



**SHIPDHAM PLAYGROUP
POLICY DOCUMENT
*2011-2012***

**Shipdham Playgroup
Pound Green Lane
Thetford
Norfolk
IP25 7LF**

Telephone: 01362 822062

www.shipdhamplaygroup.co.uk
shipdhamplaygroup@live.co.uk

INTRODUCTION

These policies and procedures have been developed to ensure the safe operating of the playgroup and should be read in conjunction with the welfare requirements which the playgroup operates by.

Setting Manager
Assistant Manager
Early Years Practitioners

Lynn Dwyer
Annette Watts
Kate Satchwell-Poole, Maxine Hinde,
Kate Chard

**Early Years Practitioner/
parent co-ordinator**
Administrator
Cleaner

Rosie Smith
Susan Buckley
Samantha Blaney-Simpson

Appointed Persons:

First Aid:	Lynn Dwyer/Annette Watts
Behaviour Management:	Maxine Hinde/Annette Watts
Setting SENCO's	Annette Watts/Lynn Dwyer
Child Protection Officer:	Lynn Dwyer/Kate Satchwell-Poole
Equal Opportunities:	Lynn Dwyer/Annette
Risk Assessment:	Rosie Smith/ Kate Chard

Document Control

Version	Reason for Issue	Comments
0.1 September 2005	Review by staff	Draft Document
0.2 January 2006	Review by committee	Revised following staff input
1.0 January 2006	Signed off by committee	Final Version
2.0 February 2007	Annual Review	
3.0 March 2008	Annual Review	
4.0 January 2011	Annual Review	
4.1 September 2011	MID YEAR REVIEW	

Policies version 4.1 were adopted at a meeting of Shipdham Playgroup held on

Signed on behalf of the management committee.....

Role

Date.....

INDEX

01	Admissions
02	Fees and Charges
03	Parents as Partners
04	Access to information
05	Settling In
06	Arrivals and Departures
07	Medication
08	Health illness and Emergencies
09	Behaviour Management
10	Food Management
11	Curriculum Development Statement
12	Special Education Needs
13	Safeguarding Children and Child Protection
14	Late Collection of Children
15	Lost Children
16	Confidentiality
17	Equal Opportunities
18	Racial Harassment
19	Personnel
20	Staff Development and training
21	Student Placements
22	Supervision of Staff
23	Visitors policy
24	Health and Safety
25	Fire Drill
26	Complaints
27	Disciplinary and Grievance
28	Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosures
and	Disclosure Information
29	Outings policy
30	Key person policy

01 ADMISSIONS

Shipdham Playgroup is registered for 24 children

The above statement is taken from the registration document and is the overriding policy in respect of admissions.

Other matters taken into account in deciding which child can be offered a place in the playgroup are:

- Availability of spaces taking into account the staff/child ratios, the age of the child and the registration requirements.
- Waiting list operated by the following criteria:
 - Children in need
 - Siblings in setting
 - Catchment area (Shipdham, Cranworth, Bradenham. Letton and Southburgh)
 - Age
 - Date of enrolment
- Extenuating circumstances affecting the child's welfare or his/her family.

We never have discriminated, and have no intention in the future of discriminating, against any person on the grounds of sex, race, religion, colour, creed or ability.

Prior to a child's attendance at the playgroup the parent/carer must complete and sign the registration form, confidentiality agreement and setting contract.

02 FEES AND CHARGES

The Playgroup operates on a non-profit making basis. Funds are used to improve provisions and facilities for the children.

The fees are currently £8.25 per 3 hour session, parents will be charged for a full session regardless of when they collect their child unless the chairperson or manager have authorised otherwise. All children registering after 7th September will have to pay a £10.00 registration fee, which will be added to your child's first bill. Fees for children's contracted hours will be issued one month in advance for payment by the 7th of the following month and any additional sessions will be billed at the end of the month. All fees should be paid to a staff member and can also be paid weekly or by standing order. Failure to pay fees on time will result in a 10% fee being levied to the outstanding balance.

The playgroup uses a 9-step letter plan for late payments.

To ensure a continuity of income, it is required that all fees are paid for your children's allocated sessions, irrespective of whether they attend or not. If your child is likely to be absent for a long period, please discuss this with the manager.

On days when the playgroup incorporates a fund raising event into session, children that normally attend that session will be charged for the session, on the basis that they can attend during normal times and will be fully supervised. Children who do not normally attend the session on that day, will not be charged on the basis that they will be supervised by their parent/carer.

Policy amended at a meeting held on _____

Signed _____ position _____

03 PARENTS AS PARTNERS

The playgroup team will work with parents/carers as partners in providing quality care for their children. The setting has a named parent co-ordinator **ROSIE SMITH.**

- All parents/carers are welcome to visit the playgroup at any time.
- Parents/carers have access to their child's records and are free to contribute to these and are consulted in respect of the care given.
- Information about playgroup activities and events are regularly distributed.
- Parents/carers are able to inspect all the policies of the playgroup at any time.
- Scrap-booking sessions are held regularly throughout the year in partnership with parents.
- Voluntary helpers are welcomed. The staff and committee firmly believe that this benefits the parent/carer as they are able to witness the development and progression of their child. The playgroup benefits by being able to maintain an adequate adult:child ratio.

04 ACCESS TO INFORMATION

We believe that an open access policy is the best way of encouraging participation.

Parents/carers are welcome to view the policies and procedures file, which governs the way in which the playgroup works at any time when the playgroup is open, this is available in the entrance room.

They are also welcome to see the records kept on their child, but as this would require withdrawing a member of staff from their usual duties, arrangements should be made in advance to ensure staff availability.

05 SETTling IN

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the setting.

We aim to make the setting a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

The key person role is set out in the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must offer a key person for each child.

- The key person will work in partnership with parents/carers to settle the child into the playgroup environment.
- When a child is accepted by the playgroup, arrangements will be made for a visit so that the child can familiarise him/herself with the playgroup and meet their key person. *Home visits are also offered.*
- During the first few sessions, parents/carers can stay with the child for sufficient time so that the child feels settled and the parent/carer feels comfortable about leaving them.
- For the first few sessions, parents/carers may collect the child early if they so wish, but will still be charged for a full session.

06 ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

It is the policy of the playgroup to give a warm welcome to each child on its arrival.

Attendance will be recorded in the register and children will be encouraged to self-register and then commence free play.

Any specific information provided by the parent/carer should be recorded in the child's file or diary as appropriate.

If the parent/carer requests the child to be given **medicine** during the day **the key person must** ensure that the **medicine consent** procedure is followed. All medicines should be recovered from the medicine box/fridge only when the parent/carer has arrived and handed to him/her personally.

If the child is not to be collected by the parent/carer at the end of the session, an agreed procedure must be followed to identify the nominated adult. The departure of the child should be anticipated by the key person .

No child should be handed over to anyone other than people on the register form unless an agreement has been made at the time of arrival by signing the collection book. On departure, the child register must be immediately marked to show that the child has left the premises.

