2.7 Safer recruitment & starting employment with us

Policy

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 Criminal Records Bureau in accordance with statutory requirements.

Procedures

Staff selection

- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
- All job roles have job descriptions which set out 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, culture, religious belief, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by our imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.
- We use DfE (Department for Education) and Ofsted guidance to question a candidate's suitability.
- All candidates applying for a role working directly with children (Manager, Teacher, Nursery Nurse, Assistant or Apprentice), must conduct a practical session. Candidates must provide all relevant certificates and qualifications at the interview stage. A checklist is available to the candidate to support in the preparation for the interview via our website: https://www.earlylearnersnurseries.co.uk/careers-1
- If successful an 'Offer Letter' is sent/ given to the candidate. The offer is valid for up to 5 working days whereby the candidate must respond in writing with an acceptance letter if they would like to accept the position. Offer letter and any terms must remain private and confidential.
- If the candidate accepts the position, a welcome email is then sent by our recruitment team. The welcome email includes:
  - Contract of employment & employee handbook.
  - Links to Staff Portal to access employment documentation.
  - Link to StaffAdmin to complete registration form.
  - Link to our training platform.
- The company completes regular reviews and may update/ vary information. When this happens staff are sent a notification.

Vetting

- If successful we obtain references and enhanced criminal record checks through the DBS (Disclosure Baring Service) for all 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. The first initial DBS check will be funded by the employer.
- 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 CRB check.
- The setting can perform checks randomly at any point in time.
- It is the employee's responsibility to pay for the annual fee of the disclosure and the '*update service*'.
- 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.
- Relevant data is displayed in our entrances. Managers are responsible to update this continuously as and when required. It is inspected by the area manager monthly.

Disclosure

- A candidate should disclose any form of potential disqualification which may challenge their suitability to work with or around children.
- Where we become aware of any relevant information which 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 person's employment with us will be terminated.

Changes to staff

- The director(s) inform Ofsted of any changes in the person responsible for our setting.
- The manager informs staff and/or parents of any changes in the 'key-person' responsible for their child/ children via NIAB. We recommend parents to communicate via notification.
- We do not celebrate employees joining or leaving a setting to minimise any disturbance to the company. We ask employees to keep information private and confidential.

Prior to commencing employment

- It is a requirement that all staff register to the following platforms:
  - Our Staff Portal : https://www.earlylearnersnurseries.co.uk/staffportal
  - Nursery in a Box – StaffAdmin https://www.staffadmin.uk/login.php?from=1
  - Register with any relevant training platforms
- It is a requirement that prior to commencing that all staff read, acknowledge, and sign for our employment documentation:
  - Contract of employment
  - Employment Handbook
  - Health & Safety Handbook and Risk Assessments
  - Polices and procedures

Induction & probationary period

- Our probationary period is approximately three months. However, this can be extended up to a six-month period.
- Inductions are carried out by the following:
  - the manager(s) induct new staff.
  - the area manager(s) induct new managers.
  - the director(s) induct area managers.
- All new staff are assigned and supported by a supervisor(s) or line manager. Directors provide additional support when necessary.
- During the induction period, the individual must demonstrate understanding of and compliance with policies, procedures, tasks and routines.
- New staff must successfully complete the induction as part of the probationary period. Once the induction process has been completed the manager acknowledges completion of successful induction and records this on the staffs log on NIAB).
- We continue to support our staff to deliver high quality performance through regular supervision where we discuss CPD.

Qualifications

- Staff must provide digital copies of their qualification(s) and awards. These are saved to the employees personal file. Providing evidence of qualifications is a conditional element of employment. If staff fail to provide such evidence the person will therefore be unsuccessful during their probationary period and employment will be terminated.
- Our 'manager' and 'deputy manager' must hold a minimum of a Level 3 Diploma in Early Years Childcare in-line with the EYFS Statutory Guidance and Early Years qualifications checklist.
- 'nursery nurse' practitioners must hold a minimum of a Level 3 diploma in Early Years Childcare or an equivalent qualification or higher qualification.
- The setting may choose to employ 'nursery assistant' practitioners that hold the Level 2 Certificate in Early Years Childcare or an equivalent.
- Staff must again a grade 'C' or above in GCSE Maths or English or alternatively pass their Level 2 'Key Skills' prior to being employed.

