

# 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*

- 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, disability, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by our imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.
- We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.
- We use the current EYFS statutory framework and Ofsted guidance on obtaining references and enhanced criminal record checks DBS for staff and volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children.
- 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 children, building positive relationships and providing enabling learning and environment for the 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.
- 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 and who has obtained it.
- Copies of documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work and required qualifications are kept on their personnel file.
- 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.

### ***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 by a written reference which will form part of their personnel file.
- We do not:
  - accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern.
  - accept references from a family member.
  - rely on applicants to obtain their reference.
- We ensure any references are from the applicant's current employer, training provider or education setting and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority. A reference is secured from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children. A verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment is obtained where the applicant is not currently employed. If the applicant has never worked with children, then a reference from their current employer, training provider or education setting is accepted.
- The legitimacy of electronic references is checked.
- Referees are contacted to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided. The information on the application form is compared with that in the reference and any discrepancies are discussed with the applicant.
- The reason for the applicant leaving their current or most recent post is established and any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.
- 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 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. All the staff will be informed about any staff awaiting enhanced DBS clearance. Further to this, the new starters will not be allowed to take photographs of any child, look at their learning and development log, change nappy or administer medicines or first aid to any child without an up-to-date enhanced DBS check.
- 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.
- The 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's practice.
- Encourage staff to contribute ideas for change within the setting and hold regular staff meetings to develop these ideas.
- We provide regular in-house training to all staff, whether paid staff or volunteers, updating staff to changes in legislation which may affect policies and procedures.

- Encourage staff to pass on their knowledge to those who are less experienced and share knowledge from external training.
- All staff are offered regular training courses on Safeguarding children and young people (with regards to Annex C of EYFS) and Pediatric First Aid training (Annex A of EYFS)
- Staff are offered CPD courses to update and enrich their knowledge and skills.
- We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervision meetings and appraisals and offer on-going support.

### ***Changes to staff***

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

### **Students and agency/supply staff**

- All students will receive an interview to ensure they are suitable for the nursery and an induction process to ensure they fully understand and are able to implement the nursery procedures, working practices and values
- All students will be fully supervised to ensure they receive the appropriate support, training and information they may require
- We request confirmation that all necessary checks have been completed by the agency before using any supply or agency staff. Once checks are obtained we record the DBS check reference number, the date the check was obtained and details of who obtained it
- We have a short induction prior to agency staff working with the children. It is our policy that all agency and supply staff are fully supervised and not left alone with children
- Students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios at the level below their level of study, if the provider is satisfied that they are competent and responsible.

## **Appendix 1 – Recruitment process sequencing**

Identify vacancy and role requirements and define duties, safeguarding responsibilities.

Prepare Job Description & Person Specification

Advertise position

Shortlist candidates

Introductory meeting on a Whatsapp video call

Interview in person in the setting by two members of staff

Request ID (e.g. passport, driving license)

Observation of candidate in a session at the setting

Offer Employment (Conditional)

(Subject to satisfactory checks)

References sought for candidate – minimum 2

Pre-Employment Checks

✓ Enhanced DBS with barred list

✓ Identity check

✓ Right to work in the UK

✓ Qualifications verified

✓ Health declaration

Decision communicated

Induction & Safeguarding Training

(Child protection policies, code of conduct

Probation & Ongoing Supervision

(Regular reviews and safeguarding oversight)

## **Appendix 2 – Recruitment questions – general guide**

- Tell me a bit about yourself
  - Qualifications
  - Experience
  - Current role
  - Where do you live?
- What do you know about the role and about Stanmore Montessori?
- Explain what Stanmore Montessori is looking for.
- Do you have experience with the specific requirements of the role, eg OFSTED, planning, reports, safeguarding, SEND etc?
- What values do you think are most important when caring for young children?
- Can you describe a time when you had to remain calm and mature in a challenging situation?
- Why do you want to work in a Montessori childcare environment?
- Inform the candidate of next steps

| <b>This policy was adopted on</b> | <b>Signed on behalf of the nursery</b> | <b>Date for review</b>  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>1 September 2026</i>           | <i>Nicky Quint</i>                     | <i>1 September 2027</i> |