# Staffing and Employment Policy

## Statement of Intent

To provide the setting with a high ratio of safely recruited and well trained staff to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee education and care of a high quality whilst ensuring safeguarding practices are paramount.

## Aims

To ensure that children and their parents are offered high quality pre-school education and care and safeguarding practices are maintained.

## Methods

* We use the following minimum staffing ratios as set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
  + 1 : 5 children aged 2 years of age
  + 1 : 8 children aged 3-5 years of age
* A minimum of two staff/adults are on duty at any one time, at least one of whom is qualified to CACHE Level 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.
* We work towards offering [equality of opportunity](http://step-by-step.org.uk/equality) by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
* All staff have job descriptions which set out their roles and responsibilities.
* 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.
* Our Pre-school manager holds Early Years Professional Status. We encourage all staff to obtain qualifications and further their continuous professional development.
* The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage states at least half of the staff need to hold a level 2 qualification appropriate for the care and development of children, which is exceeded by our staff.
* Our Pre-school budget allocates ongoing professional training for our staff in specialist subjects such as behaviour management, supporting children with English as an additional language and special educational needs.
* We provide staff induction training. This induction includes our Health & Safety Policy & Procedures and Safeguarding Children Policy. Other policies and procedures will be introduced within an induction plan.
* We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervision meetings and annual appraisals. The Manager and Chairperson have an “open door” policy for staff and are available to discuss concerns at any time.
* We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.
* We use Bucks County Council (BCC) to carry out DBS checks for staff and volunteers who will have substantial access to children.
* Volunteers and paid staff awaiting DBS checks do not commence employment until this has been completed.

**Safer Recruitment**

To ensure safer recruitment of staff within the setting West Wycombe Pre-school 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. A detailed description of the post is attached and relevant qualifications required.
* Application Forms completed and CV’s obtained – Application forms are provided to each applicant along with Curriculum Vitae. We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible. Applicants must detail their qualifications and employment history.
* Prior to meeting with the candidates management will conduct an initial internet search to obtain a background check for a character check, this will include a social media screening.
* 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, under supervision. They must provide an activity of their choosing and carry it out under the supervision of a staff member.
* Position Offered on 3 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 take up their position within the Preschool. 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.
* One of the references obtained must be the applicant’s last employer. References should be provided for previous employees upon request in a timely manner. When asked to provide references, we will ensure the information confirms whether they are satisfied with the applicant’s suitability to work with children & provide facts of any substantiated safeguarding concerns/allegations that meet the harm threshold
* Volunteers and paid staff awaiting DBS checks do not commence employment until this has been completed.
* All newly qualified staff must complete a paediatric first aid course within three months of starting to be counted within ratios. They will not be the responsible adult supervising mealtimes without a valid paediatric first aid certificate.
* Induction Training provided – Staff must complete the Induction Training provided by the Manager for West Wycombe Preschool. 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 3 months’ probation, has an enhanced DBS certificate and two sound references in place, one being that of the last employer, 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. Volunteers and paid staff awaiting DBS checks will not commence employment until this has been completed.

**Staff Supervisions**

Once yearly Appraisals, staff's own reflection sheets and daily informal meetings provide support, coaching and training for the staff and promotes the interests of children including any safeguarding concerns that staff may have. 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

**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.

This policy was adopted by West Wycombe Pre-school in October 2013. Policies are updated when necessary and reviewed on a yearly basis.

Reviewed and amended June 2025