If staff are unaware who is to collect the child, then the parent/carer will be contacted and the child will not be handed over until authorisation has been obtained.

07 MEDICATION

While it is not our policy to care for sick children, who should be at home until they are well enough to return to the setting and participate in outside play, we will agree to administer medication as part of maintaining their health and well-being or when they are recovering from an illness

Children taking prescribed medication must be well enough to attend the setting.

Parents/Carers must sign a medication form daily giving details of the medicine .

No medication may be given without these details being provided:

- full name of child and date of birth;
- name of medication and strength;
- who prescribed it;
- dosage to be given in the setting;
- how the medication should be stored and expiry date;
- any possible side effects that may be expected should be noted; and
- signature, printed name of parent and date.

The key person is responsible for the correct administration of medication to children for whom they are the key person. This includes ensuring that parent consent forms have been completed, that medicines are stored correctly and that records are kept according to procedures. In the absence of the key person, the manager is responsible for the overseeing of administering medication.

The greatest care will be taken to see that these are administered according to the instructions and a signed record of all medication administered shall be made on the medication forms and witnessed by another member of staff.

Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed for that child by a doctor. However, the playgroup keeps a bottle of Calpol on the premises in case a child develops a temperature or becomes unwell during session times. Should this happen the manager of key person will contact the parents to obtain consent to administer the directed dose, for children of this age this is 5ml. A second member of staff will witness administering of medication.

The medicine record will be completed and signed by the staff member administering, the staff member witnessing and by the parent when they collect the child. If a parent is unable to be contacted Calpol will only be administered if consent is signed in the permissions section of the registration file.

Medicines will be stored in their original containers, clearly labelled and inaccessible to children. They will remain in sight but inaccessible to children.

If the administration of prescribed medicine requires specific technical or medical knowledge then individual training is provided for staff from a qualified health professional.

08 HEALTH/ILLNESS AND EMERGENCY

It is the playgroup policy to encourage and promote good health and hygiene for all the children in our care. This includes monitoring the children for signs and symptoms of communicable diseases such as chickenpox, measles, mumps, rubella, meningitis, hepatitis, diarrhoea, vomiting and fevers of 101°F/38°C or over.

With the welfare of the sick child in mind and in the interests of the remaining children in the playgroup, if in the opinion of the staff a child is ill, then the parent/carer will be contacted and requested to collect him/her as soon as possible.

The staff of the playgroup must be convinced that the child has returned to good health before re-admitting him/her.

In cases of sickness or diarrhoea a child must be off for **a minimum of 48 hours**. In the case of a serious accident or illness occurring then the parent/carer will be contacted immediately along with the child's GP and the appropriate action taken. In the unlikely event of the parent not being available the senior staff member will assume charge and if necessary take the child to hospital along with all relevant details.

Reporting of 'notifiable diseases'

- If a child or adult is diagnosed suffering from a notifiable disease under the Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988, the GP will report this to the Health Protection Agency.
- When the setting becomes aware, or is formally informed of the notifiable disease, the manager informs Ofsted and acts on any advice given by the Health Protection Agency.

The following procedures will be followed in the event of:-

Major Accident

At all times the staff *must* wear protective clothing (disposable gloves and where appropriate aprons).

- The manager will assess the situation and decide whether the child needs to go immediately to hospital or whether the child can wait for the parent/main carer to come.
- If the child needs to go straight to hospital an ambulance will be called. Then the parent/main carer will be contacted and arrangements will be made to meet the parent/main carer at the hospital. A member of staff will accompany the child to the hospital, but **will not sign** for any treatment to be carried out.
- If the child can wait for the parent/main carer to come, then the parent/main carer will be contacted and the child will be made as comfortable as possible. A member of staff will stay with the child until the parent/main carer arrives.
It will then be for the parent/main carer to decide whether to go to the hospital or not.
- A report of the accident will then be recorded in the accident log.

Minor Accident

At all times the staff *must* wear protective clothing (disposable gloves and where appropriate aprons).

- The injury is assessed by the nearest staff member and a first aider is informed.
- The injury is then treated.
- The child is then resettled back into the playgroup and observed.

- The incident is then recorded on an accident/incident form and the manager / appointed first aider informed. The parent will be asked to sign the form on collection of their child.

First aid

Policy statement

In our setting staff are able to take action to apply first aid treatment in the event of an accident involving a child or adult. At least one member of staff with current paediatric first aid training is on the premises or on an outing at any one time.

The first aid qualification includes first aid training for infants and young children.

Procedures

In the event of a person needing first aid treatment a first aider is called. The first aider assesses the injury and deals with it appropriately.

The majority of cases will be minor accidents and a cold compress or cleaning of cuts/ wounds with water will suffice. If it is deemed necessary and in accordance with children's records a plaster will be applied where consent has been given.

All accidents are recorded in the accident record, and signed by parents on collection.

The First Aid Kit

Our first aid kit complies with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 and contains the following items only:

- Triangular bandages (ideally at least one should be sterile) - x 4.
- Sterile dressings:
 - a) Medium (formerly Large No 9) – HSE 1 - x 6.
 - b) Large (formerly Extra Large No 3) – HSE 2 - x 3.
- Composite pack containing 20 assorted (individually-wrapped) plasters 1.
- Sterile eye pads (with bandage or attachment) e.g. No 16 dressing 2.
- Container or 6 safety pins 1.
- Guidance card as recommended by HSE 1.

In addition to the first aid equipment, each box should be supplied with:

- 2 pairs of disposable plastic (PVC or vinyl) gloves.

- 1 plastic disposable apron.
- a children's forehead 'strip' thermometer.

- The first aid box is easily accessible to adults and is kept out of the reach of children.
- No non-prescription medication is given to children, parents or staff.
- At the time of admission to the setting, parents' written permission for emergency medical advice or treatment is sought. Parents sign and date their written approval.
- Parents sign a consent form at registration allowing staff to take their child to the nearest Accident and Emergency unit to be examined, treated or admitted as necessary on the understanding that parents have been informed and are on their way to the hospital.

Procedures for children with allergies

- When parents start their children at the setting they are asked if their child suffers from any known allergies. This is recorded and highlighted on the registration form.
- If a child has an allergy, a care plan is displayed for staff and volunteers near the kitchen detailing:
 - The allergen (i.e. the substance, material or living creature the child is allergic to such as nuts, eggs, bee stings, cats etc).
 - On the registration form, the nature of the allergic reactions.
 - What to do in case of allergic reactions, any medication used and how it is to be used (e.g. EpiPen).
- This form is kept in the child's personal file and a care plan with photograph is displayed where staff can see it.
- Generally, no nuts are used within the setting.
- Children with known allergies will have their allergies highlighted on their daily sheet to ensure all staff are aware.

*We have a two named people with overall responsibility for our programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour. These are **Maxine Hinde** and **Annette Watts**.*

We require the named persons to:

- keep themselves up-to-date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support;
- access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development ; and
- check that all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour. We keep a record of staff attendance at this training.
- We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
- We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the setting's behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.
- We expect all members of our setting - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.
- We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person. We work with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour

- We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping children find solutions in

ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgment of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable, and supporting children to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.

