

18. Employment and Staffing Policy

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Statement of Intent

North Nibley Pre-school is committed to providing high quality childcare to parents and children as well as a safe and happy working environment for staff. We provide a high staffing ratio to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality.

We ensure our staff are appropriately qualified and carry out Enhanced Criminal Record checks as well as child barring checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in accordance with statutory requirements to meet the Safeguarding and Welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

All staff are required to complete a 'Staff Suitability Declaration' form when they commence work with us and on an annual basis¹. Failure to complete this form will be treated as a disciplinary matter which may lead to dismissal.

North Nibley pre-school is committed to the principles and practice of equal opportunity.

Aims

To ensure that children and their parents are offered high quality pre-school care and education and that staff are treated equally and fairly.

¹ EYFS Suitable People, Para 3.11; and Ofsted Inspecting Safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings, para 13

Methods

Staffing Ratios

- We use the following ratios of adult to child:
 - Children aged 2 years of age: 1 adult : 4 children
 - Children aged 3 - 5 years of age: 1 adult : 8 children
- A minimum of two staff/adults are on duty at any one time.
- We use a key person system to ensure that each child and their family has a named member of staff who they can develop a relationship with regarding each child's development and well-being. Key workers and parents meet regularly for discuss and consultation on the child's progress.
- 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.
- Both our Playleader and Deputy Playleader have a Level 3 qualification in Pre School Practice. We will ensure that a minimum of half of our staff hold the CACHE level 2 Certificate in Pre-School Practice or an equivalent qualification.
- North Nibley Pre-school ensures that there is always a Level 3 qualified staff member in the setting in a supervisory role.

Recruitment

- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
- All new staff are required to produce documentation that confirms they have the right to work in the UK.
- We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.
- Applications are welcomed 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.
- References are sought from both the most recent employer and the most recent educational setting (if applicable). Internal references will only be acceptable from someone with authority not a work colleague. We will endeavour to check that any electronic references received are from a legitimate source, by asking that it be posted to us.
- We use the Ofsted approved company, Capita, for guidance on obtaining references and criminal record checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service for staff and volunteers who will have substantial access to children.
- We will inform Ofsted of any changes to staff or committee using the EY3 form.
- 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 at North Nibley Pre-school. This question is also asked as part of staff 1-1's and at yearly appraisal.
- All permanent appointments will be subject to a 3 to 9 month probationary period at the discretion of the Management Committee).
- All staff have job descriptions which set out their roles and responsibilities.

For more details of North Nibley Pre-school's recruitment policy, please see separate Safer Recruitment policy which details the process undertaken.

Training and Development

- North Nibley Pre-school's budget allocates resources to staff training.
- Both our Playleader and Deputy Playleader hold an appropriate qualification for working in an Early Years setting at Level 3 (or above).
- We provide regular in-service training to all staff through Foundation Stage and Playgroup & Toddler Association (PATA) Training and offer training to our volunteers where appropriate. We also recognise the value of in-house training between staff and feedback from courses attended.
- We provide staff induction training in the first week of employment. This induction includes our Health and Safety Policy and Procedures and Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and Procedures. Other policies and procedures are introduced within an induction plan.
- We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervision meetings and appraisals.
- All of our staff hold a first aid certificate or are working towards one. This is funded by the preschool committee.
- All staff are aware of North Nibley Pre-school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and will report any information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or her Deputy at the earliest opportunity.
- We support our staff's development by allowing time off to attend (self-funded) courses or to complete coursework.

Managing staff absences

Sickness absence

- Staff absence must always be reported to the Playleader, or in the case of the Playleader and the Administrator to the Chair, by telephone (no text), by the member of staff as soon as possible – but no later than 9am.
- Staff adhere to the guidance given by Public Health Britain in their document entitled 'Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings' (revised May 2016), with respect to absences.
- 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 the contract of employment.
- All staff absences are recorded in the setting's diary
- Any sickness absence of less than seven days requires the employee to complete the setting's 'Staff sickness and absence reporting form' (see Appendix 1), which is kept at the front of their confidential file.
- Where sickness absence exceeds seven days, North Nibley Pre-school will require an employee to obtain a 'Fit Note' from a GP or a hospital doctor.
- A 'back to work' discussion with the Playleader will take place after each period of sickness/absence. This is to establish the reason for and cause of the absence to consider whether there is anything the Playleader/Chair or organisation can do to help and to confirm that the employee is fit to return to work.
- The Playleader's or Administrator's 'return to work' discussion should take place with the Chair or another committee member, as nominated by the Chair.
- A more formal review will be triggered by:
 - frequent short term absences, eg. three periods of absence in a six month period; or
 - after a long term absence.
- In exceptional circumstances, eg. after a long term absence, we may ask the employee's permission to ask for a report from their GP. This request will be made in writing requesting the employee's counter signature.
- Absences of one to three days will be considered as a 'short term' absence.

- Absences of four days or more will be considered as a 'long term' absence.
- If an explanation for the absence is not forthcoming or considered to be unsatisfactory, disciplinary procedures will apply.
- All records relating to staff sickness/absence will be stored confidentially and securely.

