



March 2022

Playmates Pre-school

Policies & Procedures



Review date by: February 2023

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1. ENROLLMENT POLICIES

1.1 Admissions

Policy statement

We will ensure that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of children. We recognise that children and their families come from diverse backgrounds and all families have needs and values. Some children, parents and carers have specific needs, we will always strive to be inclusive to all and offer placements regardless of personal circumstances.

Procedures

To ensure our setting is open to all members of the community:

- We base our Admissions Policy on a fair system.
- We advertise our service in all local communities.
- We reflect the diversity of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
- We provide information in any language.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our "Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Policy".
- We plan activities to ensure that anyone with impairments can participate in the services offered by the setting and the curriculum offered.
- We act against any discriminatory behaviour by staff, children or parents or other adults.
- It is our intention to make our Pre-school genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community
- Make all policies available to families at any time via hard or electronic copies.
- Arrange our Waiting List in order of date of birth (at no time can we guarantee sessions to any families). Admission priority will be given in the following criteria;
 - 1) children who are looked after by someone other than their parents
 - 2) children qualifying for 2, 3 and 4 year old government funding
 - 3) children who have not accessed their full government funding
 - 4) children not claiming or qualifying for government funding

Our commitment to your family

- I. At Playmates Pre-school we welcome both fathers, mothers, other relations and carers, (including childminders), and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups, abilities with and without disabilities.
- II. We expect all families to realise that the contents of this Policy are for the benefit of all children in our care and their families.
- III. Playmates Pre-school will endeavour to meet the needs of our attending children. In circumstances where this is not possible an offer of a placement may need to be withdrawn and support offered to find suitable, alternative childcare. This may involve assistance from outside agencies and families may be assured that we will be transparent with the family and sensitive to the child's feelings in all instances.

Acceptance of a placement is subject to the following:

- a) To enable relationships between staff and other children Playmates Pre-school will not accept a child for less than 2 sessions per week. The maximum number of hours of attendance is 42½ hours.
- b) Families qualifying for funding for two year olds and extended funding (30 hour) will only be accepted on a full year placement (51 weeks).
- c) Families acknowledge that placements are offered on a full year basis on a minimum of 51 weeks in a year. However, we reserve the right to offer, or not offer, a number of term time only placements based on the needs of the business. Families are offered this option from the September only and cannot be changed at any other time.
- d) We will consult local families to ensure that the Pre-school continues to meet the needs of the local community.
- e) We acknowledge that families accessing only funded hours are aware that no money will be requested to pay towards their child's education. (This does not include the administration fee, uniform, and any hours attended outside of their funding entitlement).
- f) ensure families know attendance at our Setting does not guarantee admission to a particular primary school.
- g) ensure our Setting shares information from North Northamptonshire Council to families of every eligible child on how to apply for a Primary School placement.
- h) Families have a right to appeal against any decision by writing to the Pre-school's Management Committee, stating their reasons for the appeal, following the Complaints Procedure.
- i) Children who have moved from another setting and are eligible for any funding will sign a parental contract to enable a claim for funded hours. Failure to do this will result in fees becoming due at the current rate.

1.2 Behaviour Management

Policy statement

Our Setting believes that children have the best chance to thrive when they have clear boundaries and can play and learn without fear of being hurt or unfairly treated by anyone. We aim to provide an environment in which there is acceptable behaviour and where children learn to respect themselves, others and the environment.

We understand that each child is an individual and will treat their behaviour based on their social and emotional development stage throughout their time at the setting.

In order to achieve this:

- The Pre-school Leader has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour and will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of and work to this policy.
- All staff, volunteers and students provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents with friendliness, care and courtesy.
- All staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any conflict by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development, such as comfort, distraction, praise and reward.
- We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the Setting's Behaviour Policy and its 5 key values for good behaviour.
- We expect all members of the Setting - children, parents, staff volunteers and students to keep to the rules to apply consistency.
- Staff help the children to challenge unwanted behaviour appropriately by using self-preservation tactics such as; saying 'No' or 'Stop'.
- We verbally praise and endorse desirable behaviour such as kindness, politeness and willingness to share.
- Staff will ensure children do not receive adult attention ONLY when they are displaying undesirable behaviour.

When children behave in unacceptable ways

- We use a 1,2,3 Magic strategy to give the child the opportunity to make a choice about the consequences of inappropriate behavior.
- We help them to understand why their behavior was inappropriate and how to cope with similar situations in the future.
- We handle children's unacceptable behaviour in ways which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development- for example by distraction, discussion or by withdrawing the child from the situation.
- We never isolate children, however, in exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate for the child to have 'time away' with an adult until they calm down.
- We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking or any kind of threatening behaviour.
- Our techniques do not single out and humiliate individual children.
- We only use physical restraint to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property. Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of the Pre-school Leader/Deputy and are recorded in the Incident Record Book. A parent of the child is informed on the same day and signs the Incident Book to indicate that he/she has been informed.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, staff make it immediately clear to the child that their behaviour and language is unacceptable. Staff will help the child to understand rather than indicate personal blame.

- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's behaviour.
- We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their Keyworker or Pre-school Leader. We work with parents to address recurring unacceptable behaviour, using objective observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond consistently.
- We provide arrangements for admissions, identifying, assessing and supporting children with behavioural difficulties.

Possible safeguarding concerns

When children exhibit uncharacteristic behaviour such as; anger, screaming, crying and throwing toys, staff will;

- 1) ensure all children are safe in the area
- 2) call other staff for help if needed
- 3) not respond with threats, anger or a raised voice
- 4) reassure the child by asking calmly "What is wrong?"
- 5) Sympathise, talk calmly but give no indication that the behaviour is acceptable
- 6) Ensure the child is not laying down by offering a hug if needed to get them upright
- 7) Try to distract the child by moving from the area and engaging in something different and new
- 8) Speak to the child about why the behaviour happened.
- 9) Explain calmly and quietly why the behaviour is not acceptable ("Because you could have hurt one of my friends").
- 10) Advise the child to let you know if they are ever feeling unhappy. As young children can find it hard to tell the difference between something real or imaginary. It might be a very simple issue that can be eased by an adult explaining the issue is nothing to be worried about and why.
- 11) Document anything that might cause a safeguarding concern and inform the DSL immediately.
- 12) The keyworker will contact the parents/carers and ask if there could be a possible reason for the behaviour which will be recorded. Keyworkers will monitor the child.

1.3 Biting Policy

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary stage that commonly occurs in young children. The safety of the children is our primary concern and as such this policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs.

Children bite for a multitude of different reasons. A child might be teething or overly tired and frustrated. They might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of the carer or their peers. Young children have limited verbal skills and are impulsive without little self-control. Staff will discourage the children biting if they become angry or frustrated, and offer alternative emotional outlets. The staff members will always support a close and constant supervision of the children.

The following procedures will be taken:

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm "we don't bite, it's not kind".
- Staff will stay calm and not overreact.
- The bitten child will be comforted.
- Staff will remove the biter from the situation.
- The biter will be redirected into another environment or activity.
- The wound of the bitten child shall be assessed, and cold compress applied if needed. The parents of both children will be notified.
- Incident reports will be recorded.
- Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.
- The bitten area should continue to be observed by parents and staff for signs of infection.
- If this is a recurrent situation, the child will be observed or shadowed by a carer (e.g. shadowed for 10 minutes at a time without hindering their play or activities) and the observations will be monitored to see why the biting is reoccurring using ABC charts.
- The child will be given appropriate activities (sensory activities) to help cope with the biting.
- If we have a child who is biting on a regular basis, we shall put a behaviour management program into place with the full involvement of the parents/carers.

1.4 Anti-Bullying Policy

Playmates Pre-school considers bullying to be a deliberate action taken by one or more person(s) with the intention of hurting either physically or emotionally. This Policy applies to both children and adults associated with our Setting and appropriate action will always be taken to ensure everyone feels welcome whatever their connection.

We realise the children in our care are very young and may not understand their actions, we promote an ethos which encourages this behaviour to be regarded as unacceptable.

We believe that every child has the right to expect an environment which;

- Is safe and caring
 - Provides challenges but is non-threatening
 - Encourages children to feel secure
 - Values children's opinions
 - Shows an awareness of children's individual needs and attempts to meet them.
 - Allows them to develop to their full potential.
-
- If a bullying concern is raised, Staff will record any established facts immediately. Action will be taken to address the concerns and prevent an unlikely reoccurrence.
 - If a child is accused of bullying, staff will strive to gather all the facts by talking calmly to the child in a suitable environment.

The Pre-school Leader will:

- Implement the Anti-bullying Policy
- Ensure children know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour.
- Give an appropriate explanation to the child as to why the behaviour is unacceptable.
- Ensure that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with any incidents of bullying.
- Set a climate of mutual support and praise of success; so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming environment, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

Staff will:

- Take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from escalating.
- All forms of bullying will be recorded.
- Deal with incidents of bullying as soon as they become aware of them. This may involve counselling, an action plan and support for the victim of the bullying.
- Spend time talking to the child who has bullied, and endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future.
- If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, staff will inform their Pre-school Leader and the action plan will be reviewed. The Pre-school Leader will then invite the child's Parents/Carers in to discuss the situation.
- In more extreme cases e.g. where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the Pre-school Leader may contact external support agencies following consultation with parents/carers.
- Support all children in their environment to establish a climate of trust for all, by acknowledging, supporting, rewarding and celebrating the successes of all children, we will aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

We ask Parents/Carers to:

- Contact their child's Key Worker immediately if they are concerned that their child is being bullied, or suspect that their child may be bullying another child.
- Support Playmates Pre-school's Anti-bullying Policy, and actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the group.

Incidents of bullying between parents and children or parent to parent, in any situation, will not be tolerated within our Setting.

We do not tolerate bad language or derogatory comments from any adults and reserve the right to terminate any contact immediately.

If any adult is found to be intimidating any child, the adult will be asked to leave our Setting immediately and may be reported to the relevant authority. In any case a full investigation will follow and records will be kept for the appropriate length of time. Parent to parent intimidation will result in the Setting investigating and supporting the alleged victim and all possible efforts will be taken to resolve the situation.

Accusations of bullying between staff members will be recorded and treated in the strictest confidence with support from the Pre-school Leader and Pre-school Manager. The Chairperson will be notified of the basic details but not necessarily the identities of the parties involved. Investigations into the allegation will proceed sensitively and any findings will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure attached to all staff members' "Contract of Employment Terms and Conditions."

1.5 Charging & Pricing Policy

Policy statement

We ensure our fees are fair and justified by comparison to other local childcare settings. Other charges are set for the good of the business and effective running of the setting. All fees, charges and purchases are transparent, and all families are made aware of all costs and penalties before their child starts with the Setting.

Procedures

- Attendance fees are due one month in advance.
- All fees, charges and purchases must be made either online or by credit/debit card payment.
- A child is not accepted onto the register until the administration fee of £40.00 is paid in full.
- Parents will receive a statement type invoice at regular intervals listing all regular payments due for the entire academic year (September to August) and any payment(s) made. These are issued before the start of each term.
- Late payment of fees will incur a 5% charge per week, until the balance is cleared, and will be notified via email, Family notification or hard copy.
- Families owing more than £50.00 at any time will have all extra hours above their child's funding revoked from their placement. There is no guarantee that revoked attending hours will be re-instated following payment.
- For funded children – **any hours not paid through government funding will need to be paid at the current hourly rate.**
- If families agree to start their child at Playmates Pre-school and thereafter give notice to withdraw, or refuse to sign the parental contract, any fees incurred to that point will become immediately payable.
- Fees are due for payment regardless of non-attendance due to illness, holiday, appointments or any other reason - unless a management decision to close the Setting, due to health and safety reasons, is issued. In this case any fees paid for the closure period will be credited to the following month or refunded if necessary
- Families with children qualifying for the 2 year old funding or extended funding must supply all relevant information before the deadline to send in the claim. It is also parents' responsibility to ensure their codes are valid until the end of the term claim.
- Parents can obtain help with paying childcare fees with childcare vouchers and working tax credit. We will support the application process by giving the appropriate information, however, we cannot take responsibility for incorrect applications made by parents/carers.
- Government funding will be terminated at the 1 month notice period if families decide to move child care settings for any reason.
- Occasionally we organise trips to complement our curriculum which may or may not be subsidised. Parents may be asked to pay a small, voluntary contribution to cover costs.
- Fundraising activities may require a payment in return of goods which is not compulsory, however, goods will not be given without payment.

Definition of payments due;

- I. Attendance fees are any monies owing outside of the government funding for 2,3 and 4 year olds. These are charged at the current rate of £6.50 per hour which is subject to change with a minimum of one month's notice.
- II. Purchases are for items such as; uniform, water bottles.
- III. Charges are for;
 - Administration fee payable by all families @ £40.00
 - late payment charge @ 5% per week for any fees not paid by due date

- late collection charge @ £2.00 per minute for children collected later than their allocated finish time. Late fee payments are the responsibility of the parents/carers in any case. Late fees are due for payment within 7 days.
- Families understand that fees are due one month in advance.

Families are expected to fulfil their agreement in our terms and conditions contract to pay regular amounts via direct standing order from their bank or on-line banking app. Payments can also be made with debit and credit cards in the Office.

What happens if fees due amounts are not paid?

Playmates Pre-school will take reasonable steps to recover debt. Where appropriate we will seek funding from outside agencies on the debtor's behalf but this does not exclude the family from owing money at that time.

- 1) Families owing more than £50.00 at any time will have their child's placement reduced to include sessions covered by the Government funding only.
- 2) All overdue fees will be subject to a 5% late fee per week.
- 3) Families are invited to speak to senior staff regarding overdue fees at any time during opening hours or send a letter of appeal to the Management Committee.
- 4) Playmates Pre-school agrees to work with families to resolve overdue fees using affordable payment plans, however, any deviation from the agreed arrangement will result in the child's placement being referred to the above from Point 1 and no payment plan will be offered.
- 5) Families owing more than £50.00 at the end of any term; December, March and July/August – will have their placement revoked at the end of the funding block. No reinstatement of sessions is guaranteed at any point.
- 6) Families ending an academic year owing fees will not be able to access childcare through Playmates Pre-school in the September.
- 7) Families who owe outstanding fees will not be permitted to start any children until the balance is cleared, including late fees.
- 8) Failure to pay fees will result in an application to make a court claim against the family. Under these circumstances the current daily interest rate - specified by the court - and all court fees will be added to the claim. (Interest is added from the date of the application).
Families should also be aware that if we are successful this will influence your credit rating and advise families to research the probable outcomes.

1.6 Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Policy

Policy statement

We make our Pre-school available to all members of the community regardless of their background.

To ensure the welfare of all children our Pre-school operates under the following criteria to ensure all children have access to our Pre-school regardless of their background.

We abide by up-to-date legislation working to The Equality Act 2010, The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulation 2014 No 1530 and Race Relations Amendment Act, where two core duties apply to our early years Setting;

- Not to treat a child or an adult with a disability 'less favourably'
- To make 'reasonable adjustments' for children and adults with a disability

We have a trained Inclusion Manager who has also attended the SEND Code of Practice workshops. Our nominated person is Marilynn Hazeldine.

Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SEND-Co) is Kellie Mayes. We promote a shared role strategy so key personnel are supported. Regular training and resources are shared throughout our Setting offering an inclusive opportunity for keyworkers to recognise delays in learning or the need for further support at the earliest point.

All our staff are qualified and trained to ensure children begin to learn from their very first session.

We ensure basic information, written and spoken, will be clearly communicated in all possible languages to ensure that families receive information appropriately. We recognize that Children and adults who speak two or more languages are an asset to the whole group and their languages will be recognised and respected in the Pre-school. This also applies to anyone with an impairment.

Children and parents who have English as a second or additional language will be valued and reasonable adjustments will be made throughout to accommodate them.

We form positive relationships with our families before their child starts with us, ensuring an effective and consistent flow of communication between staff and parents.

Our Pre-school is open to any child, welcoming;

- Girls and boys
- Minority ethnic and faith groups
- Children who need support to learn English as an additional language
- Children with special educational needs
- Children with disabilities
- Children who are at risk of exclusion
- Travelers and asylum seekers
- Looked after children
- Vulnerable groups of children

Our Setting works on a Keyworker system and suitably trained members of staff are responsible for small groups of children who they continually assess throughout their time in our Setting. Plans and further resources and experiences support each child to their full potential with written evidence gained on each area within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). We evaluate activities daily to ensure their effectiveness for every child's learning experience and adapt each activity to offer extended outcomes if appropriate.

We offer diversity opportunities by sharing important religious festivals and encourage our children to show respectful awareness for other children's cultures and beliefs.

All staff are familiar with the relevant equal opportunity's legislation covering race, gender and disability and will make sure medical, cultural and dietary needs are met.

Staff ensure children;

- Feel secure and know that their contributions are valued
- Appreciate and value the difference they see in others
- Take responsibility for their own actions
- Participate safely, in clothing that is appropriate to their religious beliefs
- Are taught in groups that allow them all to experience success
- Use materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- Have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles
- Have challenging targets, suitable to their learning style, that enable them to succeed
- Are encouraged to participate fully, regardless of disabilities or medical needs.

Any discriminatory language, behaviour or remarks by children, parents of any other adults are unacceptable in the Pre-school. Our response will aim to demonstrate support for the victim(s), to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices and to make it clear that such behaviour/remarks will not be tolerated.

