

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Suitable People

Providers must ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles.

St Matthew's Preschool Policy

2.1 Employment

(Including suitability, contingency plans, and development)

Policy statement

We meet the Safeguarding and Welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensuring that our staff are appropriately qualified and we carry out checks for criminal and other records through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in accordance with statutory requirements.

Procedures

Vetting and staff selection

- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
- All staff have job descriptions which set out their staff 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/ sex, culture, religious belief, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.
- We use Surrey County Council and PLA guidance on obtaining references and safer recruitment.
- We obtain Disclosure and Barring checks (DBS) through the Disclosure and Barring Service, for staff and volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children. This is in accordance with requirements under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 for the vetting and barring scheme.
- We keep all records relating to employment of staff and volunteers, in particular those demonstrating that checks have been done, including the date and number of the enhanced DBS/CRB check.
- 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, and also that of those they live with in line with barring by association guidelines. As written in staff contract. We will inform Ofsted and the Disclosure and barring service of any convictions, cautions and court orders. This is discussed at supervision sessions.

Disqualification

- Where we become aware of any relevant information that may lead to the disqualification of an employee, we will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children. In the event of disqualification, that staff's employment with us will be terminated. Ofsted, the local authority and disclosure and barring service will be informed.

Training and staff development

- Our setting Managers hold an equivalent of Level 3 Childcare qualification or higher and a minimum of half of our other staff hold an equivalent of Level 2 Childcare qualification or higher qualification.
- We provide regular in-service training to all staff.
- Our setting budget allocates resources to training.
- We provide staff induction training in the first week of employment. This induction includes our Health and Safety Policy and Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy. Other policies and procedures will be introduced within an induction plan.
- We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervision meetings.
- We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and Best Practice, and to meet the needs of the children attending the preschool.

Staff taking medication/other substances

- Staff medication will be stored securely on the premises and kept out of reach of the children at all times.
- If we have reason to believe that a member of staff is under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that may affect their ability to care for children they will not be allowed to work directly with the children and further action will be taken.

Managing staff absences and contingency plans for emergencies

- Our staff are asked to take their holiday breaks when the setting is closed. Where staff may need to take time off for any reason other than sick leave or training, this is agreed with the manager/chairperson with sufficient notice.
- Where staff are unwell and take sick leave in accordance with their contract of employment, we organise cover to ensure ratios are maintained.
- Sick leave is monitored and action is taken where necessary in accordance with staff members contract of employment.
- We have contingency plans to cover staff absences.

Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.

- It is recognised that disagreements may arise between pre-school staff or between staff and committee members. These can usually be resolved informally by discussion, if necessary with the assistance of an early year's advisor or independent mediator.
- A more serious situation arises when the dispute cannot be resolved or when the committee is dissatisfied with an employee's conduct. In this situation a disciplinary hearing will be held with representatives from the committee, staff and the employee in question. The employee has the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a work colleague. The employee will be given full opportunity to state her case.
- The employee will be provided with written copies of the grievance and relevant witness statements in advance of the meeting.

- After the disciplinary meeting the employee will be issued with a first written warning for misconduct. This will outline the misconduct, what action needs to be taken to correct the conduct, state the timescale to improve, how long the warning will remain current, what further action will be taken if conduct does not improve and how to appeal against the decision.
- If the employee improves their conduct within the agreed timescale then the written warning will be removed from their file.
- If the offence is sufficiently serious, there is further misconduct or a failure to improve within the timescale and plan outlined in the first written warning then a final written warning will be issued.
- If there is still further misconduct or a failure to improve then the final step in the procedure will be dismissal.
- The employee will be provided in writing with reasons for the dismissal, the date on which the employment will terminate, and the right to appeal.
- Instant dismissal is only possible in extreme circumstances of gross misconduct for example, ill treatment of children, fraud or theft, assault, gross carelessness which threatens the health and safety of others. In such cases the employee will be dismissed without notice or payment in lieu of notice.
- An employee will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action.
- Should an allegation be made against an employee requiring investigating and it is felt that this would be handled more effectively without the employee in the setting then the employee will be suspended without pay.
- If an employee is dissatisfied or has a grievance relating to the pre-school then she is encouraged in the first instance to discuss and resolve the issue with her up line.
- Should they be unable to resolve the issue then the employee is entitled to a full meeting with representatives of the committee, staff representatives and the employee's representative should she request one.
- The aim of this meeting is to settle the grievance fairly and in a way that is acceptable to all parties concerned. It should be simple and rapid in operation.
- Full notes of the meeting plus outcomes should be kept and attached to the employees file.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

St Matthew's Pre-School

Held on

_____ (date)

Date to be reviewed

_____ (date)

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

Role of signatory