Sick pay

- Normal statutory sick applies to those staff who qualify². Staff are to refer to their individual contract of employment.

Maternity

- Absence relating to pregnancy will be recorded separately from sickness records. Employees are entitled to have reasonable time off with pay, to attend antenatal clinics. Statutory Maternity Pay will apply as appropriate. Staff to endeavour to make routine appointments outside of work time where possible.

Disability

- Absence relating to disability will be recorded separately from sickness records. We work within the framework of the Equality Act 2010 to ensure an inclusive and anti-discriminatory approach.

Time off for dependents

- In emergencies where normal childcare arrangements break down or where an employee is primarily or solely responsible for a child, dependent relative or partner who becomes ill or incapable, then an employee can request up to two days leave to organise appropriate care. This leave will be unpaid and the request should be made to the Playleader or Chair (as applicable) as soon as the problem is identified.

Time off for medical appointments

- Where possible, appointments for Doctors, Dentists, Optician or Hospital etc. should be made outside normal working hours.

Bereavement, compassionate and emergency leave

- Bereavement and compassionate leave is time away from North Nibley Pre-schol to deal with the arrangements and/or matters relating to a trauma or death of a close relative, or an urgent domestic matter.
- A "close relative" may (but not exclusively include):
 - the spouse, partner, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, uncle or aunt of a member of staff; or
 - the parent, sibling, child, grandparent, uncle or aunt of the spouse/partner of a member of staff.
- All members of staff are entitled to take up to 5 days paid bereavement leave in any one year, for reasons connected with bereavement of a close relative. North Nibley Pre-school committee should be notified accordingly.
- It is recognised that member of staff who suffer a bereavement of a close relative who lives abroad may require more than 5 days bereavement leave in order to travel. In such cases, the Playleader may authorise, after discussion with the Chair of North Nibley Pre-school committee, additional days of bereavement leave.
- In the event of a trauma involving a close relative, an employee may be granted up to 3 days paid compassionate leave in any one year. The Pre-school committee should be notified accordingly.

² www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay

- A member of staff can request emergency leave in order to deal with urgent domestic problems such as burglary, fire or flooding. The appropriate line manager should normally grant one day's paid leave, and the Pre-school committee should be notified accordingly.
- It is not always possible to give notices of the need for bereavement, compassionate or emergency leave. Staff should agree the time required as soon as reasonably possible, with the appropriate line manager, who shall inform the Pre-school committee accordingly.

Requests for “other” absences

- Where early years staff may need to take time off for any reason other than sick leave or training, this is agreed with the Playleader with sufficient notice. The Administrator will endeavour to organise such absences that they do not impact on her work day.

Contingency plans for last minute staffing shortfalls

- In case of emergency absence of staff present the Playleader will look at ratios taking into account the absent member of staff and the number of under 3's that are present and will also look at Bank Staff able to come in that day or, failing that, committee members.
- Staff will also approach arriving parents to appeal for volunteers to forgo their session (if possible) and instead gain a session on a mutually agreed date, in order to maintain the appropriate staff to child ratio and allow preschool to stay open.
- The Pre-school will close only as a last resort. Please see Session Closure Policy.

Data Protection

- We process personal data relating to those we employ to work at, or otherwise engage to work at North Nibley Pre-school³.
- The DfE advise that the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 gives rights to data subjects (ie. pupils, their parents and teachers/staff) regarding the information held. These rights include:
 - the right to know the types of data being held
 - why it is being held, and
 - to whom it may be communicated.
- In order to ensure our data subjects are informed we have created a Privacy Notice for parents/carers and one for staff to ensure we meet their rights. The Privacy Notice for parents/carers is available via our website and included in our Welcome Pack. The Staff Privacy Notice is included in staff induction packs.

Further Information

- The Equality Act 2010
- Department of Education and Safer Recruitment guidance
- Ofsted: 'Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings' (Sept 2018)
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017
- Public Health Britain : 'Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings (revised May 2016)
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018

³ See Policy 36 : Data Collection and Information Sharing

**Appendix 1: North Nibley Pre-school
Staff Sickness and Absence Reporting Form**

This form should be completed immediately upon return to work, by all employees following an absence from work. If the sickness absence has been for 7 calendar days or more, a 'Fit Note' from a GP or hospital doctor is also required.

Name:	
To whom did you report your sickness?	
Date reported:	
Date of first day of incapacity (including non-working days):	
Date of first day of absence from work:	
Date of return to work:	
State briefly why you were unfit for work/unable to come to work:	

	Yes	No
Have you consulted a doctor?		
If absent for more than 7 calendar days, have you submitted a doctor's note?		
If absence was not due to illness, please state which of the following it was due to:		
Urgent family leave:		
Parental leave:		
Authorised unpaid leave:		
Other (please state below):		

I declare that the information given is true, to the best of my knowledge. I understand that false information may result in loss of sick pay/company pay and/or disciplinary action.

Signature of Employee: **Date:**

Signature of Manager: **Date:**