Adults and/or children found to continue such behaviour will be asked to leave the Pre-school.

Please refer to our Antibullying Policy.

Outings and trips are shared with our families encouraging them to attend and build relationships and a support network for our families. We ensure our trips and outings are accessible and appropriate for all the children in our Setting.

Families with children identified by their Keyworker as needing extra support will be approached by our SEND-Co to agree a plan of action, ensuring the child is being fully supported consistently at home and in our Setting. We are experienced in involving outside agencies and will actively support the family throughout the referral. Playmates Pre-school will never involve an outside agency without the parent/guardian's full agreement – with the exception of a safeguarding issue.

Outside agencies may include; Social Workers, Health Visitors, Early Years Team, Speech and Language, paediatricians and the Portage Team (SSS)(help and advice for children with higher needs).

The Pre-school may fund one-to-one support for any child who is identified as needing support for either all or part of a session. This will be supported by the Setting funding further resources to ensure each child can join in with all available activities in our Setting.

Playmates Pre-school actively evaluates their practice of recognising potential SEND-Co children.

Before a child moves onto another Setting or Primary School we will ensure we provide detailed Transition Documents to ensure the provision is fully aware of the child's needs and abilities.

Primary school teachers are invited and encouraged to visit our Setting so the children get to know their potential teachers in a relaxed and familiar environment.

Our Setting is single storey and we strive to ensure it is as accessible as possible for everyone.

This Policy forms part of the Welcome Pack for new families and is available upon request at all times.

Sensory Sessions

At some points it may become necessary to introduce specific 'Sensory Sessions' to successfully support a number of children with SEND at any one time.

If it is deemed that a child has a significant delay, or their needs are unable to be met within session, the procedure is as follows:

1. Discuss concerns with parents.
2. Assess on portage tracker
3. If delay is highlighted contact appropriate agencies, e.g. SSS, SALT

4. If the need can not be met in sessions with targets the child will need to attend the SEND session and if full, will be put on the waiting list for these sessions. If the child is unsafe within session without a 1:1 their sessions will be on hold until a space comes available in the appropriate sessions that meets their needs, this will be at our discretion.

Aim of Sensory session

The aim of the Sensory Sessions is to offer a targeted support providing effective early intervention to promote an acceleration of development. This is done through a high ratio of qualified staff to a small number of children in an environment set up to support additional needs, taking into consideration safety concerns and medical conditions.

Requirement of Sensory Session

- Maximum capacity 6 children
- Minimum staff 3
- Provide appropriate learning resources targeting delays e.g. sensory play
- Working on agreed targets
- Offering PECS to children that require it
- Supporting use of communication flip book to children that require it
- Encourage routines and boundaries
- Use variations of communication such as Makaton and BSL as appropriate
- Offer periods of intensive interaction

Staff

Playmates Pre-school understands that a happy workforce is an effective workforce and strives to ensure that all staff feel valued and appreciated in their role. The steps we take to ensure this are covered in our Staffing Policy which also includes procedures for employing staff with a criminal record.

Our recruitment practice is covered in our Safer Recruitment Policy.

1.7 Transient Family Policy

A variety of terminology is used to define transient families such as transience, turbulence, turnover, casual admissions and mid-phase entrants. This means 'children joining or leaving a school at a point other than the normal age at which children start and finish their education at that school' – whether or not this involves a move of home. Transience becomes an issue when it is associated with other indices of deprivation and educational risk. Some of the major causes include populations of children of armed services personnel, areas receiving large quantities of immigrants/asylum seekers, populations of traveler's children, movement with inner cities, and centres of seasonal workers with associated short-term accommodation. Each of these types of transience had its own distinctive additional educational problematics, e.g. English as an additional language, poverty, unemployment, unsettled family background, itinerant lifestyle, regular re-assignment to different posts etc. which were not common to other types.

Transience can cause

Time pressures – admission procedures, compiling and posting off records/difficulties of maintaining multi-agency links. To combat this, we will ensure we actively contact prior settings if possible and our admission policy is quick and efficient avoiding delay.

Poor attendance. It was shown that inconsistent attendance patterns within the transient population depressed the overall attendance levels upon settings, we will always call families asking for their whereabouts of a child who misses a session and will encourage parents to bring children in for their assigned sessions.

Children who move in or move on are reported to suffer turbulence in several ways:

- Emotionally – moving is traumatic in itself/moving is often associated with emotional problems/may have a devastating effect on progress and behaviour. We will use emotion boxes and worry monsters to support these children offering opportunities to talk about their experiences and express their emotion.
- Socially – pupils find it hard to gauge how to behave at first/they find it hard to adapt. We will provide clear consistent boundaries focusing on positive interactions to support the children integrating.
- Academically – progress may be delayed/many under achieve at first and their confusion and frustration results in poor behaviour/the lack of continuity impedes progress. We will provide additional support for children and their families in the form of next steps and targets as needed.
- Generally – by the time the setting manage to identify needs and set up support systems, the children may already be moving on/transient pupils already suffer multiple disadvantage in addition to transience. We will proactively contact previous settings asking them to inform us of any needs and we will ensure we forward information to other settings if the children leave Playmates Pre-school.

1.8 Mobile Phone Policy

Policy statement

We understand that adults are likely to carry a mobile phone device. We make it clear to all adults that mobile phones must not be used on the premises and if they insist on using any media they must leave the premises immediately.

To ensure the safety and welfare of children in our care we operate a Mobile Phone Policy which stipulates;

Staff/Volunteers

- Personal mobile phones cannot be used during contact time with children
- All personal mobile phones must be kept in the kitchen/office and switched to silent.
- Mobile phones may be checked during staff break times and any urgent call may be returned at the discretion of the senior staff.
- Ensure all staff/volunteers are aware that the use of mobile phones to take photos or videos is not permitted without direct permission from a senior staff member.
- Staff/volunteers will be educated on the importance and safety issues for themselves and children regarding this Policy.
- Failure to adhere to this Policy will lead to disciplinary action being taken or the volunteer not being permitted to work within the Setting.

Parents/Guardians/Visitors on the premises

- Ensure that parents, guardians and visitors are aware that the use of mobile phones in the Pre-school is not permitted at any time – by displaying clear posters on all entry points.
- Senior staff will ensure any adult entering the premises is aware that they must not use their mobile phone during their visit.
- Ensure families know it is not acceptable for a child to bring in a mobile phone from home under any circumstances.

1.9 The Non-collection of Children Policy

Policy statement

We understand that circumstances sometimes influence parents' ability to collect their child on time. At all times the child's well-being is paramount to our Setting.

If a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a Pre-school session, Playmates puts into practice the following agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child. The child will receive a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Procedures

Parents of children starting at the Pre-school are asked to provide specific information which is recorded on the child's information form, including:

- 1) home address and telephone number
- 2) mobile telephone number;
- 3) names and telephone numbers of adults who are authorised by the parents/carers on the child's information form, to collect their child from Pre-school.
- 4) information about any person who does not have legal access to the child.
- 5) On occasions when parents or the persons normally authorised to collect the child are not able, we record the name and contact details on the wipe board by the front door. Identification of the person who is to collect their child will be verified by the Password entered on the child's information form. Failure of any adult attempting to collect a child to supply the 'Password' will result in the child being kept by staff until the situation can be rectified by a parent.
- 6) If parents/carers are late collecting their children, the Pre-school reserves the right to charge for Staff overtime at the rate of £2.00 per minute from the session finish time.
- 7) Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us as soon as possible so we can put our procedures in place.
- 8) All parents are provided with our contact telephone number. We also inform parents that - in the event that their children are not collected from Pre-school by an authorised adult and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises - we apply our child protection procedures as set out in our Safeguarding Policy.

If a child is not collected at the end of the session, we follow these procedures:

- 1) the wipe board by the front door is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines;
- 2) if no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home, via their mobile or at work, if applicable;
- 3) if this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from Pre-school - and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the child information form are contacted;
- 4) all reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents/carers of the child, then attempts will be made to contact the listed emergency contacts.
- 5) the child stays at Pre-school in the care of two familiar and DBS checked staff until the child is safely collected;
- 6) the child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the child's information form unless we have had telephone confirmation or authority on Family to let the child leave. We will also need the child's password before the child departs with the nominated adult.

- 7) if no-one collects the child and the premises are closing, or staff are no longer available to care for the child after 30 minutes we contact Police and our **Safeguarding MASH Team 0300 126 1000** and inform **Ofsted on 0300 123 1231**.
- 8) a full written report of the incident is recorded; and
- 9) we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional time worked by our staff.

1.10 Parental Involvement Policy

Policy statement

At Playmates we understand that parents are the first educators of their children. Our main aim is to work together with families to support children in their journey and readiness for primary school.

We will;

- ensure parents have access to their keyworker and learning records via the Family App, offering communication in real-time.
- involve parents in contributing towards their child's learning via the Family App. Parents are encouraged to comment and send in observations taken at home which provides a clear record on their child's abilities. This supports a complete record of the child, targets can be initiated to support them, if necessary.
- Invite parents to attend a Parents' Evenings at least twice a year
- feedback through written progress summaries at 24+ on each child. We may also provide a transition document for children moving onto another setting or Primary School. Parents are encouraged to contribute towards reports.
- Ensure that all parents have opportunities to visit the setting and provide activities to the children based on their own skills, knowledge, and interests
- ensure all new parents are aware they can contribute to Playmates' systems and policies by volunteering for the Management Committee.
Provide information in clear and ease-to-read formats and translated when necessary,
- encourage parents to join the Playmates' Management Committee
- offer meetings, workshops and training that will be open to all families at Playmates at times and venues that are suitable for the majority.
- value feedback from parents
- ensure parents are aware of how to register queries, complaints or suggestions.
- provide opportunities for parents to learn about the EYFS curriculum and young children's learning, in Pre-school and at home. We will use Family, Facebook, displays and notice boards to showcase our activities.
- actively promote children's self-esteem by showing their creations and crafts for everyone to see.
- use social media to keep parents up-to-date on news and activities within Playmates.
- Inform parents of the private Playmates Parents' Group on Facebook for need-to-know information

1.11 Settling-In Policy

Policy statement

We believe that children settle best when they have opportunity to meet their key worker, time to play and learn for short periods with a parent or carer present. The key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the Setting by providing secure relationships. Children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the Setting is a warm and welcoming place to attend and work in.

Children feel safe, stimulated and happy in the Setting and with our staff. Parents need to feel confident in their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the Setting. We realise that each child, and their circumstances, are unique and because our Setting gives consideration to each individual child we are sure that children can settle confidently.

Settling-in

- We use a variety of ways to provide parents with information to ensure they feel they have the appropriate knowledge and understanding of how our Setting works. This can include contact through our online Family App, written information, displays about activities within the Setting, outdoor learning and individual meetings with parents.
- Families are offered at least one 'stay n play' session before a child is officially enrolled. This gives families the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the Setting during a working session and to discuss any concerns directly with their keyworker and/or senior staff.
- We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay with the child for their stay n play session(s). This helps children to cope well when they are eventually attending without their parents/carers.
- During a child's settling-in period we clearly explain our processes and discuss with parents/carers on the best way to help the child to join our Setting confidently.
- At the child's first session and throughout the settling-in process the child's key person welcomes and encourages the child to join activities. The key person will contact the parent/carers during the child's first session with a brief explanation of how the child is progressing.
- Home visits can be arranged to ensure all relevant and/or sensitive information about the child can be made known in the comfort of the family's home.
- As a Setting we realise younger children, children who have not previously spent time away from home and children who have had a period of absence may take longer to settle in.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person; for example, the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back and when that will be; for example after story time. Even if this is likely upset them, we realise that children are happier when they know what is happening and will settle quicker.
- We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others, but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left. We expect that the parent will make provision, where necessary, to attend with their child for short periods, until their child can stay happily without them.
- In circumstances where a child is crying or distressed, we will use our professional knowledge and information gained from the parents/carers, to understand if it is necessary for the parent to stay or leave. Children will not be left in distress and parents/carers will be asked to collect their child earlier if it is agreed to be the best course of action for the child.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it too distressing to be left.

1.10 Toileting Policy & Nappy Changing Procedures

Policy statement

We understand that children's toilet needs differ depending on their age and current stage of development, so we offer a flexible, working together attitude with parents.

Toileting needs are established with parents before their child starts at our Setting. This is also confirmed through the Establishing Starting Points completed by the families prior to their start date.

When appropriate the child's keyworker will encourage toileting with the child and promote their independence to ensure their needs are met. Families feel supported and children are more confident when they learn from their peers to complete tasks and are more likely to be successful.

Toilet training is worked out in partnership with parents and reward charts can be used to encourage the children. All Staff will fully support a child during a toilet training period by;

- 1) Offering potties, toilet seats, changing table, changing mat and toilet steps
- 2) Encouraging children to wash their hands thoroughly.
- 3) Ensure the Child's privacy is respected at all times
- 4) Treating toilet accidents considerately. Embarrassment for toileting accidents is avoided and staff explain to children that accidents can happen.

Children who are not toilet trained will wear nappies and NOT pull-ups

- 1) Records of nappy changing will be sent home daily on Family, any observations made will be noted and parents are informed of any problems (such as; nappy rash, sores) via Family or face to face.
- 2) Children will arrive at Playmates wearing a clean, fresh nappy and parents should advise staff of any issues (such as; nappy rash, sores).
- 3) Children's nappies are only changed when needed, we do not routinely change a child's nappy.
- 4) Parents are to provide clean nappies, wipes, cream and a change of clothes.
- 5) Staff will wear supplied latex, powder-free, disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies. Hands are to be vigorously washed according to the displayed guidelines located on the bathroom wall.
- 6) The Staff receive in-house training on manual handling and the moving of children by the Health and Safety Officer who is Gail Gilbert.
- 7) Under no circumstances will any adult, without an Enhanced Disclosure sought through the Pre-school, be able to take part in toilet duties or be left alone in the bathroom with any child or children - as stated in our Safeguarding Policy.

2. EMERGENCY POLICIES & PROCEDURES

2.1 Emergency Procedures and Incidents Policy

Policy statement

Playmates Pre-school endeavour to make our environment as safe as possible, however, we cannot safeguard against every possible danger so can never guarantee that the children in our care will not have serious accidents and need emergency treatment.

To ensure situations are dealt with as effectively as possible parents will;

- Agree to and sign the declaration on their Child's Information Form;
"Do you give permission for a member of staff to accompany your child to the hospital, following a serious incident, until you arrive?"
- Ensure the information on their Child's Information Form is kept up-to-date.
- Ensure they are happy for their emergency contacts to act on their behalf regarding their child's welfare in an emergency situation only when Playmates' Staff are unable to contact either parent/guardian.

In the event of a child needing emergency treatment, Playmates Pre-school's Staff will;

- Administer immediate first aid where necessary (by a qualified first aider only).
- The member of staff who witnessed the incident will dial 999 giving details of the incident, time, signs and symptoms.
- A senior member of staff is to inform the parent/guardian of the incident and to which hospital the child will be taken. The staff member will continue trying to contact the parents and any additional emergency contacts until at least one parent has been contacted.
- While the child is being supervised the child's Keyworker, where possible, will provide the Child's Information Form to take to the hospital.
- In the event of a parent not arriving before the ambulance and/or not being successfully contacted the Pre-school Leader or Deputy Leader will decide which member of staff is to accompany the child. Primarily this will be the child's Keyworker or staff member who witnessed the incident.
- Remaining children will be supervised separately within our ratio in a separate area within the building. Each incident will be evaluated for suitability in the case of the remaining children continuing their session(s).
- Staff will notify Windmill Primary School of an imminent ambulance.

In the event of a child having an incident which is not deemed life threatening (by a Qualified First Aider) but there is a strong possibility of a need for treatment, Playmates Pre-school's Staff will; Administer immediate first aid where necessary (by a qualified first aider only).

- The child's keyworker or member of staff who witnessed the incident will contact the child's parents/guardians giving details of the incident and any symptoms the child is experiencing. The staff member will continue trying to contact the parents and any additional emergency contacts until at least one parent/guardian has been contacted.
- Advise the parent/guardian on the recommended actions they should take next, i.e., hospital, GP, nurse etc.

Immediately following the emergency or incident all Playmates Pre-school staff will;

- admit if they witnessed the emergency/incident and will accurately record their version of events in the Accident Book which will be countersigned by the Pre-school Leader.
- notify Ofsted and the NSCB.

Within 24 hours following the emergency or incident senior staff will contact the parent/guardian for an update on the outcome of the child's condition and treatment and will clearly record this conversation in the Accident Book. If the parent/guardian contacts Playmates Pre-school to update, the information will be taken and recorded by senior staff members only and the keyworker will be informed. The Pre-school Leader will update Ofsted and NSCB accordingly. Staff will evaluate the accident/incident and the area it happened to assess if any actions are necessary to prevent a re-occurrence.

2.1a Threats of attack

In the event of an occurring or threat of attack Playmates Pre-school's staff will always follow instruction from the local police force.

For your child's safety, which is always paramount, staff will apply the following precautions in the order listed, if it is deemed safe to do so by senior staff:

1. Obtain a telephone or mobile communication device to alert the local police force of the danger.
2. Ensure that all the external doors are locked
3. Ensure that all the windows are locked
4. Will pull down all the window blinds
5. Will ensure the garden gate is locked
6. Will inform Windmill Primary School
7. Will move the children into the safest area of the premises dependent on the threat or, if safe to do so, all children and staff will exit the building and take refuge within Windmill School.

