

Team

Team behaviour policy

Sweet Peas Nursery has the following behavioural expectations of team members, which includes volunteers and students. These expectations should be read in line with our other policies and procedures, the Employee Handbook and each individual's Statement of Main Terms of Employment. These must be adhered to at all times.

- The best interests of the children, their welfare, safety, care and development are paramount. Children must be listened to.
- The requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and Working Together to Safeguard Children should be followed at all times.
- Children, parents/carers, colleagues, visitors and other professionals are to be treated equally and with respect. Team members should be a good role model and not show any bullying, derogatory, prejudicial, or discriminatory behaviour/language. If anyone else presents this type of behaviour it should be addressed or brought to management's attention. Action should be taken to prevent or address children displaying this behaviour towards each other.
- Children's developmental records and assessments must be current and kept up to date. They should not leave the nursery premises and team members should ensure sufficient information is shared with parents/carers about their child ensuring confidentiality is still maintained.
- Confidential information should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Team members should be wary of how they share information i.e. the environment/method that they disclose it in, storage of information and also that they maintain confidentiality outside work. If team members are unsure then they should clarify with management before sharing any information.
- Ratios must be maintained at all times, even if this means staying at work longer, especially where a parent/carer is late collecting their child. Children must be adequately supervised at all times.
- Team members must arrive promptly at work and be ready to start work at their start time. If they are going to be late due to unforeseen circumstances they must notify the nursery as soon as possible.

- Team members are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands, warnings or changes in circumstances which may affect their suitability to work with children.
- Team members should be careful not to conduct themselves in a way that leaves them open to allegations of inappropriate behaviour towards children when toileting them, comforting them or managing their behaviour.
- Team members should be alert to concerns and indicators of abuse and children's needs not being met, specifically in relation to extremism, various types of abuse, neglect and special educational needs and disabilities. Concerns should be raised through appropriate channels. Concerns of a child protection/safeguarding nature should be reported as per the nurseries current Safeguarding Handbook.
- Team members must not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at work and should inform management of any medication they are taking to ensure that they are safe to carry out their duties. Medication must be stored securely out of the reach of children.
- Sickness reporting procedures and exclusion periods must be followed.
- Team members' mobile phones must not be taken into nursery suites or used in the presence or sight of children and should be stored appropriately.
- Team members should practice safe internet, email and social media usage.
- Smoking is not permitted on the nursery premises or grounds, in uniform or in the presence or sight of children.
- Team members must be aware and keep themselves up to date with any allergies and dietary requirements children and fellow team members have.
- Steps should be taken to ensure the nursery premises are safe and secure. Gates and doors should not be left open, visitors should have their identities checked before being permitted entry and children must only be permitted to leave nursery with authorised persons.
- Team members must ensure the safety of themselves and others, by identifying and eliminating/controlling risks and following guidance and training.

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be used as instructed in induction, policies, risk assessments and COSHH safety data sheets. This includes using gloves and aprons when dealing with bodily fluids.
- Good hygiene must be practised and others including children must be encouraged to do the same.
- Uniform requirements must be adhered to during working time.

Expectations

- Fingernails should not be excessively long or painted with nail polish to reduce the risk of injury to children and Practitioners. Shellac is acceptable as this is less likely to chip.
- Jewellery is to be kept to a minimum to avoid being trapped or caught or cause injury. Apart from marital rings, the management team may request any jewellery that poses a risk be removed.
- Any visible tattoos that may cause upset, distressed or that could be deemed as inappropriate must always be covered. This will be at the discretion of the Nursery Manager.
- Team members are permitted to wear plain long sleeved tops that are skin coloured or the same colour as their uniform during colder months.

Practitioners who do not abide to this dress code will be reminded of the expectations and required to ensure that they are dressed appropriately for their following shift. If a team member persistently fails to comply with the dress code they will be asked to return home and change. This time out of the nursery will be unpaid. Continuing to choose to not follow this procedure will result in disciplinary action.

All Managers and Administrators are expected to dress professionally and appropriately, avoiding low cut tops and high rising hems and adhere to the nursery expectations as outlined above.

Selection and recruitment policy

The process of selection and recruitment must be fair, systematic, efficient and effective, ensuring equality of opportunity. Employees must be recruited in accordance with relevant statutory obligations.

Sweet Peas Nursery reserves the right to only offer employment to candidates with the desired skill set which has been demonstrated throughout the interview process.

Criteria

The criteria for selection will be based on relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes and physical ability to carry out the role and responsibilities as described in the current job description.

Record keeping and management

A record of the full process of recruitment and selection should always be made and maintained meticulously. It is the responsibility of the recruiting manager to ensure that records are kept; this includes notes of meetings, emails, telephone calls, copies of correspondence etc. All sensitive information should be treated confidentially and meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

Equal opportunities

We are committed to the fair treatment of our team, potential team members or users of our services regardless of race/ethnic origin, gender, gender reassignment, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents/pregnancy, age, marital status, or disability.

It is unlawful to refuse employment to someone on grounds relating to trade union membership, refusal to join a trade union or previous/current trade union activities.

