

8.0 STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, STUDENTS AND RECRUITMENT POLICY

STATEMENT OF INTENT

We are a church-run Pre-school and seek to ensure that children, 2 ½ - 4 years of age are offered high quality early years care and education in an environment with a Christian ethos.

AIM

Staff are employed and 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.
- All staff, students and volunteers support the Christian ethos of the Pre-school and promote these values.
- There is a complaints procedure and staff, and volunteers know how to complain and who they complain to.
- Ofsted are notified of any changes to the Manager or changes to the setting's name or address.
- Parents 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 (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2016)

People Management in the Early Years (Pre-school Learning Alliance)

8.1 STAFF DEPLOYMENT

Members of staff are deployed to meet the care and learning needs of children and to ensure their safety and well-being at all times.

- 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, Deputy or Leader.
- We use the following ratios of adult to child:
 - Children aged two: 1 adult : 4 children
 - Children aged three or four: 1 adult : 8 children
- The Manager, Deputy, Leaders and at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant Level 3 qualification in accordance with EYFS Statutory Framework/Ofsted requirements.
- 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 Manager is satisfied that they are competent and responsible.
- At least one Paediatric First Aider will be on site at all times, when children are present
- The Manager/Deputy/Leader deploys staff to give adequate supervision of indoor and outdoor areas, ensuring that children are usually within sight and hearing of staff and always within sight *or* hearing of staff at all times.
- All staff are deployed according to the needs of the setting and the children attending.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring that equipment is used appropriately and that the areas are tidy at the end of the session.
- When in use, there are always a minimum of 2 members of staff in the large hall and outside. Staff will check there are sufficient staff in each room/outside before leaving it for any reason.
- Staff focus their attention on the children at all times 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 story times to engage children.
- Key persons have particular responsibility for the wellbeing and development of their key children. They liaise and feedback with parents and carers on a regular basis. Children have a second key person to support them if their key person isn’t present.
- Staff attend regular staff meetings to undertake curriculum planning, training and to discuss children’s progress, achievements and individual needs.
- Staff are given various responsibilities including preparing activities and group times.

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 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's 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 is able to fulfil his/her role as a member of staff

If it is the Manager's child, then the Pre-school Chairperson ensures the criteria above is met.

8.2 DEPLOYMENT OF VOLUNTEERS AND PARENT HELPERS

Volunteers and parent helpers 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 Manager/Deputy ensures that volunteers and parent helpers are deployed to assist permanent staff.
- Volunteers and parent helpers assist staff in ensuring that equipment is used appropriately and that it is left tidy at the end of the session.
- Volunteers and parent helpers give additional support for busy areas or to track or observe children.
- Volunteers and parent helpers inform colleagues where they are going if they leave the room at any time.
- Volunteers and parent 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 helpers are deployed in addition to two members of staff in the large hall and outside area.
- Volunteers and parent helpers focus their attention to children at all times.
- Volunteers and parent helpers allow time for colleagues to engage in 'sustained shared interaction' with children and do not interrupt activities led by colleagues.
- Volunteers and parent helpers will receive a short induction, including safeguarding, health and safety and confidentiality requirements.
- All students, volunteers and parent helpers must adhere to our Guidelines for Helpers/Students.

8.3 STUDENT PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

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 Manager ensures that students meet the 'suitable person' requirements.
- The 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 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 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 Pre-school 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 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.
- All students must adhere to our Guidelines for Helpers/Students.

8.4 STAFF RECRUITMENT

We adhere to the Safeguarding & Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework to ensure that our staff are appropriately qualified and carry out enhanced criminal records checks, for all staff.

Staff will be appointed according to the requirements of the Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school Constitution.

We endeavour to offer equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.

We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.

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, disability, gender or ethnic origin.

Applicants should support the Christian ethos of the Pre-school. The Manager and Deputies must, as prescribed in the Person Specification of these roles in the Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school Constitution, be Christians who agree and subscribe to the Basis of Faith of Cheam Baptist Church.

We use Ofsted guidance on obtaining references and enhanced criminal record checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service for staff and volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children and keep records in accordance with current legislation.

Staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children, whether received before, or at any time during their employment with us.

We inform Ofsted of any changes in the person responsible for our setting.

We provide staff induction training in the first week of employment. This induction includes our Child Protection & safeguarding Policy and our Health and Safety Policy. Other policies and procedures will be introduced within an induction plan.

All staff have job descriptions which set out their staff roles and responsibilities.

