must complete the Induction Training provided by the Manager for Lechlade Little Learners. This includes reading and discussing all policies, procedures and risk assessments for the setting, undertaking a fire drill and ensuring staff have a sound knowledge of safeguarding and behaviour management practices.
- Probation Meeting – During the probation period a meeting will be held to discuss performance management and any training requirements.
- Position Formally Offered – Once the staff member has completed a full 6 months' probation, has an enhanced DBS certificate and two sound references in place they can be formally offered a position within the setting. This will be completed in writing.
- Contracts given and signed – Once the formal offer of a position has been accepted a contract and employers handbook will be given. The handbook contains policies and procedures for the staff member to refer to. A copy of the contract will be given to the pre-school committee and to the employee.

DBS Checks

DBS disclosures and barred list information are only issued to the potential employee; Pre-school management and Committee will decide whether it contains any information that would suggest staff are unsuitable for working with children. Where a potential or existing employee has subscribed to the update service providers pre-school management will check the status of the disclosure at their discretion, and as a minimum of annually. Where it is identified that there has been a change within the disclosure a new full DBS will be applied for. Staff are expected to sign up to the update service whilst under our employment.

Induction of staff, volunteers and managers

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

We have a written induction plan for all new staff, volunteers and students which includes the following:

Staff

- Introductions to all staff and volunteers, including management committee members where appropriate.
- Familiarising with the building, health and safety and fire procedures and fire drill/emergency evacuation 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 them with confidential information where applicable in relation to any key children and reading and signing the Confidentiality Policy.
- Details of the tasks and daily routines to be completed.
- During the induction period, the individual must demonstrate understanding of and compliance with policies, procedures, tasks and routines.
- Successful completion of the induction forms part of the probationary period.
- Following induction we continue to support our staff to deliver their best performance through regular supervision and appraisals.

Volunteers & Students

- Introductions to staff.
- Familiarising with the building, health and safety and fire/emergency procedures.
- Ensuring the Safeguarding children and child protection policy has been read and signed.
- Ensuring the Confidentiality policy has been read and signed.

5. Staff Supervisions

Supervisions foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues. Regular meetings and a culture of openness within the setting provides opportunities for staff to discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being, identify solutions to address issues as they arise and receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness. As a setting we regularly share good practice, information and issues that can promote discussion and reflection.

6. Disciplinary and Grievances

The setting has a detailed Disciplinary procedure in place which will be followed if the standards of performance and behaviour are not maintained by staff in order to ensure the smooth running of our organisation and protect the safety and well-being of our employees, families and children. The Disciplinary procedure details the actions taken if any incidents occur within the setting.

7. Disqualification

In the event of disqualification of a person employed in early years provision, the setting must not continue to employ that person. The setting must give Ofsted the following information when relevant:

- Details of any order, determination, conviction, or other ground for disqualification from registration under regulations made under section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006;
- The date of the order, determination or conviction, or the date when the other ground for disqualification arose;
- The body or court which made the order, determination or conviction, and the sentence (if any) imposed; and

- A certified copy of the relevant order (in relation to an order or conviction).

The information must be provided to Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the date the provider became aware of the information or ought reasonably to have become aware of it if they had made reasonable enquiries.