Recruitment monitoring

In order that the effectiveness of our recruitment policy can be monitored, applicants are asked to provide information for monitoring purposes. The

information will not be used as selection criteria but it will provide information needed for monitoring our equality commitment.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all who demonstrate the knowledge, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records (with the exception of any record which may indicate a Safeguarding risk to children, team members or the company). We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Sweet Peas Nursery complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed. When applying for a DBS check, government guidance on the relevant and appropriate documents to be used is strictly adhered to.

Where a DBS check is to form part of the recruitment process we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person with Sweet Peas Nursery and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

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 DBS check aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available on request. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS check with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Permission to work in the United Kingdom

Sweet Peas Nursery observes its legal obligations in checking the right to work in the UK when employing all team members.

The Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for an employer to employ those who do not have permission to live or to work in the United Kingdom. Each advertisement will state that employment will only be offered to those who can provide proof of the right to work in the UK.

During the recruitment and selection process, the nursery will always comply with the most current government guidance as to rights to work.

Recruitment process

Stage 1: Recruitment need identified

Once a recruitment need has been identified a job score card and job description will be created or updated if necessary. A person specification will also be considered. This will include but is not limited to details of desired skills, knowledge and experience and personal qualities relevant to the role.

Person specification (PS)

It is also important to consider the skills and personal attributes needed to perform the role effectively. A person specification states the essential and desirable criteria for selection. This is based on a set of competencies identified as necessary for the performance of the job. The person specification should be used to inform the criteria you use to short-list applicants.

In general, specifications should include details of:

- Skills, aptitude, knowledge and experience.
- Qualifications – which should be only those necessary to do the job.
- Personal qualities relevant to the job, such as ability to work as part of a team members.

Drafting job advert

Job advertisements will be clear and will outline the key responsibilities of the role and essential qualifications. It will include the job specifications such as full time, permanent etc and details of how to apply.

Stage 2: Publishing the vacancy

We always seek to develop our team and therefore would always advertise any new opportunities in house before opening the opportunity up to external application.

Stage 3: Selecting applicants for interview

All applications will be considered against the person specification and essential qualifications. Applicants taken forward to the interview process will be emailed a copy of the job description for the role they have applied for and details of the interview process. Unsuccessful applicants will be emailed to confirm they have not been successful.

Stage 4: The interview

Our interview process consists of 3 components which are a planning exercise, a one to one knowledge based interview and a skills test which all take place on the same day.

Planning exercise

This will consist of the candidate being asked to email planning for an activity they would like to carry out for their skills test. This may be completed in any format of the candidates choosing and must be linked to relevant areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Knowledge based interview

Where possible there will be two interviewers present, however on occasions it may only be one. Where it is only one interviewer this will be the Director of the business or the Manager. It is our intention that all interviews are conducted in a relaxed and informal manner that aims to put candidates at ease to encourage their best response. The candidate will be invited to talk through their current CV and relevant experience before being asked questions in relation to the job requirements. These will be set questions to ensure fair process but may be updated from time to time to consider new guidelines and requirements. No discriminatory questions will be asked, however, the interviewer will be given the opportunity to ask any questions they feel relevant in the process.

Skills test

The candidate will carry out a skills test under the observation of a member of the management team and where possible the Lead Nursery Teacher. On occasion a Senior Child Care Practitioner may be asked to assist with this process to aid their professional development and offer their own feedback. This is where the candidate will deliver the activity they had planned for before evaluating this and writing a general observation on a child during their play.

Stage 5: Feedback and Decision Making

On completion of the skills test the candidate is invited to meet with both the interviewers from the knowledge based questions and the interviewer who observed the skills test where feedback will be shared. The candidate will be informed of the timeline for the decision process. The management team will confer and make a decision as to whether to offer employment.

Stage 6: Interview Outcome and Making an Offer

The Manager will inform the successful candidate orally and will follow up the offer in writing, once the individual has verbally accepted. Unsuccessful candidates will be informed subsequently by telephone where additional feedback will be offered.

The necessary employment checks will be carried out including:

- Employment references.
- Qualifications check.
- DBS Check.
- Permission to work in the UK document check, and approval from the Home Office (if required).

Safer recruitment & suitability of team

Sweet Peas Nursery practices robust recruitment and selection procedures in checking the suitability of team members, volunteers and students to work with children.

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- Be willing and able to discuss any gaps of employment in their current CV.

- Provide two referees, including their most recent employer. If this employer is not able to comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children, we will still request a reference before looking at the most recent place of employment where the applicant worked with children or vulnerable adults to provide a reference.
- Provide evidence of identity, qualifications and the right to work in the UK as per the DBS ID Process & the Home Office requirements.
- We record all information about team members qualifications, identity checks, right to work and vetting processes that have been completed including the enhanced DBS check for regulated activity reference number, the date a disclosure was obtained and who obtained it.

We are committed to ensuring that all team members, including students are suitable to work with children. We have systems in place to ensure all team members are suitable to work with or be in regular contact with children. This includes making a decision about suitability as part of the recruitment process and monitoring continued suitability as part of regular team members or student supervision.