2.1b Evacuation Procedure (fire, gas, leak, flooding)

In the event of emergency evacuation from the building the following procedure will apply;

- All children will be told to stop what they are doing and guided to the nearest exit.
- A member of staff will unlock the nearest exit route and the children will begin to exit the building with at least two members of staff. A head count will take place as the children exit, simultaneously a senior staff member will check all the rooms and garden before leaving.
- The last member of staff will collect the emergency details, register and door key and shut the door on exit.
- The allocated meeting area is the furthest point by the Willow Tree.
- The Register is to be called. At the same time a member of staff will contact the relevant emergency services and Windmill School.
- The person in charge, or Windmill School, will declare the all clear before we return to the building.
- The children will be reassured and explanations of what is happening will be given at all times.
- Sleeping children will be lifted, heavier children will be woken and walked with an adult offering support and reassurance.
- Any child with SEND needs that may hinder their understanding or mobility will be assisted accordingly.
- If the building is declared unsafe for an extended period of time, the parents of the children will be contacted and asked to collect their children. We will congregate in Windmill Hall or the Infant Library.
- In the event of Windmill School being evacuated at the same time Playmates will follow instructions from the emergency services on site and relocate to a safe location.
- Parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity.

2.2 Unaccompanied Child Leaving the Setting – Policy & Procedures

Policy statement

Stringent protocol is in place to ensure no child can leave the premises unaccompanied. We have a locked front door with a door alarm that cannot be reached by a child. We also have a door chain which is in place each time the door is opened or closed.

All staff receive training on how to operate the system correctly. We also have;

- Our garden gate is secured from the inside via a padlock which cannot be reached by a child.
- All exits are constantly monitored and form part of our daily risk assessment. Staff are all trained to be able to release doors quickly in an emergency.
- Accurate and up-to-date registration information, including visitors who should be signed in and out whenever they enter and leave the premises, are kept.
- Keyworkers ensure that new children are aware of the boundaries of the Pre-school and will know which children are likely to be particularly adventurous.
- All children regularly rehearse emergency procedures, so they understand what is going to happen and the reasons. It is important that they do not become fearful and add to the incident.
- Prominent notices should alert any visitors to the need to keep doors closed and who is responsible for locking them.
- Daily risk assessments are taken, and all adults are informed of any potential dangers and work together to avoid them.

Parents and staff will work together for the safety of all the children and are encouraged to alert a member of staff if they notice a child whose behaviour suggests that they might be thinking of trying to leave.

Despite the measures we have in place the following procedures will be followed if a child is thought to be missing.

1. Find out quickly

The chances of finding a missing child safe are greatest if the child's absence is soon discovered. Regular head counts should become routine for staff throughout the day.

2. Search automatically

The high adult to child ratio will permit some adults to respond to the situation without neglecting the needs of the other children.

- a) Gather all the remaining children into one large group – having a story, perhaps, with two adults – while the rest search.
- b) Without alarming them, ask the children themselves whether they have seen the child who is missing. They can sometimes be a useful source of information.
- c) Check that all the adults are present and that all know what the problem is. It is useful to establish, if you can, who last saw the child, when and doing what.
- d) Check every room in the building and any accessible outside area.
- e) Inform Windmill School and seek their co-operation.

3. Parents

Alarming them as little as possible, call the child's parents to warn them that the child may be attempting to get home. If the parents are out or at work, Playmates should have an alternative number to call in emergencies. If the child lives within walking distance, one adult should make the journey on foot in order to catch up with or intercept the child if possible.

Remember that as soon as parents are informed, they will need advice and support.

4. The Police

If the above steps do not locate the child, the police must be called. They have the resources to conduct a search and speed is important.

5. Informing Other People

Make regular checks to ensure that if an incident of this sort does happen, you have all the necessary phone numbers at hand – correct, up-to-date and kept all together.

If you have to call the police, tell the Social Services Department that you have done so. If the relevant social worker is not in the building, leave a message with the duty officer.

The Social Services Department will need to know;

- What systems you operate for preventing such occurrences
- What happened
- What you did, at what time and in what order
- Whom you informed and when.

They will want to conduct their own investigation.

If the Chairperson is not on the premises, he/she must be informed as soon as possible.

Playmates is insured through the Early Years Alliance, we will call the insurance manager at the National Centre on (0207 697 2500) who will advise and contact the insurers on your behalf.

6. The Accident and Incident Book

Start to build up a record of the event as soon as an adult has time to do so. This is important, even if, as is likely, the child is found safe within a few minutes. Your Accident and Incident Book provides an invaluable ongoing record of potential hazards as well as actual accidents. Include in the record the last definite sighting of the child and anything unusual that day about the behaviour of the child or of any other children.

7. Dealing With Peoples' Reactions

We understand that the child's parents will be distressed and probably angry. As powerful emotions are involved, people's behaviour can be unpredictable and people who seem quite calm about the incident at the time can later become very angry, threatening legal action or recourse to the local press.

It is important to be very careful what words you use to talk to people about the incident. Do not say anything which might invalidate your insurance by implying that you accept liability. Be sympathetic and apologise, tell them a full investigation is being made and that you have informed social services.

8. Dealing With The Media

Distressed parents may contact the local press, or reporters might hear about the incident if the police are involved. We will nominate one person to act as the Speaker for the Setting.

All staff will direct any media attention to the speaker and will not engage in discussion.

In handling the situation, you will have support from the Early Years Alliance. If you speak to the Insurance Manager at the National Centre, he/she will alert your regional centre, who will in turn inform local staff and volunteers as appropriate.

9. Informing Other Parents

Parents of other children will be given brief and accurate information as soon as possible to prevent gossip.

We will not hide what happened and will be open and honest to our families. We will ask for everyone's advice to ensure the incident cannot happen again.

Be sure in advance of such an event that the Setting is aware of any procedures required by OFSTED.

10. When the Child is Found

While the child is missing, however briefly, parents and staff will feel guilt and distress which may not be easy to control, especially when the child is found. Staff will remain calm and remember;

- the child might have been afraid and distressed and in need of comfort

- the child may be completely unaware of what has caused distress
- the incident provides a good opportunity to talk to all the children to ensure that they understand that they must not leave the premises, and why.
- Ofsted will be informed of the incident as soon as possible.

Further advice may be sought from:

- Early Years Alliance National Centre
- Inform Ofsted on 0300 123 1231

2.3 Contingency Plans Policy

Policy statement

We understand that having plans in place to cover emergency situations will ensure we can continue to offer our service with minimal disruption in the most likely cases.

Loss of the building

- If the building is deemed permanently unusable, we will seek permission from the landlords to replace the building with a portacabin structure until a long-term solution is sought. If necessary, this will be a rented portacabin to ensure we are open as soon as possible.
- If the building is deemed temporarily unusable, we will seek the aid of our landlords to accommodate us in one of their rooms or we will seek alternative rooms to rent in the Town. This will be for a minimal period.

Staff absences

Children's welfare and learning are our highest priority, together with offering consistency. Therefore, we will always opt to cover staff with people the children may already know. To manage this effectively we will follow the list below in order;

- 1) Our ratios of staff to children are above those stated in the EYFS, staff will be re-disseminated accordingly.
- 2) sessions will be covered by staff not on the rota.
- 3) we will ask DBS cleared committee members to assist in session.
- 4) we will seek agency staff.

If a member of staff will be away from the Setting on a long-term basis, the same plans will be put in place as above. In addition, we may also seek to recruit a temporary contract to cover the predicted period.

If staff become subjected to an illness epidemic the following practice will be put in place;

- qualified, regular staff will always outnumber volunteers/agency staff.
- If circumstances present a safeguarding issue, stated by Mairlynn, Kellie and the management committee, we will opt to close the Setting until enough regular staff are fit enough to work.

Loss or inability to work of our Pre-school Leader

Our leadership strategy enables us to continue to function without a pre-school leader, however, we recognize that the following procedures will ensure all staff and parents are aware of our plans and that their children will continue to be well looked after and staff know what is expected of them.

- The Deputy Pre-school Leader will take on all duties of the Pre-school Leader
- If it is likely that the Pre-school leader will not return to work either at all or in the short term we will consider promoting the Deputy pre-school leader or recruiting a temporary replacement.

Lack of utilities

Water - If we cannot have hot and cold running water, we will close due to health and safety concerns.

Electricity – We use for heating, lighting, telephone, alarms, internet and media. We cannot maintain a safe environment if our fire alarms are not functioning so we would have to close.

- We will not have broadband connection. Family notices and emails will be sent and monitored from senior staffs' own devices to ensure communication is continued.
- The mobile and laptops will remain in a fully charged state.

Gas – is used for the central heating of the bungalow.

- If we are unable to maintain a temperature of 16°C or more at anytime, we will not be able to stay open.

Extreme weather conditions

The Setting must always maintain a temperature of more than 16°C and less than 31°C.

If snow is forecast we will monitor the weather reports and conditions to make decisions based on the welfare of the children, parents and staff.

If strong winds are proving to be detrimental to learning we will ask parents to collect their children as soon as possible.

Torrential, hail, sleet and rain will be monitored for localized flooding and action taken dependent on local reports.

Thunder and lightning is not generally considered a reason for closing the Setting. However, if children become distressed, we will contact parents to advise the situation. If it is felt that the child(ren) need(s) to leave, arrangements will be made for collecting the child.

The above offers a handful of scenarios and it is impossible to cover all eventualities. In any situation we will always follow the advice given by the Government.

3.1 Health & Hygiene Policy

Policy statement

Our Pre-school promotes a healthy lifestyle and high standard of hygiene in its day-to-day work with children and other adults. Children will have the opportunity to play outside during each session unless the weather is extreme. To prevent epidemics of childhood illnesses and diseases we stipulate a robust system of reporting and treating children as soon as possible.

Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they are found to be suffering from any illness that may impact on the health and well-being of other children, staff and parents. This will allow the Pre-school to alert all families as necessary via the Family App and to make careful observations of any child who seems unwell. To avoid epidemics as much as possible we will;

- Insist parents do not bring any child into the Pre-school who has been vomiting or had diarrhea. The child must not return until at least 48 hours has lapsed since the last attack. This rule also applies to staff, visitors and volunteers.
- If a child of a staff member is unwell, the child will not accompany their parent to work.
- If a child/adult is suffering from a notifiable disease identified as such in the Public Health (infectious diseases) Regulations 1988, Ofsted will be informed. The Pre-school will act on any advice given by the Health Protection Agency and inform Ofsted of any action taken.

3.1a Administering Medication

We have robust procedures in place to ensure medication is not available to children or adults within the Setting. All medication is kept locked in the bathroom cupboard or kitchen fridge until needed. To ensure our children are kept safe from all medication we operate to the following procedures.

- Regular pain relief medicine may be given to a child exhibiting a high temperature following permission from a parent being sought and recorded in the Medication Book.
- Prescribed medicines can only be administered to the child identified on the packaging.
- If possible, the child's parents will administer medicine.
- If staff are to administer, then medication must be stored in the original container and clearly labelled with the child's name, dosage and any instructions.
- Written information will be obtained from the parent, giving clear instructions about the dosage, administration of the medication, time last given by parent and permission for a member of staff to follow the instructions.
- A Medication Book will be available to log in; name of child receiving medication; times that the medication is administered, together with the signature of the person who has administered each dose and a witness.
- Administration of life saving medication such as insulin/adrenalin injections or the use of nebulisers etc, children and adults will receive treatment from trained practitioners.
- Staff will advise their insurance company of any such probable situation.
- Staff involved in administering specialised medication will receive training from a qualified health professional and a full risk assessment and procedure will be in place.
- In case of a looked after children (LAC) or where local regulations require it, guidance will be sought from social services before people other than parents/carers agree to administer medicines.
- All medications will be clearly named and kept in the locked cupboard in the bathroom or kitchen fridge.

3.1b First Aid

To ensure the safety of the members of our Pre-school we will always have at least two qualified first aiders on the premises, trained to administer first aid to the children, staff, visitors and volunteers. The Pre-school will ensure that the first aid equipment is kept clean, replenished every term, and replaced as necessary. Sterile items will be kept sealed in their packages until needed.

- Cuts or open sores, whether on adults or children, will be covered with an appropriate dressing.
- Knocks to the head will be treated via a cold compress to reduce swelling. Full information will be completed by the staff member who witnessed the injury to send home with the child, together with advice as deemed necessary.
- Parents will be informed of the injury and advised accordingly.

3.1c Infectious diseases and conditions

The following is a guide to common childhood illnesses and our policy on the minimum amount of time your child should stay away from the Pre-school. This not only helps to protect the Pre-school from an epidemic, but it is likely, if returned too early, your child will be more susceptible to other bacteria and germs which would usually not be an issue if their immune system was not already under strain.

The following is our Policy and should be adhered to.

Condition/illness	Minimum return to Playmates
Chicken pox	When last blister has crusted over
Conjunctivitis	When eyes are clear
Covid-19	After a positive test, 5 days isolation, no symptoms
Croup	48 hours after coughing stopped
Diarrhoea & vomiting	48 hours AFTER the last bout of illness
Glandular fever	Until child is 100% better
Hand, foot & mouth	When all blisters are gone
Impetigo	When lesions are crusted and healed
Measles/german measles	At least 4 days from when rash appeared.
Mumps	5 days from onset of swelling
Scabies	After first treatment
Scarlet fever	24 hours after starting antibiotics
Slapped cheek	Until recovered
Whooping cough	48 hours after antibiotics
Flu	Until fully recovered
Head lice	Until clear of lice
Threadworms	Until after treatment
Tonsillitis	Following antibiotics and well enough

Parents will understand that children can show improvement but may not be well enough to return to Playmates. Parents know their children best but returning a child too soon will result in us calling you to collect them. Please make sure they are fit enough to run around outside for an hour before returning them.

3.1d Health & Hygiene Practice & Procedures

Parents will have the opportunity to discuss health issues with Pre-school staff and have access to information available to the Pre-school. The Pre-school will support the family by maintaining links with health professionals and gather information and advice with parental permission.

Hygiene

To prevent the spread of infection, adults in the group will ensure the following good practices are observed.

Personal Hygiene

- Hands washed (refer to guidelines located on the bathroom and kitchen wall) on entry, after using the toilet and before handling food.
- Children with pierced ears are only permitted to wear stud earrings and are not allowed to share each other's earrings.
- Children will be encouraged to blow and wipe their own noses, when necessary, cover their mouths when coughing and sneezing, to dispose of soiled tissues hygienically and wash their hands.
- Paper towels will be used only for drying hands and disposed of appropriately.
- Hygiene rules related to bodily fluids will be followed with particular care and all staff and volunteers will be made aware of how infections can be transmitted.
- All children will be told of the importance of hand washing after handling the guinea pigs after every contact.

Cleaning & Clearing

- Any spills of blood, vomit or excrement will be wiped up and flushed away down the toilet. Rubber gloves are always to be used when cleaning up spills of body fluids. Floors and other affected surfaces should be disinfected immediately, and any fabrics contaminated with body fluids thoroughly washed in hot water and bagged up for laundry.
- Spare pants and other clothing is available in case of accidents, and polythene bags are available for wrapping soiled garments.
- All surfaces are to be cleaned daily with an appropriate antibacterial cleaner.
- Dressing up clothes will be washed when necessary or at the end of every term.
- Toys are continuously cleaned on a rota basis.
- The fridge temperatures will be checked every day and must be below 8°C, this is recorded on the Daily Risk Assessment.
- Soiled nappies are double bagged and disposed of appropriately.

3.2 Food & Drink

Policy statement

At Playmates Pre-school we actively encourage our families to make healthy eating choices. Sharing of buffet style refreshments can play an important part in social life of the Pre-school as well as reinforcing children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating and good hygiene.

The Pre-school will ensure that it fulfils all the requirements of the registering authority and that;

- Before a child starts to attend the Pre-school, staff will discuss with parents the child's dietary needs, including any allergies, and make appropriate arrangements to meet them.
- Snacks are available during every session and consist of a selection of fresh or dried fruit, vegetables, crackers, cereals, foodstuffs high in calcium and, occasionally, those relevant to cultural diversity.
- The dietary rules of religious groups and vegetarians/vegans are known and met in appropriate ways.
- Fresh drinking water is constantly available.
- Children are offered food at least once during every three or four hour session.
- Parents providing packed meals will be advised about safe storage of lunch boxes in our fridge and are encouraged to make healthy choices for their child.
- Half fat, pasteurised milk or water is provided for children during every session.
- Hygiene matters are covered in the staff induction process.
- The Pre-school is registered with the Local Authority Environmental Health Department and currently holds a five star rating.
- Notify Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children who attend the Setting.

The Pre-school will observe current legislation regarding food hygiene, registration and training. In particular, each adult will;

- Always wash hands under hot running water using antibacterial soap, before handling food and after using the toilet, following guidelines displayed.
- Not be involved with the preparation of food if suffering from any infectious or contagious illness or skin issues.
- Never smoke on the school grounds.
- Never cough or sneeze over food or bowls
- Use different cleaning cloths, bowls and towels, for kitchen, toilet and craft areas.
- Keep food covered and refrigerated
- At least one member of staff trained in food hygiene to be present in the building during snack time preparation.
- These points will be clearly included during the staff's induction process.
- Refrigerators are provided to store lunch boxes.
- Follow new EU Food Information for Consumers (FIC) Regulations to provide accurate allergen information to parents, children and staff for every foodstuff and drink item containing any of the 14 allergens and communicate this to parents and staff.