- We ensure that there are enough popular toys and resources and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns.
- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
- When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.
- We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with these.
- We use physical restraint, such as holding, only 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 our setting manager and are recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parent is informed on the same day.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's inconsiderate behaviour.

Children under three years

- When children under three behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those for older children.
- We recognise that babies and very young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.
- Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.
- If tantrums, biting or fighting are frequent, we try to find out the underlying cause - such as a change or upheaval at home, or frequent change of carers. Sometimes a child has not settled in well and the behaviour may be the result of 'separation anxiety'.
- We focus on ensuring a child's attachment figure in the setting, their key person, is building a strong relationship to provide security to the child.

Rough and tumble play, hurtful behaviour and bullying

Our procedure has been updated to provide additional focus on these kinds of inconsiderate behaviours.

Rough and tumble play and fantasy aggression

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using strategies as above.

- We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or aggressive.
- We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.
- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently dramatic strategies, blowing up, shooting etc., and that themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies' and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.
- We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

Hurtful behaviour

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child, especially if their emotions are high at the time, but it is not helpful to label this behaviour as 'bullying'. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without awareness of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

- We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them.
- We will help them manage these feelings as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.
- We understand that self-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that take place when triggers activate responses of anger or fear.
- Therefore we help this process by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour. By helping the

child to return to a normal state, we are helping the brain to develop the physiological response system that will help the child be able to manage his or her own feelings.

- We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child's rage as that will have the opposite effect.
- Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them through holding and cuddling. Verbal children will also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we offer them an explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.
- We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they experience. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings.
- We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing and turn-taking develop. In order for both the biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.
- We support social skills through modeling behaviour, through activities, drama and stories. We build self-esteem and confidence in children, recognising their emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.
- We help a child to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we do not force children to say sorry, but encourage this where it is clear that they are genuinely sorry and wish to show this to the person they have hurt.
- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons for very young children to engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are that:
 - they do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs – this may be in the home and it may also be in the setting;

- their parent, or carer in the setting, does not have skills in responding appropriately, and consequently negative patterns are developing where hurtful behaviour is the only response the child has to express feelings of anger;
- the child may have insufficient language, or mastery of English, to express him or herself and may feel frustrated;
- the child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse;
- the child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
 - Where this does not work, we use the Code of Practice to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to a Behaviour Support Team where necessary.

Bullying

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. It is characterised by intent to hurt, often planned, and accompanied by an awareness of the impact of the bullying behaviour.

A child who is bullying has reached a stage of cognitive development where he or she is able to plan to carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress in another. Bullying can occur in children five years old and over and may well be an issue in after school clubs and holiday schemes catering for slightly older children.

If a child bullies another child or children:

- we show the children who have been bullied that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them;
- we intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child or children;
- we explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is not acceptable;
- we give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied;

- we help the child who has done the bullying to recognise the impact of their actions;
- we make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practice and reflect on considerate behaviour;
- we do not label children who bully as 'bullies';
- we recognise that children who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves, or be subject to abuse or other circumstance causing them to express their anger in negative ways towards others;
- we recognise that children who bully are often unable to empathise with others and for this reason we do not insist that they say sorry unless it is clear that they feel genuine remorse for what they have done. Empty apologies are just as hurtful to the bullied child as the original behaviour;
- we discuss what has happened with the parents of the child who did the bullying and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour; and
- we share what has happened with the parents of the child who has been bullied, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

By positively promoting good behaviour, valuing co-operation and a caring attitude we hope to ensure that children will develop as responsible members of society.

Adults behaviour

All adults including staff, committee members, parents and visitors are expected to behave in an appropriate manner. The setting, staff or committee will not tolerate discrimination, bad language, threatening or aggressive behaviour. Staff that fail to meet these requirements will be disciplined according to our grievance policy. Other adults may be asked to leave the premises, failure to do so may result in the police being called. Staff and committee will not tolerate any of the above behaviour either within playgroup or outside of playgroup, this includes any contact by email, telephone or text.

10 FOOD MANAGEMENT

Shipdham Playgroup regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our setting.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (see the procedures for managing children with allergies under Health, Illness and emergency 08)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record to signify that it is correct.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs - including any allergies - are up-to-date. Parents sign the updated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences as well as their parents' wishes.
- We include foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy.
- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.

- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- We provide children with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. We provide fresh drinking water daily, this is accessible to all children throughout the day. Parents are also encouraged to send a water bottle labeled with their child's name, this encourages them to identify and use their personal items.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting, and provide them with information on healthy lunchboxes.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- For children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurised milk.

SNACK TIME

The following procedure is in place for snack time:

- 1) Member of staff on snack duty checks allergies board.
- 2) Table cleared and sprayed with anti-bacterial.
- 3) Snack prepared in kitchen
- 4) Snack, water, milk, plates and beakers all placed on trolley and taken to table with daily sheets.
- 5) Children wanting snack wash hands and bring name card to table.
- 6) Children invited to select 2 items from trolley and put onto their plates and pour own drink.
- 7) Only 5 children at one time, unless person in charge has indicated different arrangements for snack due to special occasion i.e. birthday.
- 8) Adult preparing snack remains at snack table, engages with children and completes daily sheets for all children, including those that do not want snack.

11 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT

We set out to assist all children attending the playgroup to attain their maximum potential within their perceived capabilities. An individual record of each child's development is maintained, showing their abilities, progress rate and areas needing further assistance.

Children's rights and entitlements

- We promote children's right to be *strong, resilient and listened to* by creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
- We promote children's right to be *strong, resilient and listened to* by enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches and to encourage them to develop a sense of autonomy and independence
- We help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.

The staff are very aware of the importance of the correct play environment for the child, so they may develop good social skills and an appreciation of all aspects of this country's multicultural society. Planning of the learning experience by the staff is further designed to ensure, as far as practical, equality of opportunity between all children.

Activities are provided and resources selected which allow play opportunities and first – hand experiences. These allow children to build on their natural curiosity as learners, develop their language and mathematical thinking, use their imagination and develop social relationships.

12 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Statement

We provide an environment in which all children, including those with special educational needs, are supported to reach their full potential.

- We have regard for the DfES Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2001).
- We would work with parents/carers and the child to ensure our provision was inclusive to all.
- We support parents and children with special educational needs (SEN).
- We identify the specific needs of children with special educational needs and meet those needs through a range of SEN strategies.
- We work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting individual children's needs.
- We monitor and review our policy, practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.

We designate two members of staff to be the Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCO's) Our SETTING SENCO is **ANNETTE WATTS**.
Lynn Dwyer supports this role.

The SENCO's have links with relevant agencies for advice and support and contact details are available to both parents/carers.

- We ensure that the provision for children with special educational needs is the responsibility of all members of the setting.
- We ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity.