The Manager is responsible for ensuring that all team members and students have an enhanced check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), and that the results of such check are assessed as part of a decision on suitability. Where possible team members will have the checks completed prior to starting employment. However if there are delays in checks coming through, as a last resort team members may work in the nursery before these checks are completed as long as they are supervised at all times by team members who already hold an enhanced check and the check has been applied for. All team members will be informed of any team members awaiting enhanced DBS clearance.

Team members awaiting these checks will never:

- Be left unsupervised whilst caring for children.
- Change nappies or take children to the toilet.

Whilst ensuring all of the above are adhered to, we recognise that it is vital that the team members member awaiting an enhanced disclosure is made to feel part of the team and participate fully in every other aspect of the nursery day.

All team members are responsible for notifying the Manager in person if any there are any changes to their circumstances that may affect their suitability

to work with children. This includes any incidents occurring outside the nursery or involving people they live in a household with.

Disclosure & Barring Update Service

It is the policy of Sweet Peas Nursery to enhance our safeguarding process and reduce risks. To achieve this, when an employee's DBS certificate is due for rechecking, a DBS check will be carried out at the expense of the employee and the employee will be advised to subscribe to the DBS update service.

All employees must notify the Manager of any cautions and convictions imposed upon them during their employment at the earliest opportunity.

Update Service Status Checks (results)

When Sweet Peas Nursery carries out an annual online status check of a DBS certificate, we will receive one of the following status results:

- The DBS Certificate did not reveal any information and remains current, as no further information has been identified since issue. (Current and Valid). This means the original certificate was empty and no new information has been added.
- This DBS Certificate remains current as no further information has been identified since its issue. (Current and valid). This means the original certificate had something minor and insignificant on it but nothing new has been added.
- This DBS Certificate is no longer current. Please apply for a new DBS check to get the most up to date information. (Not Current, Not Valid). Should we receive this status report, the employee will be suspended on full pay immediately whilst we check with the DBS to see if the individual is barred using the Early Confirmation of barring. This process should take 5 working days.
- The details entered do not match those held on our system, please check and try again. (Not valid). This means the individual is not subscribed to the Update Service, the individual has unsubscribed themselves from the service, or the information submitted was inaccurate.

Induction procedure

Team members will undertake an induction upon starting employment to ensure that they are aware of their role, responsibilities and expectations and to help them feel comfortable and welcomed into the setting. It will take up to two weeks for a team member to be fully inducted.

At the initial induction the following things will be covered:

- All relevant forms regarding employment will be completed, including personnel details.
- Details of job role and responsibilities.
- Policies and procedures, if these have not been completed before the start date.
- The routine of the room that they will initially be working in.
- Health and safety.
- Most importantly, safeguarding.

All new team members are employed with an initial six months probationary period. This will include a review of welfare and progress, practical observations such as peer on peer observations and will look at the team member's planning and observations etc. At the end of the probationary period the Nursery Manager will review their performance and commitment to the nursery and a decision will be made on employment.

Appraisals

Appraisals are held annually by the Nursery Manager and for most team members this is in October. If this date differs for any reason the team member/s will be informed. Prior to the appraisal meeting team members will be given their appraisal document to complete sections on self-reflection and will be asked to bring all other relevant paperwork. The appraisal is a time for the Nursery Manager to review practice against the team member's job score card for their role. Regular coaching and action plans will be put in place throughout the year where necessary.

Team member qualifications, training, support and skills

The daily experience of children in early year's settings and the overall quality of provision depends on all team members having appropriate qualifications, training, skills and knowledge and that they have a clear understanding of their

roles and responsibilities. Our team members receive a thorough induction to help them understand their roles and responsibilities and have an understanding of their personal development. Our induction training includes information about all of our policies and procedures especially emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding and child protection, equality, health and safety issues. We will support team members to undertake appropriate training and professional development opportunities to enable them to offer quality learning and development experiences for children.

Our Nursery Manager holds at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification and at least half of all our other team members hold at least a relevant level 2 qualification. Our Manager has at least two years experience of working in an early years setting. Our Deputy Manager is fully capable and qualified to take charge in the Manager's absence.

At least one person with a current paediatric first aid certificate will be on the premises and available at all times when children are present and will accompany children on any outing they may go on. Paediatric first aid training is relevant for workers caring for young children and babies. We take into account the number of children, team members and layout of the premises to ensure that a paediatric first aider is able to respond to emergencies quickly.

Sweet Peas Nursery ensures that team members have sufficient understanding and use of English to ensure the wellbeing of children in their care. All team members at Sweet Peas Nursery are in a position to keep records, to liaise with other agencies, to summon emergency help and to understand instructions such as those for the safety of medicines or food hygiene.

Team members arrival & departure

All team members are required to sign in when they enter the building and sign out when they leave the building for any reason. We currently operate two forms of signing in which are electronically and on paper and both must be completed. It is not acceptable to do only one method.

All team members must be in their room and ready to start their shift at the allocated time.

