

Employment of Suitable People Policy

Policy statement

At Stanmore Montessori we aim to have a high quality staff team that act at all times in the best interests of children's safety. We provide a staffing ratio in line with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation stage to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality. Our staff are appropriately qualified and we carry out checks in accordance with statutory requirements. We provide equal pay for work of equal value and comply with current legislation governing discrimination.

Procedures

Ratios

- We adhere to current staff child ratios as outlined by EYFS current statutory framework.
- A minimum of three staff/adults are on duty at any one time
- We use a key person approach to ensure that each child has a named member of staff with whom to form a relationship and who plans with parents for the child's well-being and development in the setting. The key person meets regularly with the parents for discussion and consultation on their child's progress.
- We hold regular staff meetings to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss children's progress, their achievements and any difficulties that may arise from time to time.

Vetting and staff selection

- All candidates reaching the interview stage are questioned using the same set criteria and questions. These cover specific areas of childcare, including safeguarding the children in their care, planning suitable activities to enhance the child's development and their understanding of the legal framework applied to childcare and used at Stanmore Montessori. The questions will be value based and will ensure the candidate has the same values as the setting with regard to the safety and welfare of the A unique child Positive relationships Enabling Learning and children in their care.
- All shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks
- The manager and leader will then select the most suitable person for this position based on their knowledge and understanding of the Early Years framework as well as the needs of the setting.
- Every candidate will receive communication from the setting stating whether they have been successful or not. Unsuccessful candidates are offered feedback.
- Copies of documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work and required qualifications are kept on their personnel file

Starting work

- The successful candidate will be offered the position subject to at least two references from previous employment or, in the case of a newly qualified student, their tutor and a personal or professional reference. These references will be taken up BEFORE employment commences. This may be verbal initially and then followed up with a written reference which will form part of their personnel file.
- The successful candidate will be asked to provide proof of their qualifications, where applicable. All qualifications will be checked and copies taken for their personnel files.
- Prior to employment but after the job has been offered a health check questionnaire will be given to the employee and its results will be taken into account in making an overall decision about suitability. Stanmore Montessori reserves the right to take any further advice necessary in relation to a person's physical and mental fitness to carry out their role. Please see the absence management policy for more details about how the setting manages health problems, including access to medical records.
- All new starters, other than those who have registered for the continuous updating service (see below), will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This will be initiated before the member of staff commences work in the setting and they will not have unsupervised access to any child or their records before this check comes back clear. Further to this, the new starter will not be allowed to take photographs of any child, look at their learning and development log or change the nappy of any child without an up-to-date enhanced DBS check (whether supervised or not)
- New starters are required to sign (either application form, contract or separate form) to state that they have no criminal convictions, court orders or any other reasons that disqualify them from working with children or unsuitable to do so; and that, to the best of their knowledge, no-one living in their household has been disqualified from working with children.
- All new members of staff will undergo an intensive induction period during which time they will read and discuss the setting policies and procedures and be assigned a 'mentor/buddy' who will introduce them to the way in which the setting operates.
- During their induction period all new staff will receive training on how to safeguard children in their care and follow the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection policy and procedure, emergency evacuation procedures, equality policy and health and safety issues
- The new member of staff will have regular meetings with the manager and their mentor during their induction period to discuss their progress.
- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection
- All staff have job descriptions which set out their staff roles and responsibilities.
- A terms and conditions of contract are given to every member of staff in employment (contract to be received by new employee within two months of commencement of employment).

- We strongly promote continuous professional development and all staff have individual training records and training plans to enhance their skills and expertise, based on discussions at supervision meetings and appraisal meetings.

To facilitate the development of staff we:

- Coach, lead and offer encouragement and support to achieve a high level of morale and motivations
- Promote teamwork through on-going communication, involvement and a no-blame culture to enhance setting practice.
- Encourage staff to contribute ideas for change within the setting and hold regular staff meetings to develop these ideas
- Encourage staff to pass on their knowledge to those who are less experienced and share knowledge from external training
- Offer on-going support and guidance
- We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered on the basis of their suitability for the post, regardless of marital status, age, gender, culture, religious belief, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by our imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.
- We use Ofsted guidance on obtaining references and enhanced criminal record checks DBS for staff and volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children.
- We keep all records relating to employment of staff and volunteers, in particular those demonstrating that checks have been done, including the date and number of the enhanced DBS check.
- All Stanmore Montessori staff will be informed by any staff awaiting enhanced DBS clearance.

Staff awaiting these checks will never

- Be left unsupervised whilst caring for children
- Change nappies or visit the children's toilet unsupervised
- Administer medicines or first aid
- Take photographs of the children
- Have access to children's personal details and records.

Whilst adhering to the above list, we recognise that it is vital that the staff member awaiting an enhanced DBS is made to feel part of the team and we support them fully in every other aspect of the setting.

We ensure every individual working with a child goes through a vigorous recruitment and induction procedure as the DBS disclosure is only one part of a suitability decision.

Changes to staff

We inform Ofsted of any changes in the person responsible for Stanmore Montessori.

Training and staff development

- We provide regular in-house training to all staff whether paid staff or volunteers, updating staff of changes in legislation, which may affect policies and procedures.
- We provide staff induction training in the first week of employment. This induction includes our Health and Safety Policy and Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy. Our policies and procedures will be introduced within an induction plan.
- We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervision meetings and appraisals.
- We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.

Managing staff absences and contingency plans for emergencies

- We have a policy outlining absence management procedure
- All staff must take their holiday breaks when Stanmore Montessori is closed. Where staff may need to take time off for any reason other than sick leave or training, this is to be agreed with the leader with sufficient notice.
- Where staff are unwell and take sick leave in accordance with their contract of employment, we organise cover to ensure ratios are maintained,
- Sick leave is monitored and action is taken where necessary in accordance with the contract of employment.
- We have contingency plans to cover staff absences and ensure the ratio is correct