- We work closely with parents of children with special educational needs to create and maintain a positive partnership.
- We ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education using IEP's.
- We provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
- We liaise with other professionals involved with children with special educational needs and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools.
- We would aim to provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum for all children with special educational needs.
- We have support from the local authority in place for supporting children during Early Years Action, Early Years Action Plus, Statutory Assessment and the Statementing process.
- We use a learning journey in conjunction with scrapbooks for keeping records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with special educational needs.
- We provide resources (human and financial) to implement our Special Educational Needs Policy.
- We would 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 parental and external agency's views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually.
- We provide a complaints procedure.
- We monitor and review our policy regularly.

13 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND CHILD PROTECTION

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Aims

Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

- Promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by:
Creating an environment in our setting, that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
Encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
Enabling children to have the self-confidence and vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- Helping children to establish and sustain relationships within their families, with peers and with other adults.
- Working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding our children.

Safeguarding children

Safeguarding children and child protection

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

Policy statement

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Key commitment 1

The Playgroup is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

Staff and volunteers

- Our designated persons (members of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues are:

Lynn Dwyer and Kate Satchwell-Poole

- Our designated officer (a committee member) who oversees this work is:
Amy Taylor

- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureau 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.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Criminal Record Bureau checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.

- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- Photographic equipment including games consoles, children's cameras and mobile phones are not allowed to be used in the setting, staff reserve the right to confiscate such items to prevent photographs being taken and removed from the setting without parental permission.

Key commitment 2

Shipdham Playgroup is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the manager who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation.
NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- We use the detailed procedures and reporting format from the Local Authority when making a referral to children's social care or other appropriate agencies.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
 - does not question the child;
 - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
 - the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
 - the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
 - the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
 - These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's protection file which is kept securely and confidentially.

Making a referral to the local authority safeguarding team

- The publication 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' contains detailed procedures for making a referral to the local safeguarding team.
- We keep a copy of this document and follow the detailed guidelines given.
- All members of staff are familiar with the Safeguarding Policy and follow the procedures for recording and reporting.

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 of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and social services to work well together.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.
- If a referral is to be made to the local authority social care department, we act within the area's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child. LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) will also need to be informed of an allegation against a member of staff, the disciplinary procedure may need to be followed.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.

- We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's safeguarding department to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management committee and safeguarding team agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chairperson will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Key commitment 3

Shipdham Playgroup is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Human Rights Act (1999)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations
- Equalities Act (2006)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance
- Information Sharing: Practitioners' Guide (HMG 2006)
- Independent Safeguarding Authority: www.isa-gov.org.uk

Safeguarding children

Looked after children

Early years settings are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff are committed to

doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Definition of 'Looked after Children' (LAC): *Children and young people become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).*

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has impact on their emotional well-being.

- We offer places for funded three and four-year-olds who are in care to ensure they receive their entitlement to early education. We expect that a child will have been with a foster carer for a minimum of one month and has formed a secure attachment to the carer. We expect that the placement in the setting will last a minimum of six weeks.
- We will always offer 'stay and play' provision for a child who is two to five years old who is still settling with their foster carer, or who is only temporarily being looked after.
 - Where a child who normally attends our setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer we will continue to offer the placement for the child.
 - The designated person for looked after children is the designated child protection co-ordinator.
 - The designated person and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and his or her family and ensures appropriate information is gained and shared.

- The setting recognises the role of the local authority social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes, especially with regard to the birth parents or foster carer's role in relation to the setting without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
- At the start of a placement there is a professionals meeting that will determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates and the child's learning needs. This plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks and three months. Thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.
- The care plan needs to consider such issues for the child as:
 - the child's emotional needs and how they are to be met;
 - how any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed;
 - the child's sense of self, culture, language/s and identity – how this is to be supported;
 - the child's need for sociability and friendship;
 - the child's interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway; and
 - how any special needs will be supported.
- In addition the care plan will also consider:
 - how information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored;
 - what contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact. If this is to be the setting, when, where and what form the contact will take will be discussed and agreed;
 - what written reporting is required;

wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child's return home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in planning; and

with the social worker's agreement, and as part of the plan, the birth parent(s) should be involved in the setting's activities that include parents, such as outings, fun-days etc alongside the foster carer.

- The settling-in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same as for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed.
- Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.

Sign below if you have read and understand and agree to adhere to this policy:

14 LATE COLLECTION/ UNCOLLECTED CHILD

It has become the settings policy to levy a late collection fee for parents that collect their child after 3.00pm without authorization. This will be charged in 15 minute increments at the current hourly rate, and will be billed at the end of the month in the same way as additional sessions.

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session/day, the setting puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child. We will ensure that the child receives 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.

We inform parents that we apply our child protection procedures as set out in our child protection policy in the event that their children are not collected from setting by an authorised adult within one hour after the setting has closed and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises.

If a child is not collected 15 minutes after the session end, we follow these procedures:

- The child's file is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
- If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work.
- If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting – and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Registration Form – are contacted.

- All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers.
- The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in their file.
- If no-one collects the child after one hour and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures for uncollected children.
- We contact our local authority children's social services care team:
- The child stays at setting in the care of two fully-vetted workers until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social care worker.
- Social Care will aim to find the parent or relative if they are unable to do so, the child will become looked after by the local authority.
- Under no circumstances do staff go to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.
- Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.
- Ofsted may be informed:
- Our local Support Teacher /Pre-school Development Worker may also be informed.

15 LOST CHILD PROCEDURE

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises. Every attempt is made through carrying out the outings procedure and the exit/entrance procedure to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

In the unlikely event of a child going missing within/from the playgroup or whilst on an outing the following procedure will be implemented immediately.

Child going missing on the premises

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the setting manager and key person are alerted.
- The manager will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- If the child is not found, the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police.
- The manager talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
- The manager contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson, with the management committee, carries out an investigation and may come to the setting immediately.

Child going missing on an outing

This describes what to do when staff have taken a small group on an outing, leaving the setting manager and/or other staff back in the setting. If the manager

has accompanied children on the outing, the procedures are adjusted accordingly.

What to do when a child goes missing from a whole setting outing may be a little different, as parents usually attend and are responsible for their own child.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray. One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The manager is contacted immediately and the incident is reported.
- The manager contacts the police and reports the child as missing.
- The manager contacts the parent, who makes their way to the setting or outing venue as agreed with the manager. The setting is advised as the best place, as by the time the parent arrives, the child may have been returned to the setting.
- Staff take the remaining children back to the setting.
- In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.
- The manager contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson, with the management committee, carries out an investigation and may come to the setting immediately.
- The manager, or designated staff member may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive.

The investigation

- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The manager together with the chairperson or representative from the management committee or owner, speaks with the parent(s).
- The chairperson and management committee, carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.
- The key person/staff member writes an incident report detailing:
 - I. The date and time of the report.

- II. What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child.
 - III. When the child was last seen in the group/outing.
 - IV. What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing.
 - V. The time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
 - If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
 - The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements (see the Reporting of Accidents and Incidents policy); the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
 - In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
 - The insurance provider is informed.