Team members working with their own children

At Sweet Peas our employees are able, should they choose to do so, to register their children to attend our setting. Any Practitioner who chooses to do so would be expected to carry out their professional duties and maintain a

professional relationship with the Practitioners that care for their child. If for any reason a Practitioner feels that working closely with their child may cause disruption they are encouraged to speak openly to the management team where all options will be explored.

Once a child is registered under our care all policies and procedures relating to the care of children must be adopted by all Practitioners within the setting. If at any time the care or development of a particular child was negatively impacted upon due to the relationship between them and a Practitioner we would seek to move the Practitioner to ensure the child is able to remain in the room best suited to support their developmental stage.

Although we would not wish to restrict a parent from seeing their child we must consider the daily routine and the upset that a visit may cause the child when their parent leaves the room again. For example, if the parent was to visit on their lunch break. This will be agreed and reviewed by a member of management and the Senior Child Care Practitioner/s to cause as little upset as possible to the children in our care.

Practitioners will be reminded to maintain the strictest of confidence of all children at all times and to maintain a professional relationship with employees who are also parents/carers within the setting. Practitioners must strive to deliver the same level of care to all children and parents/carers, regardless of their being employed at the setting.

Special consideration for employees

We recognise that certain employees such as young persons, new and expectant mothers and persons with a disability require special consideration under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 and the Equality Act 2010. The Health and Safety Policy should have regard to such persons both at the commencement of employment and during the course of it. The following procedure is therefore set down to achieve this aim.

Procedure

Any employee requiring special consideration will be assessed by the Manager and in conjunction with the individual on induction to the nursery or when their condition comes to light. The risk assessments relating to the occupation of such workers will be considered at these times and special measures such as training and supervision, arrangements, modifications and medical surveillance, if necessary, will be agreed with the worker.

Further assessments and reviews will be carried out at least annually, or if and when any changes to the special circumstances or environment occur.

Team member breaks

Senior Child Care Practitioners are responsible for the arrangement of breaks throughout the day, ensuring that ratios are always maintained. All breaks should be taken away from the nursery suites. Team members are free to leave the building or use the break room facilities provided.

Young persons

The school leaving age is 18 years, however young people can leave school on the last Friday in June if they turn 16 by the end of that summer holiday but then must stay in full time education e.g. college, start an apprenticeship/traineeship or work/volunteer more than 20 hours while in part time education/training until the age of 18.

They are entitled to 30 minute rest breaks if they work more than 4.5 hours, daily rest of 12 hours and weekly rest of 48 hours. Young workers are entitled to compensatory rest which is rest that they should have had but have missed, and must be of the same amount that they missed, taken within 3 weeks.

Team members absence & leave

Sweet Peas firmly believes that the health of our team members is of paramount importance. We aim to make Sweet Peas a safe and healthy place for children, parents, team members and volunteers. We do our utmost to prevent or reduce sickness or illness by:

- Having hand wash facilities and encouraging team members to wash hands regularly (soap/hand wash provided).
- Disposing of waste appropriately i.e. hand towels.
- Providing personal protective equipment i.e. gloves and aprons provided when changing children who have diarrhoea - or are extremely messy.

As well as these measures, we do daily, monthly and yearly risk assessments to ensure the workplace is safe and secure for team members as well as children. We provide information about manual handling and follow safety procedures throughout the day such as putting out the wet floor sign.

All team members upon successful appointment are asked to fill out a 'health declaration' form before commencing work. This gives us an idea of any illness that may be reoccurring or any health problems that we should be aware of. We will not discriminate against anyone with health issues and do our utmost to make adjustments for all team members with health problems.

Absence and Absence Requests

At Sweet Peas Nursery we use HR Online to assist with human resources. Once a team member has started employment with us they will be emailed a link to their own individual account where they will be asked to set up a password.

We use HR Online to record sickness, latenesses and all absences.

All requests for time off should therefore be made through HR Online. This includes time off for annual leave, appointments, compassionate leave etc.

Team members should be aware of the following guidelines for requesting absences.

- Annual leave requests are required a minimum of two weeks in advance.
- Where an absence request is made for appointments as much notice as possible is requested and a copy of the appointment letter may be requested. This should be verbally agreed with Management before being submitted through HR Online.
- Annual leave requests are to be submitted on a Wednesday via HR Online.
- Within two weeks of an absence being requested, there will be one of the following outcomes;
 - The request will be approved.
 - The request will be declined.
 - The team member may be informed that at the time of the request it is unable to be approved. However, if circumstances change closer to the time, it may be able to be approved. It will then be that team member's choice as to whether they would like the absence declining and to be able request the hours

elsewhere, or to keep the request pending until closer to the time.