3.3 Well-being Policy

Policy statement

We understand that well-being is a particular state of mind or feeling that can be recognised by satisfaction, enjoyment and pleasure and relates to our basic needs as human beings, such as;

- 1) Physical needs (need to eat, drink, move & sleep)
- 2) The need for affection, warmth & tenderness (being hugged, receiving and giving love and affection)
- 3) The need for safety, clarity and continuity (knowing the rules, being able to predict what comes next, counting on others)
- 4) The need for recognition & affirmation (feeling accepted and appreciated by others, being part of a group and having a sense of belonging)
- 5) The need to feel capable (feeling that you are good at something and experience success)

Promoting children's well-being

Intellectual development and social and emotional development are strongly influenced by a child's experiences during their pre-school years. This includes being happy and confident and not anxious or depressed. Social well-being allows children to make good relationships.

As part of our ongoing observations your child's key person will be monitoring their well-being and involvement and planning activities to support the children in this area. This will be shared with you as part of our parent consultation process via Family, reports or during parents' meetings. We always value parent/carer input and notification of any circumstances that may affect a child's well-being.

Procedures for identifying a possible well-being concern (Children)

Part of an early years' practitioners' training includes identifying signs of low self-esteem via physical interaction and behaviour evaluation which could include;

- A child being withdrawn
- A child being unresponsive
- Children showing signs of a behavioural issue
- Delayed speech or poor communication and language skills
- Attachment disorders – extremely abnormal patterns of attachment to parents/main care givers

Practitioners understand children's emotional health needs and have the time and skills to develop nurturing relationships. If a child shows signs of any or all of the above points practitioners appropriately seek a cause through asking the child if there is a problem. If their concerns are raised;

- 1) They will communicate with the parents to discuss the problem or ask why their child might be exhibiting unusual behaviour.
- 2) If the behaviour continues staff will inform the Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) and ask parents to come into the Setting for a meeting and discuss their concerns directly.
- 3) Following this, if there is no apparent cause, and the DSL and practitioner(s) are still worried they will implement a "Concerns Sheet" and will keep a diary of the child's well-being on a session by session or week by week basis.
- 4) This will be reviewed with the Designated Safeguarding Leader and the practitioner(s) concerned.
- 5) If a safeguarding issue is apparent at any point, we will adhere to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Promoting staff well-being

We recognize that a happy workforce is a strong asset and morale will be high throughout the Setting if individual's input is valued and appreciated. By employing staff with a wide range of interpersonal skills as well as qualifications and experience each staff member has something unique to offer.

To ensure our staffs' well-being is effectively addressed and monitored we offer;

- An open-door system with senior staff so discussions can take place at the earliest opportunity
- Each member of the team receives a Wellness Action Plan to complete, which is kept confidential between Gail, Marilynn and the staff member, and forms part of the yearly appraisal.
- If staff show signs of stress or instability, we will support them and refer to their Wellness Action Plan as a guide for possible causes.
- Senior staff will offer reasonable adjustments to support staff members
- With permission from the staff member, senior staff may seek medical assistance or advice on the staff members' behalf.

Each staff member attends a yearly appraisal to discuss their performance over the year and an opportunity to put themselves forward for training, qualifications or additional roles within the Setting.

Twice a year we have Supervisory Meetings which contribute towards the Appraisal, giving staff the opportunity to raise any issues (employment or personal) that they feel might be influencing their performance (good or bad).

Rates of pay are fair and appropriate based on the individual staff member's role, professional development, qualifications, performance and commitment to supporting the Setting in general.

4. OPERATIONS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

4.1 Complaints Procedures

Policy statement

We believe children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our Setting at any time. Many concerns can be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, the following procedures should be used;

How to complain

- 1) A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the Pre-school's provision should first talk over any worries and anxieties with the Pre-school Leader or Manager.
- 2) If this does not have a satisfactory outcome or if the problem recurs, the parent should put their concerns or complaint in writing to the Management Committee.
- 3) The next stage is to request a meeting with the Pre-school Leader and/or Manager with at least two members of the Management Committee, one of which must be the Chairperson. A written record of the discussion should be made and signed by all attending parties as true representation of the Meeting.
- 4) A full response to the outcome of investigations will be processed within 28 days of receipt and given in writing to the parent.

Most Complaints should be resolved informally at this initial stage, however, if the parent is still not satisfied, they should again contact the Chairperson in writing. At this point, if the parent and Setting cannot reach an acceptable agreement to the outcome, we will invite an external mediator, one who is acceptable to both parties, to listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.

- Early Years Advisors, suitable professionals or a member of the Early Years Learning Alliance will be requested to act as mediator on both party's agreement.
- Meetings will be arranged at a time and date to suit the parent(s).
- The mediator will keep all discussions confidential and will make a written record of the meeting including any advice given.

The involvement of a mediator should represent the final stage in the complaint's procedure. All complaints will be kept for at least three years and kept in a clearly labelled file in the locked cupboard in the Kitchen.

What if I feel my complaint has not been dealt with to my satisfaction?

In certain circumstances parents may feel a need to involve OFSTED in the complaint. This would be appropriate if a child appeared to be at risk or where there seemed to be a possible breach of registration requirements. In this case the Pre-school would work with OFSTED to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint was followed by appropriate action.

Our Ofsted Registration Number is 220279 and the telephone number is 0300 123 1231.

We believe that most complaints, if made constructively, can be sorted out at an early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interests of the Pre-school and parents that complaints are taken seriously and dealt with fairly and confidentiality.

4.2 Confidentiality Policy

Policy statement

The nature of the Pre-school's work with children and families means we will have contact with confidential information. Our staff receive confidentiality training in their Induction which forms part of the terms and conditions of employment. Committee members sign a confidentiality agreement at their first official meeting.

Breaches of confidentiality will be dealt with in line with our policies.

To ensure that all those using and working in the Pre-school can do so with confidence, we will respect confidentiality in the following ways;

- parents will have ready access to the files and records of their own children but will not have access to information about any other child.
- Staff will only discuss named individual children for the purpose of planning, group management, well-being and safety. This information is strictly confidential between staff and parents of that child.
- Children within the Setting will not be mentioned in a detrimental way to other parents.
- Information given by parents to the staff will not be passed on to other adults without direct permission from the parent.
- At Annual General Meetings (or meetings electing further management committee members) newly elected members shall be subject to signing a Confidentiality Contract and given specific instructions as to its importance, understanding and consequences of non-compliance.
- Names of children will not be revealed at Committee Meetings regardless of the situation to be discussed.
- Issues with employment of staff - whether paid or unpaid - will remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- Any issues or evidence relating to a child's personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will not be shared within the Setting except with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the child's key-worker, and, when necessary, the Chairperson.

4.3 Data Protection Policy (GDPR)

Policy statement

We are committed to keeping personal information confidential at all times.

In order to achieve this;

- we request permission prior to a child starting regarding photographs being taken. The Child Information Sheet states;
"I agree that my child's name, photograph and details may be used for the purposes of the Pre-school but will not be passed on to any third party without my prior permission".
- Photographs and videos may only be taken for Pre-school purposes and for no other reason. Photographs will not be displayed with names or personal information.
- All Staff, volunteers, visitors and student placements will be made aware of this Policy and any procedures attached to it.
- Children needing to be discussed at Committee Meetings will not be named or identified in any way.
- Children's emergency contact details and information will be kept under lock and key when the Setting is closed. During sessions they will be clearly visible to all staff in case of emergency. Any paperwork containing information on a child needing to be permanently destroyed as they leave the Setting (with the exception of any safeguarding issues).
- Official Photographers visiting the Pre-school will not be left alone with any child at any time during their visit at the Pre-school. Children visiting the Pre-school for photographic reasons while accompanied by a parent/carer remain the responsibility of their parent/carer for the duration of their visit.
- Personal details of any name or child will not be passed onto any third party without parental permission, except for circumstances where child protection procedures request involvement to protect the immediate safety of a child.
- If for any reason a member of Playmates Pre-school has an issue regarding Privacy and/or Data Protection then the Information Commissioner's Office (I.C.O.) can be contacted on 01625 545745 or visit their website www.ico.gov.uk for advice.
- As an organisation Playmates Pre-school is exempt from notification to the Information Commissioner's Office, which is responsible for enforcing the Data Protection Act 1998. However, the Organisation does comply with the eight principles outlined in the Act.
- Learning journeys are documented on the Family App and sent directly to parents/carers each week throughout the child's time with us. This file is deleted as the child leaves our setting, following 1 weeks' notice to parents (including downloading instructions.)

Data Protection Practice & Procedures

We collect details from various sources before and during children's time with us, this information is to ensure the safety of your child as much as possible.

- I. To enable us to contact you (or your emergency contacts) when necessary, we collect details of house telephone number, mobiles number, address, telephone number and email address so that we can keep you updated if things change in the Setting or we need to contact you before we see you again.
- II. Information is also to make us aware of any allergies or background information which may affect your child.
- III. We collect religious/ethnic details to ensure we respect your cultural requirements.
- IV. Medication Records and any first aid administered (requiring hospital/doctors) are kept for 1 year after the child has left us.

- V. To verify who is collecting your child we may ask and hold photos of family/friends, for security purposes.

Funding

- I. We collect benefits information, birth certificates, utility bills, national insurance numbers, parents' dates of birth and work pattern to enable us to claim your child's 2, 3, 4 year old funding.
- II. Evidence of 30 hours or 2 year funding qualification will also be supplied by the parent.

Within the Setting

- I. A "One page profile", "Establishing starting points" and "My Family Photo Album" collects information which helps us to support your child during their time with us. This may include their comforter, close friends, relatives and their likes and dislikes.
- II. We collect observations on every child that attends to evidence their progress, this may include photographs, written evidence, summaries and transition documents which on occasion will need to be taken home with your child's keyworker (either paper copy or on an electronic device such as a tablet) to enable them to individually plan next steps for your child. When your child leaves our setting you will receive all of the relative paperwork and their electronic file will be deleted within 1 week except for transition documents which will be sent to the relevant setting (primary school or new pre-school).
- III. Should your child need any extra support (SEND, social services, health visitor etc) during their time with us we may need to share information but we will always get parents' permission first - unless it is a child protection issue.
- IV. Child protection records will be kept for up to 21 years.
- V. We may need to share some written evidence with assessors/lecturers to enable staff qualifications to proceed but we would always gain permission first.
- VI. We sometimes use children's photographs in our displays within the Setting; occasionally this may have first names attached. We may also use photos sent in for family books or displays using the child's first name. These will be either returned to you or destroyed as your child leaves us.
- VII. Any photographs used will not identify the family.
- VIII. Our Information Audit is available on our website.
- IX. All paperwork relating to children is shredded the day they leave the Setting with the exception of safeguarding information which is kept for up to 21 years.

4.4 Disclosure Management Policy

Policy statement

As an organisation using the Data and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Playmates Pre-school complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information.

This Policy includes details on these matters, which is available upon request.

Storage and Access

Disclosure information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with Section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed and it is a **criminal offence** to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, we will consult the CRB about this and will give full consideration to the data protection and human rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means, e.g. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any un-secure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

As a Pre-school using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to assess Applicant's suitability for positions of trust, Playmates 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.

Playmates Pre-school is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

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.

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 basic details of their criminal record on the initial Application Form. Any further necessary information will be sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person with Playmates 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, Playmates Pre-school will not 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 Playmates Pre-school who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify candidate selection for interview.

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.

4.5 Management Committee Policy and Procedure

Policy statement

To ensure we are providing the service needed by the community the Management Committee consists of a group of people who have formed the Committee in order that, as an early years childcare setting, Playmates Pre-school can operate as a charity based organisation. The Committee Members are accountable for all of the activities within the Setting. Therefore the Management Committee need to ensure a sound working relationship with the Senior Staff and other staff members employed at Playmates Pre-school.

The Management Committee has a clear responsibility to ensure the effectiveness of "Playmates Pre-school" in terms of the welfare and education of the children who attend, whilst supporting the staff, parents and carers. All Committee Members must be familiar with the Settings' Policies, Procedures and maintain confidentiality at all times in line with the Confidentiality Policy. All Committee Members will be required to complete a EY2 form. Members may be asked where possible to volunteer to work a session at Playmates to gain further insight. It is also requested that all members complete a skills audit form to enable the identification of current skills within the membership group and to identify if any skill gaps need to be addressed.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Chairperson – has overall responsibility for running the Committee and monitoring the activities of the organisation. Effective delegation of tasks and familiarisation of what skills are held within the Committee Membership is paramount to ensure issues are dealt with efficiently. An excellent working relationship between the Chairperson and Playmates Pre-school Senior Staff is crucial. The Chairperson will manage the Setting Leader and Manager in line with the Setting's Staffing Policy. Regular meetings with the senior staff and the Chairperson will need to be held and recorded. The Chairperson will be expected to be aware of developments in policy, procedure and practice, changes in relevant legislation and disseminate to the other committee members and Staff members as required. The Chairperson may need to attend conferences, training events and courses in order to ensure effectiveness.

Vice Chairperson – main role is to support the Chairperson. Assist with the development of long-term strategic plans and monitor progress in implementing the strategic plan. It is expected that the Vice chairperson will attend all meetings where possible and to chair the meeting if the Chairperson is unavailable. The Vice chairperson may be asked to attend training events, conferences and courses in order to ensure their effectiveness within their role.

Secretary – is responsible for recording the minutes of committee meetings and distributing them to all Committee Members in a timely manner. They may be called upon to prepare other documentation including agendas, letters etc and will work closely with Chairperson. They will be expected to attend each meeting where possible.

Treasurer - ensures adequate financial resources are available, sought and secured. This role requires close working partnership between the Setting and the Chairperson. Also liaison between treasurer and the fundraisers will be necessary. The Treasurer will be expected to comply with Northampton County Council's financial regulations.

Fundraising - committee members will be asked to assist with fundraising activities. It is important that any funds raised are done so legitimately and transparently. Any funds raised will be specifically allocated and targets will need to be set and achieved. Communication between the senior staff and the fundraising team will be vital.

Advertising – committee members will be asked to assist with the effective marketing of the Playmates Pre-school within the locale. All marketing materials will need to be approved before being distributed by both the Chairperson and senior staff. Permission must be obtained before using any images of any child who attends Playmates Pre-school. All materials must be designed to ensure the contents are in line with the equal opportunities policy and do not discriminate unfairly against anyone. The advertising volunteers will be expected to work closely with the fundraisers to ensure events are well supported and clearly marketed.

Gardeners – responsible for maintaining a safe and pleasant outside play area. Maintenance of the lawns, flower beds and fencing fall within the remit of the Gardeners role. Regular risk assessments are undertaken by Senior staff and if any action is required they must inform the relevant Committee members immediately.

Human Resources role – responsible for overseeing and reporting any staff and/or Committee concerns. They may be involved in the preparation of induction programme, job descriptions, work contracts, interviewing of prospective employees and committee members.

Health and Safety Officer – responsible for ensuring that the committee adheres to current and existing health and safety legislation. They support and advise the Pre-school on relevant health and safety issues. Undertake necessary risk assessments and document and review these as necessary. Attend relevant training opportunities where possible and disseminate information to both the committee and the Pre-school as appropriate.

Induction

Each year an AGM Annual General Meeting is held, this is open to all and clearly advertised as such in line with the Equal Opportunities Policy. It is expected at this meeting for new or existing committee members to either volunteer or be nominated to undertake a role within the Management Committee. It is also an opportunity for existing members to step down from a post.

If a person expresses an interest in joining the Management Committee outside the parameters of the AGM the Chairperson should be notified immediately and issue an induction pack as soon as possible.

An induction pack is given to all new and prospective members and it is expected that all committee members will;

- complete a DBS check via the EY2 form
- where possible volunteer to work a session at Playmates Pre-school
- complete a skills audit form
- attend as many of the regular committee meetings as possible
- maintain confidentiality of all issues discussed within the meetings and any information they may become privy too through fulfilling their committee members role
- strive to achieve a positive working relationships with fellow committee members, the Playmates Pre-school Staff and their clients the children, parents and carers
- become familiar with all the policies and procedures pertaining to the running of Playmates Pre-school and the constitution
- support the long term strategic aims of the Management Committee, Senior Staff and the Chairperson

In order to form an effective Management Committee it is vital that the process encourages members to join who have a diverse skills base and relevant prior experience.

If the Chairperson feels that a membership application should be declined, a full written record of this should be made and discussed with existing committee members and the Playmates Pre-school Manager. The person who is being declined access to the committee also needs to be informed as soon as possible. Reasons for declining an application could include where it is felt there would be a serious conflict of interest. Where it is felt that the person poses a potential child protection risk.

Safeguarding issues

Extremely sensitive child protection issues will only ever be discussed between the chairperson and Playmates Pre-school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. It may be that their respective deputies could be involved if one or both are not available to deal with an issue.

Under no circumstances will the names of any children be discussed at a committee meeting or documented in the minutes.

If an allegation of a leak in confidentiality is made against a committee member then their involvement with the committee will be suspended whilst the matter is thoroughly investigated. If the allegations are proven to be unfounded a written apology will be made to the committee member and full reinstatement of their role will be granted.

If any committee member is found to be discussing the Pre-school's confidential issues outside the confines of the meetings then that committee member will be asked to leave the committee with immediate effect.

Safety

In line with Playmates Pre-school's Health and Safety Policy and Procedures it is important that when committee members are on site or working with any of the children and staff that their actions promote a safe working environment.