Managing people

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Setting leaders need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the manager. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the manager and the other should be the chairperson of the management committee or representative.

No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, **aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated**, and the police should be called.

- The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counseling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The chairperson will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

16 CONFIDENTIALITY

Definition: '*Confidential information is information of some sensitivity, which is not already lawfully in the public domain or readily available from another public source, and which has been shared in a relationship where the person giving the information understood it would not be shared with others.*' (Information Sharing: Practitioners' Guide)

In our setting, staff and managers can be said to have a 'confidential relationship' with families. It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents and carers, while ensuring that they access high quality early years care and education in our setting. We aim to ensure that all parents and carers can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children. There are record keeping systems in place that meet legal requirements; means of storing and sharing that information take place within the framework of the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act.

The staff through their close relationship with both the children and their parents may learn more about the families using the playgroup. All staff are aware that this information is confidential and only for use within the playgroup setting. All staff are required to complete confidentiality forms as part of their contracts.

If, however, a child is considered at risk our child protection policy will override confidentiality.

- We always check whether parents regard the information they share with us to be regarded as confidential or not.

- Some parents sometimes share information about themselves with other parents as well as staff; the setting cannot be held responsible if information is shared beyond those parents whom the person has 'confided' in.
- Information shared between parents in a discussion or training group is usually bound by a shared agreement that the information is confidential to the group and not discussed outside of it.

Access to records procedures

Parents may request access to any confidential records held on their child and family following the procedure below:

- Any request to see the child's personal file by a parent or person with parental responsibility must be made in writing to the manager.
- The manager informs the chairperson of the management committee and sends a written acknowledgment.
- The setting commits to providing access within 14 days, although this may be extended.
- The manager and chairperson of the management committee prepare the file for viewing.
- All third parties are written to, stating that a request for disclosure has been received and asking for their permission to disclose to the person requesting it. Copies of these letters are retained on file.
- 'Third parties' include all family members who may be referred to in the records.
- It also includes workers from any other agency, including social services, the health authority, etc. It is usual for agencies to refuse consent to disclose, preferring the individual to go directly to them.
- When all the consents/refusals to disclose have been received these are attached to the copy of the request letter.
- A photocopy of the complete file is taken.
- The manager and chairperson of the management committee go through the file and remove any information which a third party has refused consent to disclose. This is best done with a thick black marker, to score through every reference to the third party and information they have added to the file.

- What remains is the information recorded by the setting, detailing the work initiated and followed by them in relation to confidential matters. This is called the 'clean copy'.
- The 'clean copy' is photocopied for the parents who are then invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be gone through by the manager, so that it can be explained.
- Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file, especially where the parent has possible grounds for litigation against the setting or another (third party) agency.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the setting, which is to the safety and well-being of the child

Legal framework

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998

17 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Statement of intent

The playgroup takes great care to treat each individual as a person in their own right, with equal rights and responsibilities to any other individual, whether they be an adult or child. Discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, religion, colour, creed, marital status, ability, ethnic or national origin, or political belief, has no place within this playgroup. Should any person believe that this policy is not being totally complied with, it is their duty to bring the matter to the attention of the supervisor at the earliest opportunity.

The playgroup staff and committee are committed to:

- Encourage positive role models, displayed through toys, imaginary play and activities that promote non-stereotyped images. Books will be selected to promote such images of men and women, boys and girls.
- Encouraging children to join in activities, i.e. dressing up, shop, home corner, dolls, climbing on large apparatus, bikes, etc.
- Regularly review childcare practice to ensure the policy is effective

The committee aims to ensure that individuals are recruited, selected, trained and promoted on the basis of occupational skill requirements. In this respect, the committee will ensure that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, marital status, race, religion, colour, cultural or national origin or sexuality, which cannot be justified as being necessary for the safe and effective performance of their work or training.

Service Provision

No child will be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, race, religion, colour or creed.

The committee will strive to ensure that all services and projects are accessible and relevant to all groups and individuals in the community within targeted age groups.

We will strive to promote equal access to services and projects by taking practical steps such as ensuring access to disabled people and producing material in relevant languages and media.

Recruitment

The committee will strive by recruitment to ensure that the staff levels reflect the community it serves. All vacancies will be advertised as widely as budgets allow. Every effort will be made to ensure a representative balance on the selection group and all members of the group will be committed to equal opportunities practice as set out in this policy.

Application forms will not include questions which potentially discriminate against the grounds specified in the Statement of Intent.

At interview no questions will be posed which potentially discriminate against the grounds specified in the Statement of Intent. At interview all candidates will be asked the same questions, and members of the selection group will not introduce nor use any personal knowledge of candidates acquired outside the selection process.

Candidates will be given the opportunity to discuss the reasons why they were not successful.

Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria. The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to 2 references being taken up and checks by the criminal records bureau. This enables fairness in the selection process.

All job descriptions include a commitment to valuing equality and recognising and respecting diversity as part of their specifications.

Staff

All staff are expected to co-operate with the implementation, monitoring and improvement of this and other policies. All staff are expected to challenge language, actions, behaviours and attitudes which are oppressive or discriminatory on the ground as specified in the Statement of Intent.

All staff are expected to participate in equal opportunities training.

Training

The committee recognises the importance of training as a key factor in the implementation of an effective equal opportunity policy.

The committee will strive towards the provision of equal opportunity training for all staff.

18 PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH RACIAL HARASSMENT

Introduction

We have the duty to create and implement strategies in playgroup to prevent and address racism. Such strategies include:

- That the playgroup records all racist incidents
- That all recorded incidents are reported to the children's parents/guardians, and when appropriate to the registering authority.

Parents have a right to know when racism occurs and what actions the playgroup will take to tackle it.

In the Race Relations Act 1976 Section 71 there is a statement of the duty to 'promote harmony and good relations' between different groups in society. We have a statutory responsibility to monitor, review and eliminate racial discrimination.

Definition of racial harassment

'Violence which may be verbal or physical and which includes attacks on property and people because of their race, nationality, ethnic origins – when the victim believes that the perpetrator was acting on racial grounds and/or there is evidence of racism' – (Commission for Racial Equality).

Incidents may involve a small or large number of persons, they may vary in their degree of offence and may not even recognise the incident has racial implications; or at the other extreme their behaviour may be quite deliberate and blatant.

Examples of racial harassment

Physical assault against a person or group of people.

Derogatory name calling, insults and racial jokes.

Racist graffiti and other written insults.

Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges and insignia and the distribution of racist literature.

Threats against a person or group of people because of their colour or race.

Discriminatory comment including ridicule made in the course of discussions in class or elsewhere.

Patronising words or actions.

Procedure

- All staff in the playgroup should be constantly aware of any racial harassment taking place.
- They must intervene firmly and quickly to prevent all forms of racial harassment. Any allegation should be taken seriously and reported to the supervisor.
- Each incident should be investigated and recorded in detail as accurately as possible. This record should be available for inspection by staff, inspectors and parents where appropriate, on request.
- The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that incidents are handled appropriately and sensitively and entered in the record book. Any pattern of behaviour should be indicated. Perpetrator/victim's initials may be used in the record book as information on individuals is confidential to the playgroup.
- Where an allegation is substantiated following an investigation, the parents of children who are perpetrators and victims should be informed of the incident and of the outcome.