- There will be no maximum number of team members able to have absences at any one time. Each request will be looked at individually and decided against the predicted ratios and what the needs of the nursery will be around the time the absence request is for.
- To enable us to 'future plan' we request that around 75% of a team member's absence entitlement is booked before the 31st July. **These absences may be taken at any time in the year** but we would like to know when the absence time will be taken. For example, a team member may have absences booked for August - December but we would be aware of this before July 31st. This will enable us to cover the absence in advance. The team member would still have 25% of entitlement, equivalent to one week for a full time team member, to use as they need for any plans they are unaware of at the time of the 31st July.
- All absence requests should be completed with the correct date and correct times of the absence to start and finish. Any requests submitted without the correct information will automatically be refused. The start time should be 8am and the end time 6pm if the team member usually works a 9.25 hour shift.
- All absence requests for the Christmas holiday period will be considered by the Nursery Manager who will approve requests in the fairest manner possible with the intention of all team members being able to have some time off during that period.
- It is a team member's responsibility to ensure they are aware of their annual leave entitlement and do not request over and above that allowance. This allowance may be adjusted throughout the year subject to any changes to contracts or days off.

Entitlement is calculated on an accrual basis and therefore should a team member leave employment with nursery part way through a year it may be that they have taken more leave than they are entitled to. In these circumstances the difference will be deducted from their final salary. Alternatively, a team member may have entitlement outstanding and where they are unable to take this time before their final leave date they will be paid for the accrued entitlement in their final salary.

Fitness to Work Policy

If team members are unwell they are encouraged to seek medical guidance and rest where appropriate to ensure that on their return to work they feel able to fulfil their duties to the best of their ability. All team members must refer and adhere to our Communicable Diseases, Exclusion Periods and Immunisation Policy.

Reporting an Absence

If a team member is going to be absent from nursery for any reason the following procedure must be followed:

- Call the nursery between 7.15 am and 7.30 am to alert the nursery to the absence. No personal details are expected to be provided at this point.
- Call the nursery at 8.00 am to speak to a member of the senior management team to discuss the cause for the absence and any action to be taken.
- Call the nursery no later than 4.00 pm on each day of absence prior to the team member's next working shift to allow for alternative cover to be arranged for any ratio needs. If a team member does not call nursery to inform a member of management that they are expecting to return to work the next day (even if the Statement of Fitness for Work Certificate has expired) this may result in the team member being sent home from work unpaid for the day as alternative staffing arrangements may have already been made at a cost to the nursery.
- If a team member is going to be absent for a period beyond 7 days then a Statement of Fitness for Work signed by a GP/doctor should be submitted to management promptly. Team members are not required to call nursery daily during this period, however they must inform management of their expected return as per reporting requirements.

On Return to Work

On the first day of return to work the team member will complete a Return to Work and Self Certification Form if applicable. Any concerns regarding a team member's sporadic absences or failure to follow the absence reporting procedure will be raised and recorded at that point. Persistent failures to

adhere to the reporting procedure may result in disciplinary action being invoked.

Absence Monitoring

To ensure reliability and consistency for our team and our parents / carers and children we monitor the attendance levels of all our team members. Review meetings will be held with individual team members if they have 3 separate periods of absence within a 12 week period. The intention of the review procedure is to discuss the reason for absence levels and to discuss ways in which attendance can be improved. If there is no improvement then a team member may be subject to disciplinary action. The team member has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or a Trade Union Representative and the team member should make the necessary arrangements to have someone present at the meeting should they so require.

Initial Meeting

The Nursery Manager will write to the team member to arrange a meeting at a convenient time, date and venue. They will be provided with details of the absence record prior to the meeting. At the meeting, the attendance record will be discussed, the reasons for absence/s, any help or support we can offer to improve attendance if relevant and the necessary improvement required. If the absence is likely to be continuous over a long period of time the procedures for dealing with Long Term Sickness will be followed. Should any underlying health conditions be identified, the absence will be dealt with following the guidelines for Underlying Health Conditions. Should the meeting not highlight any underlying health conditions for the absences, the team member will be informed that attendance levels need to improve. Review meetings will be arranged at regular intervals, following the Sporadic Absence Procedures, until attendance reaches an acceptable level. Should there be no improvement at the subsequent meetings, then the disciplinary process will be invoked.

Long Term Sickness Absence

If a team member is off work sick for a continuous period of 4 weeks we will normally contact them with a view to arranging an informal welfare meeting at a convenient time, date and location. We will meet the team member at

their home, at work or at a location suitable to both parties. They have the right to be accompanied at the informal meeting by a friend or relative if they wish.

The aim of the meeting is to keep in touch with events at work, to discuss the absence and offer any relevant support.

We aim to keep in regular contact with the team member and hold regular meetings over the period of absence.

Dependent upon the circumstances of the absence, we may, when appropriate, ask permission to contact a medical professional for a report on the incapacity.

Upon receipt of this report we will meet again to discuss fully the contents of the report and any implications arising from it. We will determine what support and/or reasonable adjustments we can make to assist in the team member's return to work in the future.

If it is evident from the report and our discussions with the team member, that a return to work is not possible in the foreseeable future we may have to consider a termination of contract. This would be a last resort. If the decision is made to terminate the contract the team member will be paid in lieu of notice. The team member will have the right to appeal against the decision if they feel it was unfair and details of how to appeal will be detailed in a letter.