Equal Opportunities

In line with the Equal Opportunities Policy it is important that the Committee Members do not intentionally or thoughtlessly discriminate against any persons within our society. This includes considering how written materials are prepared and distributed, whether provision can be made to extend the accessibility of information to fellow committee members, staff and parents/carers and to ensure that the long term vision and strategy of the committee does not exclude children within the prescribed age range from accessing facilities and resources.

Reimbursement of costs

It is feasible that through fulfilling your role within the committee you will incur expenses. Charity law says that a management committee member can only be paid fair reimbursement for out of pocket expenses. Reimbursement of costs will be granted provided the chairperson has sanctioned the expense and there is sufficient evidence to support the expense claim in the form of receipts. If it is the Chairperson seeking reimbursement then the Vice Chairperson should second the application.

Meetings

Regular committee meetings are held on site at Playmates Pre-school. It is important that sufficient members of the Committee are present for the meeting to be deemed viable. The meeting should be openly advertised so that all Committee Members are aware of the meeting and those interested

Playmates Pre-school Policies & Procedures

This Policy was adopted at a meeting Playmates Pre-school, held on: 27/04/2022

and is due for review by: 01/02/2023

in joining the Committee are welcome to attend. Playmates Pre-school's Manager and Leader are also expected to attend where possible to share information and update the committee of relevant issues that need to be voted on. In order that the voting process remains confidential and democratic the staff members are not present when issues are being voted upon. Staff members are informed of the decision reached by the Committee by the chairperson as soon as practical.

The secretary records and distributes the minutes of each meeting. Apologies should be given by Committee Members if they are unable to attend a meeting.

4.6 Financial Management & Budgeting Policy

Policy statement

For a childcare provision to function well, it is vital its finances are appropriately planned and managed. A structured financial system helps day-to-day activities to run more smoothly, and accurate accounting records can support the planning process. Practicing sound financial management helps keep our provision sustainable.

To ensure this we balance our expenditure (rent, utilities, wages) against the income (fees, funding and grants). As a non-profit making organization our excess revenue is used to improve our service, equipment or opportunities for our children. We use a linked, higher interest rate account to protect excess funds and separate these from our current account. The current account holds enough funds to cover direct debits and standing orders at all times.

- We fundraise to replace and purchase new equipment for the Setting and are confident our resources and activities provide high quality service to families.
- Our business plan outlines any expected changes for the year ahead and can be used to plan for the development of our services.
- We strive to keep sufficient funds in our Reserve Account to pay all statutory fees if the Setting has to close; including redundancies and rent notice.
- We have budgets for emergency rent (in case of financial difficulties), training for staff and our fundraising.
- We regularly consult with the local council on funding rates and changes to the universal funding, extended funding and 2 year funding.
- We encourage our families to use the tax-free childcare scheme.
- We accommodate the national living wage across our pay increases on a fair system based on qualifications gained, performance and commitment to the Setting's success.
- Parents are encouraged to pay fees via online or telephone banking or by using a credit or debit card to ensure we have an electronic trail of all payments.
- Although discouraged, in some cases, we will accept cash. We understand that some families do not have access to online/telephone banking or a credit/debit card. In the case of a cash payment a hand-written receipt will be given.

Ensuring our Setting accounts for all monies

We use a robust system which keeps accurate records and confirms prompt payments of invoices. We do this by;

- 1) Keeping a daily cash book up-to-date with a corresponding accounts book.
- 2) Financial records and statements are examined by a qualified accountant once a year and all information are reported to the Charity Commission for publication.
- 3) We use Barclays online banking system to keep our records up to date, pay invoices and wages.
- 4) A treasurer's report is delivered at every Management Committee Meeting where members can scrutinize the accounts and ask for proof of payment/receipt.
- 5) Refunds for purchases are only processed if a receipt is provided.
- 6) The Setting uses up to £50 per week from fees paid in cash to top up petty cash.
- 7) The Setting keeps a fundraising tin with a float of £50 for staff to purchase resources for activities when needed.

4.7 Record Keeping

Policy Statement

Playmates Pre-school believes that all records required for the protection of families and staff and for the effective and efficient running of the organisation should be maintained accurately and should be up to date. Families and staff have access to their own records and information and that all individual records and organisation records are kept in a confidential and secure fashion.

Practice and procedure

- Playmates Pre-school adheres fully to the Data Protection Act 2018.
- All information to be filed should be completed and witnessed by the person asking for completion
- All records concerning staff and children are signed and dated
- Records are kept in a locked cupboard or filing cabinet and can be accessed only by staff who need and have a right to access them.
- ensure that all files or written information of a confidential nature are not left out where they can be read by unauthorised staff or others.
- check regularly on the accuracy of data being entered into computers
- always use the passwords provided to access the computer system and not abuse them by passing them on to people who should not have them
- Staff will not leave computers unattended when personal data is on the screen.

Records that may be kept include:

- (a) all essential records and data relating to families and staff
- (b) interview/recruitment records (records of interviews of applicants for posts who are subsequently employed for three years' and one year for applicants for posts who are not subsequently employed)
- (c) all paperwork and computer records relating to complaints
- (d) all paperwork and computer records relating to accounts and financial transactions.

This Policy works in conjunction with our Data Protection Policy (GDPR) and Retention of Information & Destruction Policy.

4.8 Retention of Information & Destruction Policy

Policy statement

Information held for longer than is necessary carries additional risk of exposure. To minimize the opportunity, we only retain statutory information for business and safeguarding purposes for as long as there is a need to do so.

Under GDPR and the DPA 2018, all personal data will not be retained for longer than is necessary for its lawful purpose and will be destroyed the day following the last day of attendance.

Safeguarding data which will be kept until the corresponding child reaches the age of 25 years. Staff who are subject to a safeguarding accusation, regardless of the investigation outcome, will be kept until the staff member leaves our employment.

Business records will be kept for a maximum of 7 years unless we can justify statutory, regulatory, legal or security reasons or for their historic value. The disposal periods for records retained for extended duration will be destroyed under regulatory guidance.

Any challenges to the retention of personal data must be considered in accordance with GDPR Article 17 (Right to erasure). The right to erasure does not apply where we are legally obliged to process personal data or where the processing is necessary for performing our functions.

Where we would be required to erase personal data but the personal data must be maintained as evidence for legal purposes or for reasons of important public interest, we must restrict access.

Destruction of Information Procedures

To ensure all information is destroyed or illegible we will;

- 1) Shred paper records or;
- 2) Burn paper records
- 3) Burn back up and electronic media until it is destroyed beyond use.

4.9 Family Application Policy

Policy statement

Playmates Pre-school is committed to giving parents and families better involvement in their child's learning journey by working with an online application to offer real-time experience in sharing their child's (children's) education and care.

Procedures

From the child's start date parents will be given log in details and information on how to access the Family App as part of the enrollment process. A parent/carer must supply a private email address.

Both parents/carers are welcome to access this with separate email addresses.

All keyworkers are designated a tablet for the use of the Family App.

Keyworkers will share observations made of the child to the Family App which will notify the supplied email address(es) that there is an entry on their learning journey.

Family is a system that allows you to view your child's learning journal online. It is a smart phone app designed to bring you as a parent or carer, closer to your child's development at Pre-school. It can be used as a communication tool between you and your child's keyperson and also used to notify us of holidays/sickness.

Parents/carers have direct access to their child's keyworker via the Family App to report any issues or concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Parental involvement

Parents/carers are encouraged to share activities or enrichment opportunities they have accessed away from the Setting. This helps the keyworker and parents to work together to create an accurate record of the child's learning styles and abilities.

All records on the Family App are available to download for families until one week after their leaving date.

Security

Each child's record is available to all members of staff. Staff generally do not access Family away from the Setting but in some cases, this is unavoidable. Staff have been instructed on how to keep the Family App secure within the boundaries of Playmates Pre-school's policies and procedures.

4.10 Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) Policy

Policy statement

We provide an environment in which all children, including those with special educational needs (SEND), are supported to reach their full potential. We have regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2015) (particularly Chapter 5 'Early Years Providers') and ensure our provision is as inclusive as possible to all children with special educational needs and disabilities.

We actively support parents and children with special educational needs and disabilities, identifying the specific support for individual children and meet those needs through a range of SEND strategies. Our aim is to work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting individual children's needs. This policy is reviewed and/or amended at least once a year.

Procedures

Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SEND-CO) is Kellie Mayes. We ensure our families are aware of our SEND-CO and the many ways in which Kellie can support them. Kellie attends relevant training opportunities to support her SEND-Co role. We also:

- ensure that the provision for children with special educational needs is the responsibility of all members of the setting.
- ensure that our Admissions Policy and practice offers equality of access and opportunity.
- We use the graduated response system for identifying, assessing and responding to children's special educational needs.
- work closely with the parents of SEND children to create and maintain a positive partnership.
- ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education.
- provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
- liaise with other professionals involved with our SEND children and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools (SSS, Health visitors, SALT, Eps)
- provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum for all children with special educational needs.
- use a system of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing individual educational plans (IEPs) for children with special educational needs.
- ensure that children with special educational needs are appropriately involved at all stages of the graduated response, taking into account their levels of ability.
- have systems in place for supporting children during the Early Years Action process (stage 2 on Continuum of Needs).
- have systems in place for working with other agencies through each stage of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), Early Years Action Plus (stage 3 of Continuum Need), Statutory Assessment and the Statementing Process (stage 4 of Continuum Need).
- use a system for keeping records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with special educational needs.
- provide resources to implement our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy.
- provide in-service training for parents, practitioners and volunteers.
- raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer, e.g. Makaton trained staff.
- ensure the effectiveness of our special educational needs provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. Individual Education Plan reviews, staff and management meetings, parental and external agency's views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually.
- Ensure parents are aware of support and services available through 'The Local Offer'.
- Should it be deemed necessary, we will work closely with parents and professionals to complete a request for Statutory Assessment and EHCP's to ensure the correct support is in place in setting and once the child attends school.

5.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Policy statement

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, for the sake of this policy is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health and development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development.

Our Setting will work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

We will

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- Always listen to children
- Train our staff to look for additional barriers for children with SEND.
- Contact any outside authority previous to a child joining our Setting for any Safeguarding advice and/or support. In this case we would have the necessary knowledge and support in place before the child starts with us.

The legal framework for this policy is based on;

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Staff at the Setting may well be the first people in whom children confide about abuse. The Setting has a duty to be aware that abuse does occur in our society.

This statement lays out the procedures that will be followed if we have any reason to believe that a child in our care is subject to welfare issues including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of all the children in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that they may come to our attention. All staff will work as part of a multi-agency team where needed in the best interests of the child.

The Pre- school aims to:

- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of Pre-school staff
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times
- Ensure that all staff are alert to the signs of abuse, understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed including by other children i.e. bullying, discriminatory behaviour
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection issues and procedures.
- Ensure parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with the nursery and kept informed of all updates when they occur
- Keep the child at the center of all we do
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate.

Children will be supported by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. Activities will be devised according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence within their peer group.

Contact details;

- Ofsted 0300 123 1232
- Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Board (NSCB) and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Referral and Assessment Team 0300 126 7000, open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm
- Out of hours Referral Assessment Team from 5.30pm - 01604 626938
- NSPCC Helpline (not required to give name etc) 0808 800 5000

Types of abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them, or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution, or community setting by those known to them or a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child or children.

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree.

Possible areas of abuse

- Physical
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Sexual, including exploitation
- Female genitalia mutilation

Physical Abuse

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face.

Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries these should also be logged and discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mairilyn Hazeldine.

Children and babies may be abused physically through shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and should always be logged in the Safeguarding folder and discussed with Mairilyn.

Procedure:

- All signs of marks/injuries to a child, when they come into the Setting or occur during session time, will be recorded as soon as noticed by a member of staff and brought to the named person's attention.
- The Child Protection Officer/Leader will discuss the incident with the parent at the earliest opportunity.
- These discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records.
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury, the LSCB in the local authority will be notified.

Emotional abuse

Action should be taken under this heading if a staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection.

This may include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent, or it may include parents or carers placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations upon them. Emotional abuse may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and/or drug misuse by adults caring for them.

The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse; this may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive or clingy in order to receive their love and attention. This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

Procedure

- The concern should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL)
- The DSL will discuss the concern with the parent
- Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records
- Early Help Assessment (EHA) may be offered.
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the MASH Team.

Neglect

Action should be taken if a staff member has reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child such as being exposed to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation and failure to seek medical treatment when required on behalf of the child, which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at Playmates unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small. Arriving at Playmates in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child's needs.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they may need at home and may crave love and support at the Pre-school. They may be clingy and emotional.

Procedure

- The DSL will discuss any concerns with the parent
- Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records.
- An Early Help Assessment (EHA) may need to be completed
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances the LSCB in the local authority will be notified (MASH Team).

Indicators of child abuse

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Aggressive behaviour
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents/carers or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illness or injuries

Sexual abuse

Action needs to be taken under this heading if the staff member has witnessed occasion where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters, or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult behaviour or language.

This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role-play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language. The child may become worried when their clothes are removed, e.g. for nappy changes.

The symptoms may also include a distinct change in a child's behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole.

If a child starts to talk openly to an adult about abuse they may be experiencing, the procedure stated later in this Policy under 'recording abuse suspicions' will be followed.

Procedure

- The adult should reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk
- The observed instances will be detailed in a confident report
- The observed instances will be reported to the DSL & Leader
- The matter will be referred to MASH in the local authority

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff should make an objective record with support from the DSL & Leader of any observation or disclosure and include:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or disclosure
- EXACT words spoken by the child
- EXACT position and types of injuries or marks seen
- EXACT observation of an incident including any other witnesses

- Name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time as well as the names of any other person present at the time
- Any discussion held with parent (where deemed appropriate)

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the DSL & Leader and kept in a separate locked confidential file.

If a child starts to talk about potential abuse it is important NOT to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure it is vital details are logged accurately.

It may be thought that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the MASH and Ofsted, and/or a EHA needs to be initiated. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information they have concerns with regard to the child. Playmates expects all staff to co-operate with the MASH and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Sexual Exploitation

Action needs to be taken if any staff member has reason to believe that Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is currently taking place, is evident from the past or if they are concerned that a child is in immediate danger of CSE.

Staff have been trained to recognise signs of CSE abuse and the circumstances that could lead up to CSE abuse.

Any staff member with concerns will speak to the DSL (Marilynn Hazeldine or Kellie Mayes), if the child is in immediate danger they will call 999 and the CSE helpline: 0300 126 7000 (MASH Team).

Female Genitalia Mutilation

Action needs to be taken if any staff member has reason to believe that Female Genitalia Mutilation (FGM) is currently taking place, is evident from the past or if they are concerned that a child is in immediate danger of FGM.

Staff have been trained to recognise signs of FGM abuse and the circumstances that could lead up to FGM abuse.

Any staff member with concerns will speak to the DSL (Marilynn Hazeldine or Kellie Mayes), if the child is in immediate danger, they will call 999 and the FGM helpline: 0800 028 3550.

Staff must not make comments publicly or in private about a parent's or staff's supposed or actual behaviour.

Staff and volunteering

It is the policy of Playmates to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. We will therefore not allow an adult to be left alone with a child who has not received their enhanced DBS disclosure clearance.

All staff will attend child protection training as soon as this becomes available and receive basic training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the Pre-school.

We have a named person within the Pre-school that co-ordinates child protection and welfare issues. The Pre-school DSL undertakes specific training and accesses regular updates to development about this area.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at the Setting is our Pre-school Leader – Marilynn Hazeldine who is supported by Kellie Mayes who has also attended DSL training.

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing to meet the needs of the children
- Applicants for posts within the Pre-school are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- All enhanced DBS disclosure checks will be updated on a regular basis to ensure the suitability of the adults caring for the children.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in obtaining references and police checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at Playmates or has access to the children
- We seek two references before a new member of staff commences employment with us
- Volunteers, visitors, students and staff who do not hold a DBS disclosure or references, are never left unsupervised with the children
- We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the Pre-school in the visitors book and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who enters and that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children
- All visitors/contractors will be accompanied whilst on the premises, especially in the areas the children use
- All staff are encouraged to 'whistleblow' where necessary, enabling them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner to 0800 028 0285.
- All staff will receive supervision meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss child protection training and any needs for further support
- The deployment of staff within the Pre-school allows for constant supervision and support. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, there are no internal doors and the child will be supervised and another staff member will be informed of what is happening at all times.

Informing parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance from the MASH does not allow this, this will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser, or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases the investigating officer will inform parents.

Confidentiality

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the MASH.

Support to families

- The Pre-school takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations with all families, staff and volunteers at the pre-school
- The Pre-school continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgemental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interests of the child

- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate under the guidance of the MASH the care and safety of the child is paramount, we will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

Employees of the Pre-school

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, we will follow the HM Government guidance in 'Working together to safeguard children'.

The allegation should be reported to the Senior Manager on duty. If this person is the subject of the Allegation, then this should be reported to the DSL and/or Chairperson.

The Designated Officer (DO), Ofsted and the MASH will then be informed immediately in order for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly.