- Continued racial harassment may lead to exclusion but such steps should only be taken when other strategies have failed to modify behaviour.
- Adults found to be perpetrators must be reported immediately to the committee.

Racial harassment needs to be recorded to:

- Develop strategies to prevent future incidents
- Identify patterns of behaviour
- Identify persistent offenders
- Monitor the effectiveness of playgroup policies
- Provide a secure information base to enable playgroup to respond to comments about racial incidents

Playgroup Staff

All staff should be alert and seek to overcome any ignorant or offensive behaviour based on fear or dislike of racial distinctions that children or adults may express in playgroup.

An atmosphere must be created where the victims of any form of racial harassment have confidence to report such behaviour and that subsequently they feel positively supported by the staff of the playgroup.

It is incumbent upon all members of staff to ensure that they do not express any views or comments that are racist. Nor must staff appear to endorse such views by failing to counter behaviour, which is prejudicial in a direct manner. A sensitive and informed approach must be used to counter any racial harassment perpetrated out of ignorance.

When a member of staff violates this playgroup code of practice he/she will be counselled by the committee. It will be explained to them why the behaviour is unacceptable and what steps will be taken to remedy the situation. At this stage

Shipdham Playgroup
Policy Document

it will be made clear that the content of the discussion will not be used as evidence in further disciplinary action. A repetition of such behaviour will lead to a formal verbal warning at which point the member of staff will be advised of their right to have a witness present. From this point the normal disciplinary codes of practice for employees of the playgroup will come into effect.

19 PERSONNEL

Playgroup policies in respect of personnel are governed by the following:

- The best interests of the children, their welfare, care and development.
- The requirements of Welfare Requirements and OFSTED Early Years Directorate
- Compatibility between all members of staff and the building of a good team spirit.
- Consideration of the advancement of each member of staff both by internal and external training to help them achieve their maximum potential.
- Equal pay for work of equal value.
- Compliance with the current legislation.
- The provision of a job description for each member of staff.

Procedures

Ratios

- To meet this aim we use the following ratios of adult to children:
 - children aged two years of age: 1 adult : 4 children; and
 - children aged three to seven years of age: 1 adult : 8 children
 - where a qualified EYP is in session directly with the children, children aged three to seven years of age 1 adult : 13 children.
- A minimum of two staff/adults are on duty at any one time.
- We use a key person approach see policy 30.
- 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 work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection. Job vacancies are usually advertised through the job centre.

Shipdham Playgroup
Policy Document

- Playgroup issues all potential employees with an applicant pack which is based on safer recruitment, and includes a pro forma for reference checking.
- All staff have job descriptions which set out their staff roles and responsibilities.
- We welcome applications from all sections of the community, from persons over the age of 17. 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 (We always obtain 2) and enhanced criminal record checks through the Criminal Records Bureau for staff and volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children. This is in accordance with requirements under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 for the vetting and barring scheme.
- 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 CRB check.

Changes to staff

- We inform Ofsted of any changes in the person responsible for our setting.

Training and staff development

- Our setting budget allocates resources to training.
- 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. Other 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

- Where staff may need to take time off for any reason other than sick leave or training, this is agreed with the committee 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.

20 STAFF DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

The committee highly values the playgroup staff. It is in the interests of the playgroup, the children and the individual that each staff member be given the opportunity to develop their personal skills to their maximum and to broaden their knowledge and skills in caring for children.

To facilitate this we:

Hold regular staff meetings and team meetings.

Encourage where practical staff to attend external training courses.

Encourage staff to pass on their knowledge to those less experienced.

Have staff appraisals every year.

Develop a training plan addressing both qualifications and continuous professional development needs of the setting and of individual staff.

Promote a positive learning culture within the setting.

For new staff:

An induction plan will be agreed with them which will cover playgroup policies and child protection procedures in the first week.

They will not be left alone with children until regulatory checks have been completed.

21 STUDENT PLACEMENTS

The Playgroup 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 offer placements to students undertaking early years qualifications and training. We also offer placements for school pupils on work experience.

We aim to provide for students on placement with us experiences that contribute to the successful completion of their studies and that provide examples of quality practice in early years care and education.

- We require students on qualification courses to meet the 'suitable person' requirements of Ofsted and have CRB checks carried out.
- We require schools placing students under the age of 17 years with the setting to vouch for their good character.
- We supervise students under the age of 17 years at all times and do not allow them to have unsupervised access to children.
- 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 may be included in the ratios if they are deemed competent.
- We take out employers' liability insurance and public liability insurance, which covers both trainees and voluntary helpers.
- We require students to sign and keep to our confidentiality policy.
- We co-operate with students' tutors in order to help students to fulfill the requirements of their course of study.

Shipdham Playgroup
Policy Document

- We provide students, at the first session of their placement, with a short induction on how our setting is managed, how our sessions are organised and our policies and procedures.
- We communicate a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
- We make the needs of the children paramount by not admitting students in numbers that hinder the essential work of the setting.
- We ensure that trainees and students placed with us are engaged in bona fide early years training, which provides the necessary background understanding of children's development and activities.

22 SUPERVISION OF STAFF

The committee is responsible for ensuring all staff are registered to work on the premises. Ofsted forms are issued and checks carried out, however staff can work in the playgroup before these checks are completed as long as they are supervised by registered staff at all times.

All playgroup staff will be informed of staff awaiting registration clearance.

Unregistered staff **and parent/carer helpers** must never:

- Be left unsupervised whilst caring for children.
- Take children for toilet visits unless it is their own child.
- Change nappies unless it is their own child.
- Be left unsupervised during outdoor play.
- Be left alone in a room for children.
- Administer medication.
- Administer first aid.

Whilst ensuring all the above are adhered to, it is vital that the unregistered staff be made to feel part of the team and participate fully in every other aspect of the playgroup session.

23 VISITORS POLICY

To ensure the safety of all children and staff the following procedure must be adhered to:

The person who answers the door or gate must always look to identify the caller.

If the caller is not known, identity and reason for calling must be requested.

The identity must be checked thoroughly including telephoning the callers company for verification.

Access must never be granted to unknown callers.

Access must never be granted to callers without identification or if there is any doubt over the validity or the reason for their visit.

Any visitors must fill in the visitors form on arrival.

24 HEALTH & SAFETY

General Statement

The playgroup believes that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers.

- We aim to make children, parents and staff aware of health and safety issues and to minimise the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.
- Our member of staff responsible for health and safety is:
Lynn Dwyer
- We display the necessary health and safety poster

Insurance cover

We have public liability insurance and employers' liability insurance. The certificate for public liability insurance is displayed on the information board.