Underlying Health Conditions

If, at any time during the initial meeting or any subsequent review meeting, an underlying health condition is identified we may, dependent upon the condition, continue with the Sporadic Absence Process or we may ask the team member for permission to contact a medical professional (either their GP, anyone else who is treating them or we may consult an Occupational Health Advisor) to determine the extent of the incapacity.

Upon receipt of this report, we would meet with the team member further to discuss the report and any implications arising from it. We would consider what support we could offer and any reasonable adjustments that could be made to assist attendance at work.

If the level of attendance is still unacceptable and we have exhausted all other viable options we may need to consider a termination of contract on the grounds of ill-health but this would be a last resort.

If the decision is made to terminate the contract, the team member will be paid in lieu of notice. They will have the right to appeal against the decision if they feel it was unfair and details of how to appeal will be detailed in a letter.

Sporadic Absence

First Review – 8 weeks after initial review

Management will write to the team member to arrange a meeting at a convenient time, date and venue. They have the right to be accompanied by a team member or a Trade Union representative at this meeting should they so wish. The team member will be provided with details of the absence record prior to the meeting.

At the meeting we will discuss the attendance record, the reasons for absence/s, any help we can offer to improve attendance and what improvement is necessary.

Should any underlying health conditions be identified, the absence will be dealt with following the guidelines for Underlying Health Conditions.

If attendance has not improved to an acceptable level and should no underlying health conditions be highlighted the team member will be issued with a Formal Verbal Warning for the level of absence. They will have the right to appeal against this warning, details of which will be given in the letter detailing the warning. The team member will be informed that they will need to attend a further meeting in 8 weeks time to review the attendance further.

If attendance has improved to the required level, no disciplinary action will be taken at this time. The team member will be informed that they will need to attend a further meeting in 8 weeks time to review the attendance further.

Second Review (8 weeks after the first review)

Management will write to the team member to arrange a meeting at a convenient time, date and venue. The team member has the right to be accompanied by a team member or Trade Union representative at this

meeting should they so wish. The team member will be provided with details of the absence record prior to the meeting.

At the meeting we will discuss the attendance record, the reasons for absence/s, any help we can offer to improve attendance and what improvement is necessary.

Should any underlying health conditions be identified, the absence will be dealt with following the guidelines for Underlying Health Conditions (detailed later in this document).

If the attendance has not improved to an acceptable level and should no underlying health conditions be highlighted the team member will be issued with a Formal Written Warning for the level of absence. They will have the right to appeal against this warning, details of which will be given in the letter detailing the warning. The team member will be informed that they will need to attend a further meeting in 8 weeks time to review the attendance further.

If attendance has improved to the required level, no further disciplinary action will be taken at this time. The team member will be informed that they will need to attend a further meeting in 8 weeks time to review the attendance further.

If attendance has reached the required level at the second and third reviews, the team member will no longer be subject to attend further review meetings.

Third Review (8 weeks after second review)

Management will write to the team member to arrange a meeting at a convenient time, date and venue. The team member has the right to be accompanied by a team member or Trade Union representative at this meeting should they so wish. The team member will be provided with details of the absence record prior to the meeting.

At the meeting we will discuss the attendance record, the reasons for the absence/s, any help we can offer to improve attendance and what improvement is necessary.

Should any underlying health conditions be identified, the absence will be dealt with following the guidelines for Underlying Health Conditions (detailed later in this document).

If attendance has not improved to an acceptable level and should no underlying health conditions be highlighted the team member will be issued with a Final Written Warning for the level of absence. (If the team member received no Formal Written Warning at the last meeting they will be issued with a Formal Written Warning at this stage).

The team member will have the right to appeal against this warning, details of which will be given in the letter detailing the warning. The team member will be informed that they will need to attend a further meeting in 8 weeks time to review attendance further.

If attendance has improved to the required level, no further disciplinary action will be taken at this time. The team member will be informed that they will need to attend a further meeting in 8 weeks time to review their attendance further.

If their attendance has reached the required level at the second and third reviews, the team member will no longer be subject to attend further review meetings.

Fourth Review Meeting (8 weeks after third meeting)

Management will write to the team member to arrange a meeting at a convenient time, date and venue. The team member has the right to be accompanied by a team member or Trade Union representative at this meeting should they so wish. They will be provided with details of their absence record prior to the meeting.

At the meeting we will discuss the attendance record, the reasons for absence/s, any help we can offer to improve attendance and what improvement is necessary.

Should any underlying health conditions be identified, the absence will be dealt with following the guidelines for Underlying Health Conditions (detailed later in this document).

If attendance has not improved to an acceptable level and should no underlying health conditions be highlighted the team member may be dismissed. The team member will have the right to appeal against the dismissal, details of which will be given in the letter detailing the dismissal.

If the team member received no Final Written Warning at the last meeting they will be issued with a Final Written Warning at this stage. The team member will have the right to appeal against this action, details of which will be given in the letter detailing the Final Written Warning. The team member will be informed that they will need to attend a further meeting in 8 weeks time to review their attendance further.

