

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

- Recruitment checks meet the requirements of the EYFS as stipulated in procedure 8.0A below
- 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.
- There is a whistleblowing procedure for all staff, students and volunteers to raise any concerns they may have.
- Ofsted are notified of any changes to the Manager 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

Early Years Careers Gov.uk
Recruiting Early Years Staff (Early Years Alliance 2024)
People Management in the Early Years (Early Years Alliance)

8.0A Recruitment Checks

Obtaining references

As part of our commitment to **safer recruitment Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school** will always obtain references from applicants for roles in our setting. Robust recruitment checks are essential to ensuring that unsuitable persons cannot have contact with children through employment with us.

Obtaining references is an essential element of our recruitment process. We will always obtain a reference prior to employment commencing in line with the requirements of the EYFS as follows:

- Our application process requires candidates to supply us with the contact details of a suitable referee from:
 - Their current employer, training provider or early years education and care setting
 - A senior person within the organisation who is authorised to provide a reference.
- If the applicant is not currently employed, or is not currently working with children we will:
 - Obtain verification of the applicants most recent relevant employment if they are not currently employed
 - Obtain a reference from the applicants most recent relevant employer from the last time they worked with children
- If the applicant has never worked with children we will obtain a reference from their current employer, training provider or education setting.
- We do not accept references from the following
 - Family members
 - A generic reference i.e. 'to whom it may concern'.

Once a reference is received

- A reference received electronically will be checked to ensure that it originates from a legitimate source.
- We will compare the information on the original application form against relevant information given in the reference, for example, checking that dates align, and roles and responsibilities listed are consistent. Where this is not the case, we will take up any discrepancies with the applicant.
- If information is incomplete or we feel it is insufficient for us to make an informed decision about the applicant's suitability, we will contact the referee for clarification.
- Before an offer of employment is made, we will ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily.
- In line with best practice, we will seek to gain explanations for any gaps in employment.

Further information and guidance

A120 New Employee Handbook (Alliance Publication)

A128 Recruiting Early Years Staff (Alliance Publication)

A129 People Management in the Early Years (Alliance Publication)

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8.1 STAFF DEPLOYMENT

Members of staff including assistants, reserve staff and students (where eligible to be counted in ratios) 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 or Deputy ~~or Leader~~.
- We use the following ratios of adult to child:
 - Children aged two: 1 adult : 4 children (NB: current government legal ratio is 1:5)
 - 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. 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 will be on site at all times, when children are present and at least one Paediatric First Aider must be present, and **within sight and sound**, of children at mealtimes. **Consideration will be given around staff breaks, lunchtimes and absences from the setting so that Cheam Baptist Church pre-school is compliant with paediatric first aid requirements.**
- The Manager/Deputy 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. Whilst eating, children must be within sight and hearing of a member of staff and **where possible the staff member will be sat facing children when eating.**
- 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 always focus their attention on the children whilst having a wider awareness of what is happening around them.

- Staff plan their focus on activities.
- Staff inform colleagues if they must leave the room for any reason.
- Staff do not spend working time in social conversation with colleagues.
- Staff allow time for colleagues to engage in 'sustained shared interaction' with children and do not interrupt activities led by colleagues.
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- Sufficient staff are available at story times to engage children.
- Key persons have particular responsibility for the wellbeing and development of their key children. Key persons spend time with key groups daily; these times are not for focussed activities but for promoting shared times and friendship. 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/CARER 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/carer helpers are deployed to assist permanent staff.
- Volunteers and parent/carer 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/carer helpers give additional support for busy areas or to track or observe children.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers inform colleagues where they are going if they leave the room at any time.
- Volunteers and parent/carer 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/ carer helpers are deployed in addition to two members of staff in the large hall and outside area.
- Volunteers and parent/ carer helpers focus their attention to children at all times.
- Volunteers and parent/carer helpers do not spend time in social conversation with colleagues while they are with children.
- Volunteers and parent/ carer helpers allow time for colleagues to engage in 'sustained shared interaction' with children and do not interrupt activities led by colleagues.
- Volunteers and parent/ carer helpers will receive a short induction, including safeguarding, health and safety and confidentiality requirements.
- Sufficient volunteers and parent/carer helpers are available to support staff at story and other group times.
- 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.
- Suitable students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios at the level below their level of study, if the provider is satisfied that they are competent and responsible and if they hold a valid and current PFA qualification.
- 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.

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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- Safer Recruitment

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

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