Awareness raising

- Our induction training for staff and volunteers includes a clear explanation of health and safety issues so that all adults are able to adhere to our policy and procedures as they understand their shared responsibility for health and safety. The induction training covers matters of employee well-being.
- Records are kept of these induction training sessions and new staff and volunteers are asked to sign the records to confirm that they have taken part.
- As necessary, health and safety training is included in the annual training plans of staff, and health and safety is discussed regularly at staff meetings.

Shipdham Playgroup Policy Document

- We operate a no smoking policy.
- Children are made aware of health and safety issues through discussions, planned activities and routines.
- We encourage children to have healthy lunches and provide information on this in parent welcome packs. Parents are encouraged not to put sweets into children's lunchboxes.

Safety of adults

- Adults are provided with guidance about the safe storage, movement, lifting and erection of large pieces of equipment.
- All warning signs are clear and in appropriate languages.
- Adults do not remain in the building on their own with the door unlocked or leave on their own after dark.
- The involvement of staff in accidents is recorded. The records are reviewed termly to identify any issues that need to be addressed.
- We keep a record of all substances that may be hazardous to health - such as cleaning chemicals, or gardening chemicals if used. This states what the risks are and what to do if they have contact with eyes or skin or are ingested. It also states where they are stored.
- We keep all cleaning chemicals in their original containers.

Hygiene

- We regularly seek information from the Environmental Health Department and the Health Authority to ensure that we keep up-to-date with the latest recommendations.
- Our daily routines encourage the children to learn about personal hygiene.
- We have a daily cleaning routine for the setting which includes play room, kitchen, toilets and nappy changing areas, office area and reception.
- We implement good hygiene practices by:
 - cleaning tables between activities;

- cleaning toilets regularly;
- wearing protective clothing - such as aprons and disposable gloves - as appropriate;
- providing sets of clean clothes;
- providing tissues and wipes; and
- ensuring individual use of disposable paper towels.
- Disposing of all lost property after 3 weeks.

Activities and resources

- Before purchase or loan, equipment and resources are checked to ensure that they are safe for the ages and stages of the children currently attending the setting.
- The layout of play equipment allows adults and children to move safely and freely between activities.
- All equipment is regularly checked for cleanliness and safety and any dangerous items are repaired or discarded.
- All materials, including paint and glue, are non-toxic.
- Sand is clean and suitable for children's play.
- Physical play is constantly supervised.
- Children are taught to handle and store tools safely.
- Children who are sleeping are checked regularly.
- Children learn about health, safety and personal hygiene through the activities we provide and the routines we follow.
- Any faulty equipment is removed from use and is repaired. If it cannot be repaired it is discarded.
- Large pieces of equipment are discarded only with the consent of the manager and the chairperson.

Nappy changing

Shipdham Playgroup
Policy Document

- No child is excluded from participating in our setting who may, for any reason, not yet be toilet trained and who may still be wearing nappies. We work with parents towards toilet training, unless there are medical or other developmental reasons why this may not be appropriate at the time.
- Changing areas are warm and there are safe areas to lay young children if they need to have their bottoms cleaned.
- Gloves and aprons are put on before changing starts and the areas are prepared. All staff are familiar with the hygiene procedures and carry these out when changing nappies.
- In addition, staff ensure that nappy changing is relaxed and a time to promote independence in young children.
- Young children are encouraged to take an interest in using the toilet; they may just want to sit on it and talk to a friend who is also using the toilet.
- They should be encouraged to wash their hands and have soap and towels to hand. They should be allowed time for some play as they explore the water and the soap.
- Staff do not make inappropriate comments about young children's genitals when changing their nappies
- Older children access the toilet when they have the need to and are encouraged to be independent.
- Nappies and 'pull ups' are disposed of hygienically. Pants that have been wet or soiled are bagged for the parent to take home unless the parents has agreed their disposal in cases of severe soiling.

The committee consider this matter of such importance that breach of health and safety procedures by staff constitutes misconduct and will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter. Staff and committee must constantly be mindful of their responsibilities individually and collectively for the safety of themselves and their colleagues.

25 FIRE DRILL

We ensure our premises present no risk of fire by ensuring the highest possible standard of fire precautions. The person in charge and staff are familiar with the current legal requirements. Where necessary we seek the advice of a competent person, such as our Fire Officer, or Fire Safety Consultant.

- The basis of fire safety is risk assessment. These are carried out by a 'competent person'.
- Designated members of staff, LYNN DWYER and ANNETTE WATTS will undertake regular training in fire safety sufficient to be competent to carry out risk assessment. This will follow the guidance as set out in the *Fire Safety Risk Assessment – Educational Premises* document.
- Fire doors are clearly marked, never obstructed and easily opened from the inside.
- Smoke detectors/alarms and fire fighting appliances conform to BSEN standards, are fitted in appropriate high risk areas of the building and are checked as specified by the manufacturer. Smoke detectors are checked weekly and findings recorded on the indoor risk assessment.
- Our emergency evacuation procedures are approved by the Fire Safety Officer and are:
 - clearly displayed in the premises;
 - explained to new members of staff, volunteers and parents
 - practiced regularly at least once every six weeks.
- Records are kept of fire drills and the servicing of fire safety equipment.

Emergency evacuation procedure

Raise the alarm by blowing the whistle and shouting 'fire'.

- Immediately evacuate the building under guidance from the person in charge, if the fire is outside, blow the whistle and shout 'fire' guide everyone to the designated assembly point by the gate.
- All staff outside should take responsibility for gathering children by the main gate and encouraging them to form a single line to assist with head counting.
- All staff inside should communicate who will check which rooms, toilets, corners, etc. A very thorough sweep of the building should be made as staff make their exit. The staff member sweeping the admin room should collect the phone and register and exit via the admin room fire exit.
- Staff inside should encourage children to leave the building via the nearest exit and assemble the entrance gates.

DESIGNATED FIRE OFFICER TO:

- Telephone emergency services and notify the school:

IN A SAFE PLACE CLEAR OF THE BUILDING

- A head count should be made as soon as possible and can begin whilst children are assembling.
- If after the head count children/adults are unaccounted for check the children against the register.
- Account for all adults

Do not try to collect personal belongings on evacuating the building.

Do not attempt to go back in and fight the fire.

The fire drill record must contain:

- Date and time of the drill.
- Whether there were any problems that delayed evacuation.
- Any further action taken to improve the drill procedure.

Legal framework

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2005/20051541.htm

26 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with the manager.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- Anonymous complaints will be carried out within the set procedures as far as possible.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the manager or chair of the management committee.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints, the form may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent.
- The setting stores written complaints from parents in a separate file designated for this purpose.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the chair of the management committee or manager meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.

- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the manager or the chair of the management committee. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the manager should have the support of the chairperson of the management committee
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it.
- This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting the parent and setting cannot reach agreement, an external mediator is invited to help to settle the complaint. This person should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
- Staff or volunteers within the Network or Local authority are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (manager and chair of the management committee) and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice s/he gives.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the manager and chair of the management committee is

Shipdham Playgroup
Policy Document

held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.