If attendance has improved to the required level, no further disciplinary action will be taken at this time. The team member will be informed that they will need to attend a further meeting in 8 weeks time to review attendance further.

If attendance has reached the required level at the second and third reviews, the team member will no longer be subject to attend further review meetings.

Fifth Review (8 weeks after fourth review)

Management will write to the team member to arrange a meeting at a convenient time, date and venue. The team member has the right to be accompanied by a team member or Trade Union representative at this meeting should they so wish. The team member will be provided with details of the absence record prior to the meeting.

At the meeting we will discuss the attendance record, the reasons for absence/s, any help we can offer to improve attendance and what improvement is necessary.

Should any underlying health conditions be identified, the absence will be dealt with following the guidelines for Underlying Health Conditions (detailed later in this document).

If attendance has not improved to an acceptable level and should no underlying health conditions be highlighted the team member may be dismissed. The team member will have the right to appeal against the dismissal, details of which will be given in the letter detailing the dismissal.

If attendance has improved to the required level, no further disciplinary action will be taken at this time. The team member will be informed that they will need to attend a further meeting in 8 weeks time to review attendance further.



If attendance has reached the required level at the third and fourth reviews, the team member will no longer be subject to attend further review meetings.

Subsequent Review Meetings

Should there be further cause for concern regarding attendance levels, the above reviews may be continued or the process started again.

Timesheets

As per our company Handbook all team members are required to complete and submit accurate timesheets. All timesheets must be completed daily and stored alphabetically in the timesheet folder, which is kept at reception.

The information on the timesheets must be correct to the best of a team member's knowledge, with any appropriate notes included on the reverse.

Timesheets which are untidy or incomplete will be returned for re-completion.

Timesheets should be ready for collection every 4 weeks unless informed otherwise.

Timesheets will be checked weekly to ensure this procedure has been followed and to offer any advice. This advice must be respected and actioned, if appropriate, as soon as possible. Continuous failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

Any timesheets that are not ready to be approved by each deadline will be passed back to the team members, which may result in incorrect or delayed payment of wages.

Any team members who work more or less than their usual working pattern of the week must also email the administrative team and inform them of this immediately.

Any team members who are unable to accurately complete their timesheet must seek support from the administrative team or management at the earliest possibility.

Right to search

This policy will define the company philosophy regarding the rights of nursery management to search persons and personal property during work:



- Management of the nursery reserves the right to take all reasonable precautions to safeguard the resources of the nursery at all times. This can include the right to institute a random search of an employee's identity, person and property at any time while that person is on duty and on the nursery premises. This may include the employee's vehicle.
- The reasons for random searches will be explained to each employee. It is emphasised that requesting an employee to undergo a search does not necessarily imply suspicion, nor is it an accusation of guilt.
- Any employee reserves the right to refuse to be searched.
- The employee who has been requested to be searched has the right to have a work colleague present during the time of the search, and any subsequent internal investigative questioning that takes place.
- The mechanics of a search may involve requesting that the employee removes the contents of their pockets, bags and briefcases. For vehicles this may involve a search of the boot, glove compartment and under the seats.
- The nursery management reserves the right to call the police at any stage of the search.

Capability, Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures

These procedures can be found within the Employee Handbook, however they are not contractual and may be subject to updating. Where the handbook has been updated, employees will be directed to these updates.

Whistle blowing policy

Whistle blowing is when a member of team members chooses to raise concerns about misconduct within the nursery or give information about illegal or underhand practices, either to their employer or an outside agency.

Our aims

- Encourage team members to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice.
- Provide avenues for team members to raise those concerns and be aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied.

- The Nursery Manager will reassure them that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have made their disclosure in reasonable belief.
- There are existing procedures in place to enable team members to raise a grievance relating to their employment and procedures.
- All reports will be investigated and dealt with in confidence, including only those team members on a 'need to know' basis.

Safeguards

- The Nursery Manager makes it clear that team members can speak without fear of harassment, victimisation or discrimination.
- It is recognised that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. (If what they are saying is true, team members should have nothing to fear because they will be doing their duty to their employer and those for whom they are providing a service).
- Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary or other procedures that already affect the member of the team.

Any employee who is involved in victimising employees who make a disclosure or takes any action to deter employees from disclosing information may be subject to disciplinary action which may result in dismissal.

Failure to report serious matters will also be investigated and potentially lead to disciplinary action which may result in dismissal.

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to all employees of Sweet Peas Nursery. This includes students and volunteers, who should be aware of how to raise their concerns appropriately through the use of this policy. Sweet Peas Nursery actively seeks an honest and open relationship with parents/carers and as such they are additionally encouraged to express any concerns they may have around practice.

What should be reported?

It is important to consider that this list is not final, and that there are many other reasons as to why you may raise a potential concern. These could include:

- Actions which cause or could cause significant harm to a child or vulnerable person.
- Employees failing to meet their contracted roles and responsibilities.
- Malpractice or mistreatment in dealing with any party within the nursery, which may lead to endangering health and safety expectations.
- A criminal offence which is actual or potential.
- Failure to adhere to any legal obligations.
- Misuse of money within the nursery.
- Abuse of power or position.
- Actions which cause damage to the environment.
- Actions intended to conceal any of the above.