- This is a none-exhaustive list and staff should refer to DfE guidance on relevant qualifications and awards.
- The company reserves the right to challenge an award and seek further clarity from an awarding body or university.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

- We provide regular in-service training to all staff - whether paid staff or volunteers - led by the manager and/ or through external agencies.
- Our company allocates funding and resources to training.
- We provide every employee induction training in the first week of employment. This induction is continuous throughout their probationary period. Each employee must complete, read and acknowledge each document, checklist and training relevant to their position and job role. Certain training is mandatory.
- We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervision meetings and appraisals.
- We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.
- All staff must have and hold a PFA (Paediatric First Aid) award if working directly with children. This is funded by us the employer.
- Staff must renew their PFA within three months of expiring and provide evidence to their line-manager.
- Any additional hours accumulated on training is paid for by the company. The company reserves the right to give time back in lieu. This includes staff and team meetings. The Manager of the site is responsible for tracking time and attendance.

Dress and Appearance

Staff should follow guidance outlined in our employment handbook. Our staff appearance, personal hygiene and what they wear at work are all very important. Staff must always project an acceptable, professional image which helps achieve the companies legitimate business aims. What is appropriate may vary according to the particular job. However, employees must always be well groomed and wear neat, clean and tidy clothing appropriate to your role. The Company will obtain items of workwear for employees, at cost price, which they are required to wear in the prescribed manner at all times whilst at work. Management also have a uniform. The employer provides an annual budget per year, per employee to contribute to uniform. All new staff are offered the equivalent of two t-shirts within their probationary period.

Jewellery including earrings, studs, necklaces, bars, body piercings are not allowed due to the safety of the children. Wedding rings and bands are allowed as are jewellery items worn as part of a person's religion or belief. Flat shoes must be worn. No heels or boots. These can include pumps, trainers, or slippers. Footwear must be clean.

Hair colour must be neutral – vibrant colours such as bright red, purple, pink, blue, or green are not allowed. Hair must be tried back at all times when working with children. Offensive tattoos must be covered.

Staff taking medication/other substances

- If a member of staff is taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, we ensure that they seek further medical advice. Staff will only work directly with the children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly.
- Staff medication on the premises will be stored securely and kept out of reach of the children at all times.
- Staff taking medication inform the manager and their StaffAdmin account should be is kept up-to-date.
- 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.
- During employment the setting can request to obtain a medical to assess or assist in an employee's suitability.

Managing staff absences and contingency plans for emergencies

- *[In term time only settings/ age groups and/or services]* Our staff take their holiday breaks when the setting/ class is closed (For example Out-of-School services). Where staff may need to take time off for any reason other than sick leave or training, this is agreed with the manager with sufficient notice.
- *[In all year round settings/ services*] Managers organise staff annual leave so that ratios are not compromised.
- 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 their contract of employment.
- We have contingency plans to cover staff absences, as follows:
  - Part-time / Fixed term / Flexible / Casual contracts
  - Employment contracts state that they must be flexible to the needs of the business.
  - Staff being seconded and supporting from other local company businesses
  - Employees have read and understand the employee handbook before commencing work.

Confidentiality

Employment with us places employees in a position of trust and confidence. During their employment they will inevitably see and use sensitive confidential information and data about people's relationship with this organisation. This may relate to other employees, clients, suppliers etc. It is important to recognise that our employees are dealing with privileged information.

Staff must not, except in the proper performance of their job or as required by law, disclose confidential information relating to our organisation. This also applies where we must respect an obligation of confidence to anyone else. This is both a legal and contractual obligation. Staff must not bring the company into disrepute. Staff must respect confidentiality even after ceasing our employment. Confidential information/data includes but is not limited to:

- Sensitive information/data about other employees and those who undertake work or other activity on our behalf.
- Sensitive information/data about or received from customers, clients, suppliers etc..
- Unpublished financial accounts or statistical data.
- Trading or operational procedures, methodology or analyses.
- Processes, designs and products in development or subject to modification.

These provisions apply to information/data acquired through employment and not publicly available other than by their disclosure. Staff must not disclose, publish or misuse such information/data. Staff must not supply it to any unauthorised person or organisation. This applies irrespective of whether staff are doing so for their own purpose or benefit or for any other reason. We expect our staff to take all appropriate action to maintain the security and sensitivity of confidential material. We also expect employees to use their best efforts to prevent disclosure, publication or misuse of confidential material by others. Please report any suspected breach to us immediately.

Staff must not remove or transmit any of our documents, material or data physically or electronically. Staff must not send/store our information/data onto their own or any external storage device or medium. We must specifically authorise any deviation from this policy in advance. The only exceptions are where staff do so in the proper performance of their job or as required by law. Staff must return to us when we request, and in any event when their employment ends, all our documents and equipment. This includes information belonging to the business which staff may have stored on portable or external electronic media locations. Where we request, staff must delete, destroy, remove or erase confidential information contained in documents, electronic storage media/devices, disks etc. This applies to all material in a member of staffs possession or under their control, irrespective of its location.