- A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the setting's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
- Ofsted can be contacted with regard to a complaint :

OFSTED

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

Contact Telephone Number 0845 640400

Ofsted will respond to your complaint within 28 days. (These details are displayed on our settings notice board.)

- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in our local authority.

- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the setting manager works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

- A record of complaints against our setting and/or the children and/or the adults working in our setting is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Summary Complaints Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

27 DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE

Where a serious situation arises or the conduct of a member of staff falls below what is required, the following procedures will apply.

The committee chair will lead the procedure unless the grievance involves the chair in which case the secretary will take the lead role.

Instant Dismissal

Instant Dismissal is possible for cases of gross misconduct. These include:

- Theft or Fraud
- Ill treatment of children
- Assault
- Malicious Damage
- Gross carelessness which threatens the health and safety of others
- Conduct which amounts to a criminal offence whilst on duty or playgroup premises

Otherwise an employee will not be dismissed without the appropriate warnings

Formal Disciplinary Proceedings

Any disciplinary matter will be dealt with in 4 stages. These are:

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Final written warning
- Dismissal

In serious circumstances it will be more appropriate to proceed direct to the written warning stage.

Verbal Warning

1. The manager (or deputy in their absence) will interview the employee and explain the complaint.
2. The employee will be given full opportunity to state their case.
3. If the warning is still considered valid the manager and employee will discuss and agree;
 - What action should be taken to correct the conduct.
 - Time-scale.
 - That failure to improve will result in further action being taken.
 - That a record of the warning will be kept on file.

Written Warning/Final Written Warning

If the employee fails to correct their conduct and further action is necessary

1. The employee will be interviewed by the chair person and given the opportunity to state their case as before
2. If the need for disciplinary action is established, a letter will be sent to the employee immediately.
3. The letter will contain a clear explanation of the unacceptable conduct and explain what corrective action is required and the time-scale for change. The letter will contain a warning that failure will lead to the next stage of the disciplinary process.

Dismissal

If the employee still fails to correct their conduct

Shipdham Playgroup
Policy Document

1. The employee will be interviewed by the chair person and given the opportunity to state their case
 2. If the decision is to dismiss, the employee will be given notice of dismissal stating the reasons for dismissal.
- If the circumstances warrant instant dismissal an employee may be suspended while investigations are made.
- The employee has the right to be accompanied at any meeting.

Grievance Procedure

Most grievances will be resolved at an early stage by informal discussion. When this is not successful the following process will be followed.

Stage 1

The grievance will be put in writing to their immediate senior. Where this is the committee chairperson this will proceed direct to stage 2.

The person dealing will have 7 days to resolve the grievance. Meetings may be arranged to discuss. If the grievance cannot be resolved within 7 days, the grievance will be passed to stage 2.

Stage 2

The grievance will be passed to the chairperson of the committee with a written report from the manager detailing what steps have been taken to resolve the grievance.

The chairperson will have 14 days to resolve the grievance and will arrange meetings between staff to resolve any disputes. The chairperson may make amendments to policies where required but they will be signed off at the next committee meeting before coming into effect.

If the chairperson is unable to solve the grievance then it will proceed to stage 3.

Stage 3

At this stage the grievance will be considered by the committee. The chairperson will prepare a report stating what action has already been taken and the parties involved. The committee may direct staff to meet and these meetings will be

minuted. Dependent upon the results of these meetings, the committee may invoke the disciplinary process.

The decision of the committee at stage 3 will be binding and grievances against a resolution at this stage will not be entered into.

At all stages, the aggrieved person will be entitled to a written explanation of the action taken at the conclusion of that stage.

<p style="text-align: center;">28 Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information</p>
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As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for the positions of trust, Shipdham Playgroup complies fully with the CRB code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of disclosures and disclosures information.

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 applicants full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment 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.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means. While awaiting destruction, disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle.

We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a disclosure. However, 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.

29.OUTINGS POLICY

Statement of intent

Shipdham Playgroup believes that children benefit from being taken out of the setting to go on visits or trips to suitable venues for activities that enhance their learning experiences. We have procedures to keep children safe on outings and all staff and volunteers are aware of and follow these procedures.

Procedures

- A risk assessment is carried out before an outing takes place, which includes travel arrangements as well as the location to be visited.
- All venue risk assessments are made available for parents to see in the admin room.
- A letter will be sent to all parents/carers giving them relevant information for the outing.
- Parents/carers will be asked to sign a disclaimer form before major outings.
- Staff do not accept responsibility for children on outings. It is expected that all children attending will be accompanied by a responsible adult.
- Outings are recorded in an outings record book kept in the setting stating:
 1. The date and time of outing.
 2. The venue.
 3. Names of staff attending.

4. Time of return.

- The Pre-school will remain open on days when an outing is organised. At least 2 staff members will remain at the Pre-school, to continue to offer Pre-school sessions for children who are not going on the outing.

If a child goes missing on an outing

Policy/ procedure 15. Lost Children is actioned.

30.KEY PERSON POLICY

Policy statement

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the setting.

We aim to make the setting a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

The key person role is set out in the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must offer a key person for each child.

The procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children who are in settings.

Procedures

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- where a home visit is carried out before the child starts, this is done by the The key person and another adult.
- is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and leaning.
- The key person acts as the key contact for the parents and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a childminder, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- A key person is responsible for developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents to keep those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group on a regular basis.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our setting, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.

Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), displays about activities available within the setting
- Before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.

Shipdham Playgroup
Policy Document

- We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend; the key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- We may offer a home visit by the person who will be the child's key person, to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- parents, carer or close relative are welcome to stay for most of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
- Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be on hand to re-settle them.
- 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.
- 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 reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
- Within the first four to six weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to start to create their child's record of achievement.

31. TRANSITION POLICY

At Shipdham playgroup we believe that the children moving from us to school or another Early Year's provider still deserve our very best care and attention.

The majority of children whom we care for move on from us to Thomas Bullock Primary School, which is situated on the same site as us.

We believe that children need time to build up trust with people who care for them. To enable a successful transition between playgroup and school; and to share our joint way of thinking we have developed the following strategies together to support links between the two settings and support transitions:-

- Websites which link to one another.
- Scrap-booking sessions in the school hall.
- The playgroup and primary school send regular newsletters to parents, where we both try to share and celebrate each other's news.
- The playgroup manager has regular liaisons with both the reception teacher and the head teacher, where information can be shared, particularly relating to children prior to starting school.
- Regular visits to the school and reception class. The children are supported by the playgroup staff to ensure they feel safe and secure within the new environment.
- Playgroup sends a copy of the child's transition report to the school, after parents have read and contributed to it, children are also given an opportunity to have their thoughts on the transition recorded, any I.E.P's are also sent.
- The school offer an open afternoon and a number of taster sessions where the child goes to school for a short period in the day.

For children who feed into a different school (other than Thomas Bullock), communication is done in a similar way. Class teachers are invited to call in for a visit to meet the child within a familiar environment, and have time to spend with the child's key person. Formal paperwork is shared in the same manner.