Who to speak to?

It is important to carefully consider the best member of the team to raise your concern with. The person who you speak to will depend on the nature of your concern. It should be a member of the team that is not involved with your concern. The first person you would speak to would be your room Senior, however if the concern is around this person, you will need to look to a suitable member of higher seniority. If the concern is relating to a safeguarding matter involving a team member this must be taken to the DLP immediately.

How to raise a concern?

It is important that when raising a concern, you do so in a manner that is confidential. When you speak to the relevant person, it will need to happen in an environment that is private to safeguard those involved.

As you raise your concern, you may find that the person you are discussing it with will record key points or ask another senior member of team members to. It is important that as you raise your concern you are able to provide full details around the concern, such as name(s), date(s) and an accurate account of the issue.

Depending on the nature of concerns, they may have to be passed on or reported to:

- The Manager
- The Director
- LADO
- Ofsted

However, the number of people involved will be on a 'need to know' basis. All of this will then help management deal with and investigate the concern.

It is acceptable for a team member to raise their concern anonymously in writing by sending a letter to any of the people identified above. In order to protect all members of team members involved, certain safeguards are in place. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout raising the concern and investigating the concern. This is to protect identities and to ensure that there are no situations in which the team member may become victimised or subject to harassment. It is therefore important that the person raising the concern discusses it only within meetings with senior members of the team. This is to protect them and additionally the team members they have concerns about. If confidentiality is not maintained this could result in disciplinary action being taken.

Investigation process

The investigation of the concern may depend on the seriousness of the concern. Investigations reported within the setting, will be conducted within the setting, although information may be passed onto outside parties such as:

- Ofsted
- Police
- Social Care
- LADO
- Local Safeguarding Children's Board

Unfounded or malicious allegations

It is also important to note that no actions will be taken against any members of team members who raise concerns which are found to be unfounded and untrue within an investigation. However, during an investigation, should any concerns raised by an employee be found to be malicious, disciplinary action may be taken against them.

Feedback to the employee making the concern

Sweet Peas Nursery values the importance of dealing with all concerns and actively investigates them with a view of always striving for the best possible practice. We accept the importance of ensuring that the person reporting the concern will need to know that the matter had been addressed and will, within reason, ensure that they are consulted with regard to the matter. If an employee or other party raising a concern is not satisfied with the way that the situation has been dealt with they may wish to look for higher parties to consider the concern.

Whistle blowing using Ofsted Hotline

To contact the hotline call:

0300 123 3155 (Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 18.00)

Email: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

Or write to WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD.

A charity called 'Public Concern at Work' give free and confidential advice and can help you decide whether and/or how to raise concerns at work. You can call Public Concern at Work on 0207 404 6609, email helpline@pcaw.co.uk or visit www.pcaw.co.uk/law/uklegislation.htm for useful information about whistle blowing legislation.

All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding person and/or Manager. Complaints about the Designated Safeguarding person/Manager should be reported to the Director/owner and/or Ofsted.

All team members should be aware that the policy will apply where they reasonably believe that the information disclosed and any information contained in it is substantially true.

Procedure for making a whistle blowing complaint (protected disclosure)

A team member wanting to make a whistle blowing complaint should do so in writing clearly stating that they are making a whistle blowing complaint. This clearly identifies the nature of the complaint and enables the setting to acknowledge the complaint within 48 hours.

If an action of Gross Misconduct is suspected

If an allegation is raised against a team member or if there is reason to believe that any gross misconduct has happened on a team member's behalf:

- The member of our team will be escorted by the Nursery Manager/Managing Director/Directors off the premises.
- The member of team concerned will be suspended with full pay, pending a full enquiry.
- In the event of a Director being the accused, the Nursery Manager would take full responsibility of the Nursery.
- In the event of the Nursery Manager being the accused, the Directors and/or the Deputy Manager would take full responsibility of the Nursery
- In the event of the Deputy Manager being the accused, the Nursery Manager would take full responsibility of the Nursery.
- Relevant people should be contacted, Police, Social Care, Local Authority Designated Officer Ted O'Sullivan 0113 253 4968 or Caroline Hargreaves, carolyn.hargreaves@leeds.gov.uk and Ofsted on 0300 123 1231 within 24 hours. We would follow this up in writing. Effort should be made to contact all these services/bodies immediately.
- The team member accused should only be contacted by one member of management (Manager or Director).
- The Nursery Manager/Managing Director (if appropriate) will conduct a full investigation.
- Should the allegations lead to disciplinary proceedings, the accused member of the team will be given full copies of any statements or transcripts and invited to state their case.
- During the investigation support will be given to the accused member of the team by fortnightly meetings.
- The Manager and Managing Director will follow the procedures laid down in the Disciplinary & Grievance Procedure Policy.



- If an allegation regarding misconduct or poor practice is raised against a team member then a thorough investigation will be conducted and the appropriate action, as per the disciplinary guidelines in our Employee Handbook, will be followed.