We provide regular in service training to all staff, whether paid or volunteers. Our setting budget allocates resources to training.

We support the work of our staff by holding regular staff meetings and through Appraisals. This provides opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or wellbeing
- Identify solutions to address issues as they arise
- Receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness

We have contingency plans for emergencies and staff absence to ensure ratios are maintained.

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff and users of its services. Our policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process. Staff will need full CRB Enhanced Clearance due to the nature of working with young children.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to the Manager of Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Unless the nature of the position allows Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about unspent convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We ensure that all those in Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment. We make every subject of a CRB Disclosure aware of the existence of the CRB Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

Further guidance

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, Part 3 Safer Recruitment

8.5 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE FOR PRE-SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

This procedure has been adopted by Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school as part of the Statement for Employees under the Employment Acts.

1. PURPOSE

It is recognised that disagreements may arise among Pre-school staff or between staff and Committee. These can usually be resolved informally by discussion and are outside the limit of disciplinary or grievance procedure.

The purpose of the following procedure is to set out the action that will be taken when a dispute cannot be resolved, or when the committee is dissatisfied with the conduct or activities of an employee.

2. PRINCIPLES

- The procedure is designed to establish the facts quickly and deal consistently with disciplinary issues. No disciplinary action will be taken until the matter has been fully investigated.
- At every stage you will be advised of the nature of the complaint, be given the opportunity to state your case, and be represented or accompanied by a fellow employee of your choice.
- You will not be dismissed for a first breach of discipline except in the case of gross misconduct, when the penalty will normally be dismissal without notice and without pay in lieu of notice.
- You have a right to appeal against any disciplinary action taken against you.

3. INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS

Before taking formal disciplinary action, every effort will be made to resolve the matter by informal discussions with you. Only when this fails to bring about the desired improvement will the formal disciplinary action be implemented.

4. FIRST WARNING

If conduct or performance is unsatisfactory, you will be given a written warning. You will also be informed that a final written warning may be considered if there is no sustained satisfactory improvement or change.

5. FINAL WRITTEN WARNING

If the offence is serious, or there is no improvement in standards, or if a further offence of a similar kind occurs, a final written warning will be given which will include the reason for the warning and a note that if no improvement results within a specified period of time, statutory procedures will be implemented.

6. STATUTORY DISCIPLINE AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

In the case of dismissal or action short of dismissal such as loss of pay or demotion, the minimum statutory procedure will be followed. This involves:

- Step one: A written note to the employee setting out the allegation and the basis for it.
- Step two: A meeting to consider and discuss the allegation.
- Step three: A right of appeal including an appeal meeting.

The employee will be reminded of their right to be accompanied.

7. GROSS MISCONDUCT

If, after investigation, it is confirmed that an employee is guilty of gross misconduct, examples of which are theft, physical violence or gross subordination, the normal consequence will be dismissal without notice and without payment in lieu of notice.

While the alleged misconduct is being investigated, the employee may be suspended on full pay. Any decision to dismiss will only be taken after full investigation.

8. APPEALS

If you wish to appeal against any disciplinary decision, you must appeal in writing within five working days of the decision being communicated to you to the Pre-school Manager. The appeal will normally be heard by the Pre-school Committee.

If you remain dissatisfied you may appeal to the Pastor of Cheam Baptist Church or an experienced person nominated by the Elders.

8.6 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR PRE-SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

This procedure has been adopted by Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school as part of the Statement for Employees under the Employment Acts.

1. INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS

It is recognised that grievances may arise among Pre-school staff or between staff and Committee. These can usually be resolved informally by discussion and are outside the limit of grievance or disciplinary procedure.

The purpose of the following procedure is to resolve grievances as quickly and fairly as possible.

2. STAGE 1

If you feel that the matter has not been resolved through informal discussions, you should put your grievance in writing to the Pre-school Manager, who will try to resolve the matter and give you a response within five working days. If your grievance relates to the Pre-school Manager, your grievance should be addressed to the Committee.

3. STAGE 2

If the matter is still not resolved, you may raise the matter in writing with the Pre-school Committee who will arrange a meeting at which you may be represented or accompanied by a fellow employee of your choice. After the meeting you will be informed in writing, within five working days, of their decision and your right to appeal.

4. STAGE 3

If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction you should appeal in writing to the Pastor of Cheam Baptist Church. You will be entitled to have a meeting with the Pastor or an experienced person nominated by the Elders to discuss the matter. The Pastor or person nominated by the Elders will give a decision within seven working days of the grievance being received. This decision is final.

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