- DO will be informed immediately for advice and guidance
- A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (DO, Ofsted, MASH) to determine how this will be handled. The Pre-school will follow the instructions from the above and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
- If the allegation could possibly interfere with the normal working day of the pre-school the member of staff will be allocated to another area within the setting, after consulting with all parties and professionals including DO
- Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with DO support and advice
- The Pre-school reserves the right to suspend any member of staff on full pay during an investigation
- All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated
- Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisation (police) and will result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision.
- All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 10 years if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS questions and avoid any unnecessary re-investigation
- The Pre-school retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry
- Counselling will be available for any member of the nursery who is affected by an allegation, their colleagues in the Pre-school and the parents.

NON-CONTACT SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

Playmates Pre-school strives to make all our families feel safe and secure during their time with us and to ensure this is accomplished, under Court Order cases only (which will be copied and kept as part of your child's safeguarding record) we will take the following action under completed declaration;

At the present time [enter child's name] is only to be collected by [enter person's name(s)] or any person currently authorised by the parent. The parent must provide a new password which will be needed before the child will be permitted to leave with the person.

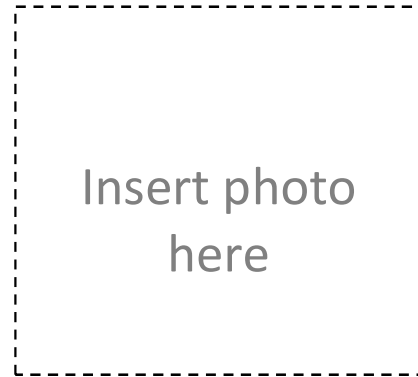
If (the non-contact person) arrives to collect[enter child's name] we will take the following actions;

1. Do not open the door.
2. Immediately inform the session leader and deputy leader.
3. Talk to them through the closed door – do not open it.

4. With urgency collect all the children from the back garden into the Setting and lock the back door, even if [enter child's name] is not present.
5. Telephone the parent as soon as possible.
6. Telephone the Police immediately after.

During the morning session the person operating the Cabin door is to be vigilant.
If the (person for non-contact) is seen;

1. Close and lock the door immediately.
2. Alert the session leader, Mairlynn Hazeldine and Kellie Mayes via the telephone intercom.



5.2 Absent Child Policy

Policy statement

Regular attendance at our Setting ensures we can educate and safeguard our children effectively, so periods of non-attendance must be explained by parents/carers. Parents are encouraged to mark their child as absent using the Family App on the first morning of absence. Our Pre-school also provides an environment to recognize patterns of attendance, behaviour and well-being.

To ensure we are following the Pre-school's and statutory guidelines, when a child does not arrive for their sessions, we will:

1. Check all media (mobile, answerphone, Family and email) for notification of a child's absence from a parent/carer.
2. Use the landline to contact parents/carers within 1 hour of their session start time.
3. When contact is made the parent/carer will be reminded to contact the Setting in the event of absence. The reason for absence will be marked in the register as; A for appointment, S for sick or O for any other reason.
4. Continue to attempt to contact via other means; text, email or message on the Family App for parents/carers to contact us as soon as possible.
5. If the child fails to attend their next session without notification, we will repeat points 1-4, and;
6. Contact the emergency contacts on the child's information form and ask them to make contact with the parents/carers, asking them to telephone us as a matter of urgency.
7. If we have not had communication with a family, or their emergency contacts, or an appropriate reason has not been provided we will notify social services of our concerns.

5.3 Prevent Duty Policy

This policy is prepared using the following publications;

DFE "The Prevent duty. Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers. June 2015"

DFE "Keeping children safe in schools July 2015"

HM Government Channel Guidance - Preventing vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism 2015

Policy statement

From 1st July 2015 all schools, registered early years childcare providers and registered later years childcare providers (referred to in this advice as 'childcare providers') are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing bodies.

What is Radicalism?

Radicalism refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is seen as part of Playmates Pre-school's wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings.

Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer.

The internet, and the use of social media in particular, has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

What is Extremism

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Constant practice and Procedure

At Playmates Pre-school it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified.

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and childcare providers' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

We can also build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views.

All staff are instructed to challenge extremist and radical views.

It is important to emphasise that the Prevent duty is not intended to stop pupils debating controversial issues. On the contrary, we will always provide a safe space in which children and staff can

understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments appropriately.

At Playmates Pre-school we can emphasise this in daily work such as assisting the children's personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world.

All staff are DBS checked as stated in our Safer Recruitment Policy.

Risk assessment

All staff are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology.

This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel program (see **appendix one** overleaf for further information on Channel)

Procedure for reporting concerns

If a member of staff has a concern about a particular child they should follow the Pre-school's normal safeguarding procedures, including discussing with the Pre-school's designated safeguarding lead.

You can also contact your local police force or dial 101 (the non-emergency number).

They can talk to you in confidence about your concerns and help you gain access to support and advice. Also, they can advise if this would be a case for Channel

The Department for Education has dedicated a telephone helpline (020 7340 7264) to enable staff to raise concerns relating to extremism directly.

Concerns can also be raised by email to counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk.

Appendix one

Channel explained

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for childcare providers to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

Section 36 of the CTSA 2015 places a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must be chaired by the local authority and include the police for the relevant local authority area. Following a referral the panel will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, and, where considered appropriate and necessary consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals.

Channel is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Appendix Two

Contact details;

Marilynn Hazeldine – Designated Safeguarding Lead	}	
Kellie Mayes – Safeguarding Lead	}	01933 460111
Donna Randall – Chairperson	}	

Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Board	}	
Northamptonshire Social Care Services	}	0300 126 1000
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	}	

(This number is available 24 hours a day; between 08.00am to 06.00pm the call will be passed to the Access Team, outside those hours the call will go to the Duty Team.)

The Department for Education has dedicated a telephone helpline (0207 340 7264) to enable staff to raise concerns relating to extremism directly.

Concerns can also be raised by email to counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

5.4 Online safety

Policy Statement

Playmates Pre-school believes that accessing online information can be an important part of children and young people's lives. We recognize that the internet and online technology can provide new opportunities for children's learning and growth, but we also realise it can expose them to certain risks.

E-safety practice

When a computer is used during session times, children do not have access to the internet or any online data without a member of staff operating the media or supervising in small groups.

Staff use the internet to gather material or information for the children.

Senior staff use the internet to gather and/or supply information for the Setting.

Any sensitive information that is deemed only to be shared between two parties will be sent by a secure email address, such as Egress or a similar type.

The Family App is a closed and secure system which is only available to families of our attending children. Staff can access all criteria relevant to their role, senior staff members can access the entire platform. Families can only access their own child's information and are advised to keep passwords and email addresses secure.

5.5 Safety Policy

Policy statement

The safety of young children is of paramount importance. In order to ensure the safety of both children and adults, the Pre-school will ensure safety in the following areas;

Environment

- Safety checks on premises, both outdoors and indoors, will be made before the start of each day.
- The main entrances will be kept locked and there will always be two keys, only accessible by adults, close by.
- Low level glass will be covered or replaced by safety glass.
- Outdoor space will be securely fenced.
- Room temperature will be between 16 and 20°C and will not drop below 16°C at any time.
- Electrical equipment will be checked for faults yearly, recorded and any dangerous items repaired/discarded.
- The layout and space ratios will allow children and adults to move safely and freely between activities.
- There will be adequate systems and equipment for the detection and control of fire.
- Fire doors will never be obstructed, and fire exits will be easily identifiable.
- Fires/electric points/wires and leads will be adequately guarded.
- A record will be kept of any checks by the Fire Safety Officer and also of the fire drills and servicing of Fire safety equipment. Any recommendations by the Fire Safety Officer will be carried out.
- All dangerous materials, including medicines and cleaning materials, will be stored out of reach of children in the Kitchen/Office or in a locked cupboard.
- Large equipment will be erected with care and checked regularly.
- Equipment offered to children will be developmentally appropriate, recognising that materials suitable for an older child may pose a risk to younger/less mature children.
- Internal safety gates/barriers will be used as necessary
- Play equipment is checked regularly. Large outdoor equipment is monitored daily during use.
- Day trips undertaken will be within Child – Staff ratios.

Supervision

- At least two qualified paediatric first aiders will always be on site during session time.
- All children will be supervised by adults at all times and can always be heard by an adult
- Children will leave the Pre-school only with authorised adults under the following criteria;
 - The child's parents, (excluding any parent where we have seen original proof that they are currently under a court order not to have contact with their child).
 - A family member or friend who has brought the child to the Setting on that day
 - A family member or friend who has been notified to us that day by a parent AND who has the 'Password'.
 - An emergency contact on the Child Information Sheet, if we have been informed directly by a parent AND has the 'Password'.
 - A person clearly identified by a parent via a telephone call after giving their designated password. The person collecting will also have to give the 'Password'.
 - Children in our care will only be collected by responsible persons over the age of 16 years old unless previously arranged with management and written consent is obtained first from the parent.
 - The Setting reserves the right to refuse to let a child go into the care of any person they suspect will be detrimental to the child.

- Children will not have unsupervised access to kitchens, cookers or any cupboards storing hazardous materials including matches.
- On outings, the adult to child ratio will be well within normal ratios, offering one to one for any special needs children when necessary. At least one first aider will be present during outings with a fully stocked and up-to-date first aid kit.
- If a small group leaves the Setting, there will be sufficient adults to maintain appropriate ratios for staff and children remaining on the premises.
- Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults will be present.
- Volunteers who are not DBS checked will not be left unsupervised with any children at any time during session times.
- Children who are sleeping will be checked regularly.

Adult Safety

- All adults in the Setting, both staff and visitors, will be aware of and respect the Setting's safety and evacuation procedures located on the walls in each room.
- Adults in the Setting will have access to advice on safe lifting.
- If adults need to reach up for stored equipment, they will be provided with something safe to stand on. Heavy materials will not be stored above head height.
- The Health and Safety Officer for the Staff is Gail Gilbert.

Management

- Books will be available each session for the reporting of any accident/incidents.
- Regular safety monitoring will include checking of the accident records as a basis of risk assessment via the accident hotspot form.
- All adults, including parents and other carers, will be aware of the system(s) in operation for children's arrivals and departures and an adult will be at the door during these periods.
- Adults will not walk about with hot drinks. Hot drinks will remain in the Kitchen/Office during sessions when the children are in attendance.
- Fire drills will be held at least once every half term, recorded in the 'Fire Drill Book' and located on the shelves in the Office.
- A register of both adults and children will be completed as people arrive and leave so that a complete record of all those present is available in any emergency
- There is strictly no smoking on the premises or within the School grounds.
- A correctly stocked first aid box will be available at all times.
- Fire extinguishers will be checked annually and staff will know how to use them

Special considerations

Some areas and activities pose particular hazards. all staff will be aware of these;

- Children playing with or near water will be continuously supervised
- Any animals on the premises are safe to be in the proximity of children.
- There will be safe surfaces beneath and around all climbing equipment and such activities will be appropriately supervised
- Open toe sandals are not to be worn by children. Sun-cream and protection from the sun will be closely monitored and advised, a shaded area will always be provided.
- The Setting will provide a communal bottle of sunscreen, applied at lunch to all full day children. Alternatively parents/carers can provide a named bottle of sunscreen for full day children. Children not attending all day, should have sunscreen applied at home before attending the session.
- All cooking activities involving the use of heat will be continuously supervised.
- Access to dangerous areas such as the Kitchen will be physically restricted.
- Systems will be in place to ensure that no child can leave the premises unattended.
- Permission will be sought via the Child Information Sheet for photographs to be used internally for display or record keeping purposes.
- Additional and written permission will be sought prior to using photographs and names for any other purpose.

5.6 Selecting Play Equipment and Toys

Policy statement

The toys and equipment in the Pre-school provide opportunities for children to develop new skills and concepts in the course of their play and exploration. The equipment we provide;

- is appropriate for the ages and stages of the children.
- offers challenges to developing physical, social, personal and intellectual skills.
- features positive images of people, both male and female, from a range of ethnic and cultural groups, with and without disabilities.
- includes a range of raw materials which can be used in a variety of ways and encourages an open-ended approach to creativity and problem solving.
- will enable children, with and without adult support, to develop individual potential and move towards required learning goals
- conforms to all relevant safety regulations and is sound and well-made

Any items donated to the Pre-school will be inspected by the Pre-school Leader or Deputy, inspected for safety issues and cleaned before use.

5.7 Social Media Policy

Policy statement

Playmates Pre-school is committed to keeping our children safe and unexploited. We do, however, recognise that social media can be a beneficial tool in keeping families informed of our Setting's activities and with marketing and advertising.

Playmates will use social media within the following boundaries:

- Photos will not contain recognisable faces of the children. Arms, legs, feet and torso may be posted, however, Playmates will make every effort to ensure the children are not personally recognisable.
- If for any reason this is not possible, permission from all parents will be sought prior to any image being posted.
- No names of children or their families will ever accompany photos posted onto social media sites.
- Photos are posted for the benefit of our families and prospective families only

Staff

- Staff names may be used with their permission.
- Staff have the right to refuse photographs containing their image or posts containing their name to be used.
- No photographs posted to social media should be copied by a staff member for their own use.

Playmates and Parents

- No videos will be posted to social media pages of any of the children outside of the above.
- No identifiable reference will be made to a certain child in any way.
- Parents will be dissuaded from naming their children in the comments sections.
- No photographs posted to social media should be copied for personal use.

5.8 Whistle-blowing Policy

Policy statement

We understand that having a policy which protects employees in the case of reporting a concern about a colleague helps to minimize risks to children, staff and volunteers.

Reporting a concern can consist of something seen by a staff member during or outside of work time and must be in the public interest and likely to affect others if not dealt with.

Whistleblowers are protected by law and should not be treated unfairly or lose their job because of it. All employees, trainees and agency workers are included, if you are unsure please contact your local Citizen's Advice.

Concerns can be raised at any time regarding the past, present or in the future and include but not limited to;

- 1) A criminal offence
- 2) Someone's health and safety is in danger
- 3) Risk or damage to the environment
- 4) A miscarriage of justice
- 5) A company breaking the law, or;
- 6) You believe someone is covering up a wrongdoing

Personal grievances are not covered by whistleblowing law unless it is in the public interest.

Who do I tell?

You can tell the Pre-school Leader, Manager, Deputy Leader or the Management Committee. You can also seek legal advice and/or contact Ofsted if you do not feel able to raise your concerns with your employer. Follow procedures set out in our Safeguarding Policy.

It is your right to ask for your identification to remain confidential. However, remaining anonymous is not always possible if person(s) you have disclosed your concern to need further information to proceed with an investigation. Every effort should be made to protect your identity if you request it.

If you report your concern to the media it is very likely that you will not be covered by the rights of Whistleblowing Law.

What happens next?

Whoever you have disclosed the concern to may ask for further information to decide if any action is needed.

You must inform them immediately if you want to remain anonymous.

You will have no say in how the concern is dealt with but may be kept informed of any investigation and outcome, subject to confidentiality.

What if I'm not satisfied with how my concern was dealt with or the outcome?

Try to speak to a more senior staff member, an officer of the management committee or Ofsted. It is recommended that you involve more people with your concern to ensure it is suitably investigated to your satisfaction, especially if your concern is still happening or you believe you were not taken seriously. If you feel you are not being heard or treated unfairly contact www.acas.org.uk for advice or www.protect-advice.org.uk.

6.1 Staffing Policy

Policy statement

This policy ensures our staff and parents are fully aware of what is expected of our staff members, volunteers and students.

General

- Staff will always act professionally and have the responsibility to ask for help when needed.
- Staff will ensure they make every effort to welcome all families.
- Staff ensure they are aware of strategies to cope with children's challenging behaviour. If they do not feel confident, they must inform their line manager who will arrange suitable training as soon possible.
- Staff will actively encourage all children to be respectful and kind to others regardless of their background. This will be done using our Golden Goals Strategy.
- All staff are subject to our Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Staff who are employed as childcare practitioners understand that they do not deal with fees or payments and will direct any queries to the administration department.
- Staff are aware of and understand that mobile phones cannot be used outside of the Kitchen area at any time during sessions. Mobile phones must be switched to silent during working hours.
- Staff understand that it may be necessary to wait with a child if the parent/guardian does not arrive to collect them for any reason. The staff member understands that no detrimental comments or blame will be voiced and will actively keep the child engaged to reduce stress or upset.
- Staff encourage the involvement of families in all aspects of Playmates Pre-school.
- Staff will strive to offer the best environment to welcome new children into the Setting by ensuring they use appropriate language and encouragement.
- Staff understand that nappy changing forms part of their duties and will not make detrimental comments regarding a child's toileting habits/routines.
- Staff will complete all paperwork in respect of recording incidents or areas of concern.

Emergency situations

- Staff are trained and practiced in emergency procedures and will follow the specified routine in any event.
- If evacuation is imminent all staff will ensure the safety of the children and vacate the area as quickly as possible.
- If a child has left the premises unattended all staff members will take direction from the Pre-school Leader and/or Deputy Pre-school Leader.
- All staff understand that some situations will require them to take leave or alter their working environment for a set period due to circumstances beyond the Pre-school's control.

Health & Hygiene

- Staff will always present as a good role model to children by demonstrating good hygiene and tidiness during session.
- Staff will record and administer medication as required and will inform the session leader.
- A high percentage of staff are trained in pediatric first aid and are expected to administer first aid when needed to any person in the setting. All staff are expected to help and support in the situation.

Playmates Pre-school Policies & Procedures

This Policy was adopted at a meeting Playmates Pre-school, held on: 27/04/2022

and is due for review by: 01/02/2023

- Staff understand that they cannot be at work if they are ill or have been in contact with a person showing signs of an infectious disease, which could have serious repercussions on the children and other staff.
- Staff will always wash their hands after toileting, before they eat and before preparing food or drinks. They also demonstrate good hygiene involving coughs and colds by using tissues, disposing of them in a suitable receptacle and washing their hands with anti-bacterial soap.
- Staff will ensure they are aware of any allergies of children and staff members and will take appropriate action to avoid contamination.
- If a staff member finds their well-being compromised for any reason, they must refer to the Well-being Policy in the first instance.

Operations

- A senior staff member will notify Ofsted of any changes to the person responsible for our Setting.
- Staff are duty bound to give accurate information regarding a complaint made against them, another staff member, a child, a parent or the Setting in general.
- A staff member who breaks the Confidentiality Policy may be served with instant dismissal in the case of gross misconduct or disciplinary action depending on the breach.
- Staff will abide by the GDPR policy at all times.
- Staff understand that the Management Committee are their employers and that they are ultimately answerable to them.
- Staff will abide by our Retention of Information & Destruction Policy.
- Staff are aware of and act accordingly based on our Health and Safety Policy.
- Staff understand that it might be necessary to involve the SEND-Co-ordinator and/or outside agencies during a child's time with us and will support any application.

Safety

- Safeguarding is a vital part of the practitioners' role and all staff are expected to act on our policy if required. Staff work together to form a case or concern with the designated safeguarding leader in all cases. Should it be necessary for staff members to contact MASH they will do so at the earliest opportunity.
- Staff witnessing possible prevent duty concerns should report to the DSL immediately with any appropriate evidence or statement.
- Staff will always have safety as a top priority of all children, staff and parents.
- Staff are permitted to supply or source play equipment or resources and will use their professional judgement on the suitability.
- Staff will not post photos of the Setting, children, staff or any adults onto any media platform without express permission of all contained in the image and the senior staff. Comments and written posts must be of an appropriate content in respect of acting professionally.
- It is advised by senior management that staff members do not 'friend' or enter into online conversations with parents and relatives of our children.
- Staff ensure they are aware of their rights and procedures regarding whistle blowing via our Whistle-blowing Policy.
- In the case of bereavement, staff will follow the Bereavement Policy.
- Staff will not treat any other member of the pre-school disrespectfully based on their background or past history.
- Staff understand that student placements and volunteers offer a valuable contribution to the Pre-school and will support and encourage their involvement in all aspects of the Setting.

Terms and conditions of employment

- Staff will refer to their written terms and conditions of employment, job description, staff handbook, disciplinary and grievance procedures and job offer letter for all employment details.
- On termination of employment, staff details (in exception of any safeguarding disclosures or disciplinary or legal information) will be permanently destroyed.
- All equipment will be left at Playmates Pre-school on the last day of employment.
- Any clothing will be returned within 1 week of leaving in a clean, washed and useable condition.
- Any monies owing to the Pre-school will be deducted from the final wage.
- Holiday days taken during a period which have not accrued during that period will be taken off the final wage payment. All holiday entitlement will be subject to statutory calculations from the .gov website.
- Staff will request holiday dates in advance of any booking. Senior staff will agree or disagree within 48 hours if request.

Training and staff development

- Our setting leader, deputy, keyworkers and pre-school practitioners who are employed to lead learning all hold at least a Level 3 Diploma qualification or equivalent in childcare and education.
- At least 80% of our staff have attended pediatric first aid training and hold a valid certificate.
- At least 3 members of staff hold a valid food hygiene certificate.
- Our Inclusion Manager, Designated Safeguarding Leader and Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Co-ordinator attend regular network meetings and training to ensure we are using the most up-to-date criteria and strategies.
- We offer one apprenticeship placement at a time and actively support them to follow best practice.
- We provide regular training to all staff – whether paid staff or volunteers – through the Early Years Alliance and other external agencies.
- Topical training is shared with all staff members.
- Training needs are identified by the training plan and targets set from appraisals and supervisory meetings.
- We support the work of our staff by offering regular supervision meetings and a yearly appraisal.

Staff taking medication & other substances

- Staff accessing the Setting's painkillers do so at their own risk.
- All unprescribed medication must be added to the "STAFF NON-PRESCRIBED MEDICATION DETAILS" form and will be referred to only if a staff member needs emergency hospital care.
- Prescribed medication must be notified to the Manager which will be kept locked in the filing cabinet in the office with the staff member's employment information.
- If a member of staff is taking prescribed medicine, the staff member must seek advice from a medical professional to confirm the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children and report to their line manager.
- Staff who need to keep medication on the premises ensure it is always stored securely and kept out of reach of the children.
- If we have reason to believe that a member of staff is under the influence of alcohol, or any other recreational substance, they will be sent home and disciplinary action will be taken.

Staff to child ratios

Children aged two years: 1 adult : 4 children:

- at least one member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification; and
- at least half of all other staff hold at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

Children aged three years and over: 1 adult : 8 children:

- at least one member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification; and
- at least half of all other staff hold at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

A minimum of five staff/adults are on duty at any one time. Staff will work as a team to ensure the safety of the children and will not put themselves in a compromising situation that could lead to a safe-guarding accusation.

Staff in practice

Each child is assigned a key person to help the child form a positive relationship from the outset and become familiar with the setting. The key person is in regular contact with the family either face-to-face or via the Family App and discusses their child's progress. Staff also supply resources and support for families in development at home.

- We hold regular staff meetings to discuss children's progress, their achievements, any difficulties that have arisen and possible reasons or strategies used.
- Where necessary a care plan is put in place and relevant information is shared on a need-to-know basis with staff.
- Plans will be shared with parents/carers.
- Any specific medication will be recorded by the keyworker or nominated person in their absence. Staff will be trained in delivering specific medication to a key child with all relevant documentation from a medical professional and written consent from the parent/carer to administer the medicine.
- If a child or adult has attended the Setting and is diagnosed as suffering from a notifiable disease under the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010, the GP will report this to the Health Protection Agency.
- In the first instance of notice the Setting will inform Ofsted.
- The Setting will consult with the Health Protection Agency and act on any advice given.
- Staff must record any relevant information in the respective file.

At all times the administration of medication must be compliant with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and follow procedures based on advice given in *Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years Settings* (DfES 2005).

6.2 Staff Absenteeism Policy

Policy statement

Employee absenteeism can put significant strain on a business in terms of effectiveness and cost. It also places an additional burden on colleagues, resulting in low morale and a possible loss of efficiency.

Our Staff Absenteeism Policy helps employees to understand the standards we expect from them and helps managers deal with absence issues in a fair and consistent way, ensuring we can tackle underlying problems such as work life balance or conflict at work.

We aim to balance workplace standards with employee health and wellbeing to support reduced absence, increase efficiency, and improve employee retention.

Reason for absence

With the exception of annual holiday entitlement, an employee might need time off work:

- Short-term and long-term sickness, including mental health conditions
- Helping a child, partner or relative
- Bereavement (see Bereavement Policy for specific information)
- Medical appointments
- Pregnancy-related illness and appointments, including IVF
- Bad weather or travel disruptions, making travelling to work difficult or impossible

In any case above we will always follow statutory guidance and refer employees to their Contracts of Employment for further information. Staff may appeal to the Management Committee if they feel they have been treated unfairly.

What staff members must do in the instance of needing to take time off

Please refer to your Contract of Employment to ensure you follow the specified procedures. If a staff member needs to be absent from work, they:

- 1) Must inform Mairlynn Hazeldine and/or Kellie Mayes by telephone as soon as possible, but no later than 7.30 am on the first day of absence.
- 2) Will qualify for statutory sickness pay (SSP) only
- 3) Will have an appropriate "Return to Work Meeting" with your line manager on your first day back at work after 2 weeks absence
- 4) For absences lasting more than 3 working days, the employee will contact their line manager on the third day, by telephone or text message, to update them on their condition and potential return to work date
- 5) Will have their absence recorded in the attendance file which will be reviewed regularly for trigger points of absence
- 6) Will provide a sick note/fit note (on or before the 28th day) signed by a medical professional if they are absent for over 28 days. This is a temporary statutory rule and will most likely be updated when the pandemic is under control
- 7) Employees may be absent from work (self-certifying) for up to 28 days without needing to provide a fit note and will be paid qualifying statutory sick pay only.
- 8) Employees who are unable to provide a fit note due to being unable to have an appointment with their GP will inform their line manager on or before the 28th day.

Time off to help dependents

Employees have the right to take time off work to help someone who depends on them (a 'dependant') in an unexpected event. This will be unpaid.

Employees having difficulty getting to work due to bad weather or travel disruption

Employees who cannot get to work or will arrive late because of bad weather or transport problems, will tell their line manager as soon as possible. Employees will not be paid for working time missed because of bad weather or travel disruption.

Fit notes and proof of sickness

Fit notes (used to be called sick notes) are an official written statement from a doctor giving their medical opinion on a person's fitness for work. The medical professional might make recommendations for how Playmates Pre-school can support the employee.

A fit note will say the employee is either:

- is not fit for work
- might be fit for work

Where the doctor says the employee might be fit for work, they can give details of what level of work they consider the person is able to do.

The doctor might suggest in the fit note ways the employer can help their employee get back to work. For example:

- A phased return to work where they might come back for a limited number of hours or days a week to start with
- Flexible working
- Difficult duties
- Making changes to their working pattern by making reasonable adjustments

Playmates Pre-school will consider any fit note recommendations. If these are not possible, the fit note will change from 'might be fit for work' to 'not fit for work'. There is no need to get another fit note.

If the employee has a disability, Playmates Pre-school will consider making reasonable adjustments to help them return to work to carry out their job.

Asking to see an employee's medical records

Playmates Pre-school can request a doctor's report about an employee's health if they need to:

- Assess whether the employee is fit to carry out their work
- Prevent health and safety risks
- Prevent disability discrimination

The employer can only do this if the employee agrees.

The employee can also:

- Ask their doctor not to give information they think could be damaging or is not relevant
- Ask to see the doctor's report first
- Not agree to the doctor's report being shared with their employer if they disagree with what it says

If the employee does not wish the employer to see their medical information, Playmates Pre-school will make a decision on the employee's suitability based on what they know and are told by the employee.

Keeping information confidential

Any information the employer receives about an employee will be stored in a secure, lockable cabinet and kept confidential. The information will only be shared with appropriate persons in senior roles in support of the employee's personnel records.

The employee can withdraw their consent to share the information at any time by writing to the Management Committee, their wishes will be honoured from the date of receipt.

If an employee is unhappy with how their confidential information has been handled, they can raise this with their line manager.

An employee is unhappy with how their absence was handled

If the employee feels their absence or sick pay was not handled fairly or correctly, they can raise this with their line manager.

Time off because of a mental health issue

If an employee needs time off because of a mental health issue, Playmates Pre-school will support the employee both inside and outside of employment and to seek help if needed.

We will:

- Manage the absence in a fair and supportive way
- Communicate regularly during the absence
- Realise that everyone's experience of mental health, and its cause, is different and the severity/reaction will be taken into account on an individual basis
- Understand that the employee might need continued support, or time off, after they return to work

Time off to help someone else

Employees have the right to take 'reasonable' time off work to help someone who depends on them (a 'dependant') in an unexpected event. Playmates Pre-school will be as flexible as possible to help employees needing to help dependants which will be assessed on an individual basis.

Employees will not be paid for any time taken to help dependants.

An employee's dependants include:

- Their spouse, partner or civil partner
- Their child
- Their parent
- A person who lives in their household (not tenants, lodgers or employees)
- A person who would rely on them for help in the event of an accident, illness or injury, such as an elderly neighbour
- A person who relies on them to make care arrangements

Employees can take time off if they need to:

- Help a dependant who is ill, injured or assaulted, or gives birth
- Arrange care for a dependant who is ill or injured
- Deal with the death of a dependant
- Deal with an incident involving their child during school hours

Keeping in touch during absence

Playmates Pre-school will make regular contact with an employee who is absent from work for more than 3 days.

Your line manager (or senior staff member) will:

- Contact you on the 4th day of absence
- Use the mobile, landline, send a text message or email to make contact (depending on the reason for absence, sore throat etc)
- Check on your wellbeing
- See if you need any support
- Inform you of any relevant updates or changes happening at work

If an employee's absence is due to a mental health condition, Playmates Pre-school will take time to consider if more or less contact is appropriate.

Playmates Pre-school Policies & Procedures

This Policy was adopted at a meeting Playmates Pre-school, held on: 27/04/2022

and is due for review by: 01/02/2023

Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is when someone does not come to work and gives no reason for their absence or does not contact their employer as specified in their terms and conditions of employment.

Playmates Pre-school will:

- Attempt to contact the absent employee as soon as possible, including using any emergency contacts they have
- Discuss the absence with the employee when they come back to work
- Consider the reason for their lack of contact. If the employee cannot provide good reason for the absence and lack of contact, Playmates Pre-school will start disciplinary procedures against the employee

If an employee is struggling to attend work

The employer will discuss the absence with the employee to try and determine what is causing the problem(s). If an employee cannot raise any reasonable issues to explain their conduct, Playmates Pre-school will start formal action for any of the following points if their employee:

- Keeps taking sick leave or being late
- Has unauthorised absences
- Seems to have trouble doing their job

Returning to work after absence

Playmates Pre-school will discuss with the employee how and when they feel able to return to work through regular communication. In any case where a staff member has been absent for more than two weeks, senior staff will invite the employee to a Return To Work Meeting to ensure they are fit enough to continue their role effectively.

Employees will be encouraged to specify any tasks they feel they will struggle with. Senior staff will make reasonable adjustments to their workload, where necessary, to accommodate this.

After long-term absence

Where an employee has been absent for a 2-week period or has an ongoing health condition, the employee's line manager or senior staff member will invite the employee for a meeting to:

- Make sure the employee is ready to return to work
- Talk about any work updates that happened while they were off
- Look at any recommendations from the employee's doctor
- See if they need any support
- If the employee has a disability, see if changes are needed in the workplace to remove or reduce disadvantages ('reasonable adjustments')
- Consider supporting the employee in seeking a referral to a medical service
- Agree on a plan that suits both parties, for example: a phased return to work

Making reasonable adjustments

If an employee has a disability, by law their employer must consider making 'reasonable adjustments' if needed to help them return to work.

Reasonable adjustments could include making changes to the employee's:

- Work hours
- Duties or tasks

This can help:

- Get people back to work quicker
- Prevent any further problems

For the best course of action, the employer should take advice from:

- The employee
- The employee's doctor or medical practitioner

Phased return to work

A 'phased return to work' can include any of the following:

- Reduced hours
- Lighter duties
- Different duties

For example after a:

- Long-term illness
- serious injury
- bereavement (See Bereavement Policy)

Playmates Pre-school and the employee should discuss and agree on a plan, detailing how this will happen and when the plan will alter depending on how the employee is feeling.

Playmates Pre-school will continue to review the employee's health and wellbeing and make adjustments if necessary.

Pay during a phased return to work

Employees who return to normal duties but on reduced hours, will receive their normal rate of pay, only for the hours they work. If the employee is entitled to sick pay, they might receive SSP for the time they are not able to work.

If the employee is unable to do their usual role, Playmates Pre-school and the employee will agree on a fair rate of pay, which will be put in writing as a temporary measure.

When there are a lot of absences or the employee is not performing to a satisfactory standard

If Playmates Pre-school is concerned about an employee's attendance, or their performance within their role, we will proceed to the following steps:

- Invite the employee for a meeting to discuss any issues
- Attempt to resolve any issues the employee is experiencing and monitor the resulting improvement in attendance and/or performance. This might include offering a mentoring program and/or training to help the situation. The outcome will be reviewed at regular intervals.
- If, following the above, there is little to no improvement, Playmates Pre-school will request a Capability Meeting with the employee to assess their suitability to the role.

If an employee is unhappy with how their return to work has been handled

If an employee is unhappy with how their return to work has been handled, they should first request a meeting with their line manager or senior staff member who is familiar with the situation. This will then be taken to the Management Committee for further investigation.

In all cases of absence, staff will be monitored for regularity of certain days and number of days in any 12-month period. If staff members exceed 12 days of absence in any 12-month period, this will be addressed at their appraisal, or earlier if deemed necessary.

6.3 Bereavement Policy

Policy statement

Playmates Pre-school acknowledges the personal nature of bereavement and grief and is committed to supporting employees in practical and reasonable ways.

Bereavement leave

Bereavement leave is unpaid leave that allows an employee time off to deal with their personal distress and related practical arrangements, primarily, but not limited to, when a member of their family dies.

Playmates Pre-school acknowledges that bereavement impacts all individuals differently and the guidelines below are intended to show the minimum leave granted to an employee under different circumstances.

Playmates Pre-school acknowledges that not all employees will need to take the full allowance, and some employees will need additional time, depending on their relationship with the person who has died and the circumstances of the death. Below is the written guidance under individual situations.

In the event of the death of an immediate relative, 10 working days leave will be granted. An immediate relative includes:

- A spouse, civil partner or co-habiting partner (including same sex partners)
- a child in their legal care
- parent
- step-parent
- sibling
- grandchild
- a person with whom the employee is in a relationship of domestic dependency.

5 days leave will be allowed on the death of:

- a mother or father-in-law
- grandparents
- son/daughter-in-law.

2 days leave will be allowed on the death of:

- an uncle/aunt

In exceptional circumstances leave may be granted on the death of someone outside the immediate family. These circumstances would include (but are not limited to) situations where the employee is responsible for funeral arrangements or will have to travel abroad to attend the funeral.

An employee should notify their line manager of their need to take leave as soon as possible or, at latest, on the first day of absence. In exceptional circumstances, applications for leave will be considered after the first day of absence. Line managers have the right to exercise discretion in exceptional circumstances as outlined above.

Leave days do not have to be taken consecutively.

If an employee is absent from work for more than 10 working days due to bereavement a "Fit Note" from a medical professional will need to be presented to your line manager. If the "May be fit to work" box is ticked, your line manager will discuss any practical changes they can make to your role and working environment to support your return to work.

If the "Not fit to work" box is ticked then, where applicable, statutory sick pay (SSP) will be paid until the employee is deemed "Fit to work" from a medical professional.

Paid bereavement leave

Circumstances of each individual employee will be considered and in certain situations Playmates Pre-school may feel it is appropriate to offer some paid leave to an employee.

Annual leave

In the event of a bereavement, an employee will be able to take unpaid leave or annual leave at short notice. Requests should be directed to the employee's line manager.

An employee who suffers a family bereavement while on annual leave can opt to take unpaid bereavement leave and take their annual leave at a future date.

Return to work

In certain circumstances a full return to work may not be possible for an employee following the death of an immediate relative – for example, when the employee's grief is likely to impact on their ability to perform their role, or where new child care arrangements have to be sourced or responsibility for the care of an elderly parent has transferred to the employee.

In such instances Playmates Pre-school will allow a phased return to work on a part-time or reduced hours basis where practicable. Alternative duties may also be considered. Any such arrangement would need to be agreed in advance by the line manager, would be subject to an agreed maximum number of days and reviewed regularly.

Employee support

Playmates Pre-school acknowledges that bereavement leave is intended to support employees in the immediate period around the death of a relative. However, the process of grief, the natural reaction and adjustment to loss and change may take a significant time and will be personal to each individual.

An employee with any concerns about the grieving process impacting on their work performance should discuss this in confidence with their line manager to ensure that any reasonable adjustments are discussed and put in place, so the employee feels supported.

Health and safety

Playmates Pre-school understands that bereavement can impact on concentration, sleep, and decision-making. When a bereaved employee returns to work Playmates Pre-school will consider this and will not expect staff members to fully resume their duties and may offer extra support so bereaved staff members are not counted in the adult:child ratio. This offers opportunities for the bereaved staff member to have some quiet time or leave the premises in exceptional circumstances.

Culture and diversity

Playmates Pre-school recognises that different cultures respond to death in significantly different ways.

Line managers will check whether the employee's religion or culture requires them to observe any particular practices or make special arrangements which would necessitate them being off work at a particular time. Employees should not assume that their line manager is aware of any such requirements and should draw this to their line manager's attention as soon as possible.

Line managers who are unsure of how to respond to a bereaved employee from a different culture should ask the bereaved employee or someone else from their cultural group about what is appropriate.

6.4 Safer Recruitment Policy

Policy statement

A robust safer recruitment and selection process helps to identify people who share the values of our Setting and deter unsuitable candidates and employees. To help us choose the right candidate Playmates Pre-school will;

- Accept only suitably completed Application Forms and any gaps in their employment history must be suitably explained.
- Ask for two referees, one of which must be the candidate's most recent supervisor.
- Interview candidates face-to-face with at least two suitable Interviewers, one of which will have completed a suitable Safer Recruitment Course.
- The Recruitment Process will include certain skills tests dependant on the role.
- Ask for suitable identification documents which will be closely scrutinised and copied, including one form of identification containing a photograph.
- Qualifications will be copied, checked closely and filed with applicants permission.
- Practitioners will be asked to work a session to assess their suitability in line with our policies and procedures.
- Successful candidates will have a Criminal Record Check (DBS) processed as soon as possible.
- New employees will be monitored closely in their first few months of employment, regardless of DBS status, to ensure all senior staff members are confident in their conduct around children.
- Inductions, supervisory meetings and appraisals will form part of the staff members' employment record.
- Use the procedures attached directly after this Policy to consider applicants with a criminal record accordingly.

Employment

- We work towards an Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Policy, seeking to offer job opportunities equally to both women and men, with and without disabilities, from all religious, social, ethnic and cultural groups.
- A full Setting Induction will be completed by each new member of staff at the earliest possible opportunity.

Staffing

- In emergencies we will call on the help of Committee Members who hold a current Enhanced Disclosure for our Pre-school when all avenues to cover with staff have been exhausted.
- Staff/volunteers/students under the age of 17 years are not included in the adult to child ratio.

6.5 Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy & Procedure

Policy statement

We follow The Code of Practice published under section 122 of the Police Act 1997 advises that it is a requirement that all registered bodies must treat DBS applicants who have a criminal record fairly and not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed.

- 1) As a Setting assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order we use criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS),
- 2) We fully comply with the Code of Practice and undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly. We will not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- 3) We only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that we are legally entitled to know about.
- 4) Where a DBS certificate at enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 and Police Act Regulations) we only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
- 5) We are committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- 6) 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
- 7) An application for a criminal record check will be necessary to work in the Pre-school and all recruitment materials will specify this as part of the process.
- 8) We ensure our Safer Recruitment Officer has received appropriate training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- 9) At interview, failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- 10) Candidates will discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the recruitment officer.
- 11) We understand that certain old, minor cautions and convictions are no longer subject to disclosure and will not be taken into account.
- 12) All cautions and convictions for specified serious violent and sexual offences, and other specified offences of relevance for posts concerned with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, will remain subject to disclosure. In addition, all convictions resulting in a custodial sentence, suspended or not, will remain subject to disclosure, as will all convictions where an individual has more than one conviction recorded.
- 13) Applicants may be offered information on the filtering of old and minor cautions and convictions, now 'protected' so not subject to disclosure to employers.

6.6 Student Placements

Policy statement

Our setting recognises that qualifications and training make an important contribution to the quality of the care and education provided by early years settings. As part of our commitment to quality, we consider placements to students undertaking early years qualifications and training. We also consider placements for school pupils on work experience.

During a placement we aim to provide students with experiences that contribute to the successful completion of their studies and that provide an example of quality practice in early years care and education.

Procedures

- We require students on qualification courses to meet the 'suitable people' requirements of Ofsted and have DBS checks carried out.
- We require students in our setting to have a sufficient understanding and use of English to contribute to the curriculum and well-being of children in our care.
- We require schools placing students under the age of 17 years, to vouch for their good character.
- Students under the age of 17 years do not have unsupervised access to children at any time.
- Students undertaking qualification courses, who are placed in our setting on a short-term basis, are not counted in our staffing ratios.
- Trainee staff employed by the setting and students over the age of 17 may be included in the ratios if they are deemed competent and responsible by senior staff.
- We take out employers' liability insurance and public liability insurance, which covers both trainees and voluntary helpers.
- We require students to keep to our Confidentiality Policy.
- We co-operate with students' tutors in order to help students to fulfil the requirements of their course of study.
- Before accepting a student, we provide a short induction on how our setting is managed, how our sessions are organised and our policies and procedures, including our safeguarding policy and procedures.
- We communicate a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
- We make the needs of the children paramount.
- We ensure that trainees and students placed with us long term are provided with the necessary background understanding of children's development and activities.

6.7 Working from home during the coronavirus outbreak

Playmates Pre-school Policies & Procedures

This Policy was adopted at a meeting Playmates Pre-school, held on: 27/04/2022

and is due for review by: 01/02/2023

Introduction

During the coronavirus outbreak Playmates Pre-school may ask staff to work partly or wholly from home. This arrangement will only be put in place where staff are able to work from home.

Staff who are asked to work from home will need to be mindful of:

- self-discipline
- the ability to work with less or no direct supervision
- increased attention to organisational skills
- managing their mental wellbeing
- managing time effectively
- the potentially conflicting demands of work and family

This policy aims to describe the home working arrangements that will apply during the coronavirus outbreak.

Hours of work

Staff working from home are required to work their usual work hours. Any deviation from these hours must be agreed by your line manager.

Staff must ensure that they take adequate rest breaks as required by the Working Time Regulations 1998. For full time staff this will normally be one hour and at least 20 minutes for part time staff, during which they must stop work.

Use of Conference Calls or Team Meetings online

Staff working from home are required to ensure that they have means of immediate communication available during their working hours so that they can be contacted.

Record keeping

Staff are expected to keep their line manager updated on their work.

Playmates Pre-school recognises that staff may not be able to carry out all their normal work tasks during the coronavirus and in line with the requirement for workers to be flexible and adaptable, Playmates Pre-school reserves the right to ask staff to carry out any other reasonable duties.

Visits to the setting's premises

Staff working from home are required, on request, to attend their normal workplace for essential tasks. This will be kept to a minimum. The dates and times of such visits will be agreed in advance.

Staff required to visit setting

Some staff will be required to continue to visit the setting as part of their role. In these circumstances necessary precautions must be taken by staff to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

Sickness

Staff must telephone their line manager as soon as possible, indicating the nature of the illness and expected duration of inability to work. The setting's normal sick pay policy and procedure will apply in these circumstances.

Annual leave

Staff must submit any annual leave requests in the normal way. The setting's normal annual leave policy and procedure will apply in these circumstances.

Maintaining contact

The setting expects staff working from home during the coronavirus outbreak to speak with their supervisor/line manager (or delegated person) once a day, for the purposes of:

- 1) providing a channel for reporting
- 2) performance monitoring and feedback
- 3) confirming current work activities being undertaken
- 4) general discussions about work-related matters
- 5) ensuring wellbeing, health, safety and security
- 6) any other work-related purposes that the setting considers appropriate

Equipment and materials

It is the homeworker's duty to ensure that proper care is taken of equipment and materials provided by the setting.

Telephone and printing costs

Playmates Pre-school will reimburse staff for all telephone calls and printing costs used in connection with the setting's business. A record of the costs must be provided if it is not possible to obtain a receipt. These expenses must be claimed on a monthly basis using the expenses claim form.

Stationery and postage

Staff are required to obtain receipts for any stationery purchased and any items posted in the course of their work and reclaim the costs once a month, using the expenses claim form.

Security

Staff who work from home are responsible for keeping all documents and information associated with the PlaymatesPre-school business secure at all times:

- keep all documentation belonging to the setting under lock and key at all times, except when in use
- ensure that passwords are kept secure for all digital devices.

Further, equipment provided by the setting must not be used by any other member of the family or third party at any time or for any purpose.

Health and safety issues

In order to consider the health and safety of staff working from home, during a pandemic, staff and line managers should discuss the following during their regular communication:

- equipment and systems of work in the employee's home are safe
- the employee's workstation
- information and training on the safe use of equipment, including display screen equipment
- consideration of any adjustments that can be made

All staff who work from home have a duty to ensure, insofar as is reasonably practicable, that they work in a safe manner and that they follow all health and safety instructions.

Insurance

Staff are responsible for checking that all home and contents insurance policies provide adequate cover for the fact that they work from home.

Protecting personal data

When processing personal information staff must follow strict rules called 'data protection principles'. They must make sure the information is:

- used fairly, lawfully and transparently
- used for specified, explicit purposes
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and limited to only what is necessary

Playmates Pre-school Policies & Procedures

This Policy was adopted at a meeting Playmates Pre-school, held on: 27/04/2022

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- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- kept for no longer than is necessary
- handled in a way that ensures appropriate security, including protection against unlawful or unauthorised processing, access, loss, destruction or damage

Managers are also required to carry out data protection impact assessments in line with the setting's policy in order to minimise or remove any risks to an acceptable level.

Policy compliance

A breach of this policy could lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

6.8 Flexible Working Policy

Policy statement

To ensure our setting is supporting its employees, and recognises the benefits of staff being given the opportunity to achieve a better work/life balance, we will consider applications for an altered working pattern provided the needs and objectives of the Setting and the employee can be met.

Procedure

We encourage open discussion with all employees and request that initially you have an informal conversation with the Pre-school Manager or Pre-school Leader, to consider all options before making a formal request.

Due to the needs of the business, we can only consider the following options, where possible:

- Job sharing – arrangements between 2 or more staff to cover the same role
- Part time – working less hours over a number of days
- Term time only – working within the boundaries of local authority term time

The needs of the organisation

The organisation is committed to providing appropriate working patterns. However, employees and management need to be realistic and to recognise that not all flexible working options will be appropriate for all roles.

Where a flexible working arrangement is requested the organisation will need to take into account a number of criteria including (but not limited to) the following:

- the costs associated with the request
- the effect of the proposed arrangement on other staff
- the need for, and effect on, supervision
- the existing structure
- the availability of staff resources
- details of the tasks specific to the role
- the workload of the role
- whether it is a request for a reasonable adjustment related to a disability
- health and safety issues

Eligibility

Any employee with at least 26 weeks of employment service has a statutory right to request flexible working.

Submitting a flexible working request

An eligible employee is entitled to submit one flexible working request in a 12 month period (an employee is entitled to additional requests if they relate to a statutory entitlement, for example the Equality Act 2010 right to request reasonable adjustments).

All requests must be made by email or letter and must include:

- the date of the application
- the changes that the employee is seeking to their terms and conditions
- the date from when the employee would like the proposed change to come into effect
- what effect the employee thinks the requested change would have on the organisation
- how, in their view, any such effect could be dealt with
- whether this is a statutory or non-statutory request
- whether a previous application for flexible working has been made
- the dates of any previous applications

If the employee is making the request in relation to the Equality Act, e.g. as a reasonable adjustment relating to a disability, this should be made clear in the application.

If an application does not contain all of the required information, Gail Gilbert or Mairlynn Hazeldine, will explain to the employee what additional or amended information they need to provide, and ask the employee to resubmit the request.

Meetings regarding flexible working

Upon receiving a written request for flexible working Gail Gilbert or Marilyn Hazeldine will arrange a meeting within 28 days of the organisation receiving the request. This time limit may be extended with the agreement of both parties.

At the meeting, both parties will:

- discuss the request
- find out more about the proposed working arrangements
- how it will benefit both the employee and organisation

The employee will be given advance notice of the time, date and place of the meeting. If the initial date is problematic then one further date will be proposed. If a face to face meeting is difficult to arrange then, if agreed by both parties, the meeting can be held over the telephone or a secure media platform.

At the meeting the employee may, if they wish, be accompanied by a workplace colleague or a trade union representative.

If the employee fails to attend a meeting and then fails to attend a rearranged meeting without good reason, their application will be deemed to have been withdrawn.

Where a request can, without further discussion, be approved a meeting to discuss the request may not be necessary. The employee will be informed of the organisation's agreement to the request by a confirmation letter as outlined in the section 'Responding to a flexible working request' within 28 days of the organisation receiving the request. This time limit may be extended with the agreement of both parties.

Responding to a flexible working request

The Pre-school Manager and/or Pre-school Leader will consider the proposed flexible working arrangements, looking at the potential benefits and adverse effects to the employee and to the organisation in implementing the proposed changes.

Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Agreeing to one request will not set a precedent or create the right for another employee to be granted a similar change to their working pattern.

The employee will be informed in writing of the organisation's decision as soon as is reasonably practicable, but no later than 14 days after the meeting.

The request may be granted in full, in part or refused. The organisation may propose a modified version of the request, the request may be granted on a temporary basis, or the employee may be asked to try the flexible working arrangement for a trial period.

If the request is agreed then the employee will be sent a confirmation letter which will include details of the new arrangements. The employee should contact the Pre-school Manager and/or Pre-school Leader within 14 days if they wish to discuss the new arrangements further, or have any concerns.

Right to appeal decision

The employee has the right to appeal the decision if their request is refused or is only agreed in part.

The employee may lodge an appeal within 14 days of being notified of a decision on their application. This should be done in writing and clearly state the grounds on which they are appealing. The appeal will be heard within 14 days.

The employee will then be informed of the outcome to their appeal within 14 days of the appeal meeting. These time limits may be extended with the agreement of both parties.

Trialling new working arrangements

Where there is some uncertainty about whether the flexible working arrangement is practicable for an employee and/or the organisation a trial period may be agreed. If a trial period is arranged the organisation will allow sufficient time for an employee and their manager to implement and become used to the new working practices before taking any decisions on the viability of a new arrangement.

Varying an employee's contract

Where flexible working practices are agreed as a permanent change, a variation will need to be made to the employee's contract of employment. A new contract of employment will be sent to the employee within 28 days of the change to the employee's working pattern being agreed.

If the employee has any questions or concerns about the new contract of employment, they should contact the Pre-school Manager to discuss the matter further.

Where a trial period has been arranged the organisation will provide the employee with a document that details their new working pattern and makes clear that it is only a temporary variation to the terms of the employee's contract. The employee will be informed in writing of the start and end dates of the trial period (although the organisation may reduce or lengthen the trial period where necessary with the agreement of the employee).

The organisation will reserve the right, at the end of the agreed trial period, to require the employee to revert to their previous working arrangement.

Complaints and further information

The organisation is strongly opposed to any form of victimisation of individuals who work, or request to work under flexible working arrangements.

If an employee feels that they have been treated unfairly or are dissatisfied with any stage of the flexible process, they should raise their concerns informally with the Pre-school Manager.

If informal discussions do not resolve the matter to an employee's satisfaction, they should raise a grievance with the Management Committee and under the organisation's grievance procedure.

For further information an employee should refer to the documents listed below.

Law relating to this document:

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Flexible Working Regulations 2014