



Harvard Park Policies and Procedures:

Staffing and Employment

23. Staffing and Employment

Policy Statement

We meet the Safeguarding and Welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (here on referred to as the EYFS), ensuring that our staff and volunteers are appropriately qualified, and we carry out checks for criminal and other records through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in accordance with statutory requirements. We take up references and follow through an induction programme of six months, with the possibility of this being extended should issues or complications arise. We provide an induction for all staff, volunteers, agency workers, assistants, students, apprentices and managers to fully brief them about the setting, the families we serve, our policies and procedures, curriculum and daily practices.

Procedures

Vetting and staff selection

- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection. We follow our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 including the fair and equal treatment of early years educators regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- All our staff have job descriptions, which set out their roles and responsibilities.
- We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered based on their suitability for the post, regardless of disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex, age, marriage or civil partnership. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by our imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.
- We follow the requirements of the EYFS and Ofsted guidance on checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children. This includes obtaining references and ensuring they have a satisfactory enhanced criminal records check with barred list(s) checked through the DBS. This is in accordance with requirements under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) and the Protection of Freedoms Act (2012) for the vetting and barring scheme.
- During our recruitment process we explore candidates use of spoken and written English allowing us to meet the standards of the EYFS.
- Where an individual is subscribed to the DBS Update Service, we carry out a status check of their DBS certificate, after checking their identity and viewing their original enhanced DBS certificate to ensure that it does not reveal any information that would affect their suitability for the post.

- We keep all records relating to the employment of our staff and volunteers; in particular those demonstrating that suitability checks have been done, including the date of issue, name, type of DBS check and unique reference number from the DBS certificate, along with details of our suitability decision.
- We require that all our staff and volunteers keep their DBS check up-to-date by subscribing to the DBS Update Service throughout the duration of their employment with us.
- The amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provides that when applying for certain jobs and activities, certain convictions and cautions are considered 'protected'. This means that they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Guidance about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found on the Ministry of Justice Website and on the websites of charities NACRO and UNLOCK.
- Our staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that are not eligible for 'filtering' by the disclosure and barring service (DBS), which may affect their suitability to work with children – whether received before, or at any time during, their employment with us. For more information, please follow this link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance/dbs-filtering-guide>
- We obtain consent from our staff and volunteers to carry out on-going status checks of the Update Service to establish that their DBS certificate is up to date for the duration of their employment with us.
- In regard to what is disclosed on an Enhanced DBS certificate, the following rules were updated on 28th November 2020. Warnings, reprimands and youth cautions will no longer be automatically disclosed on a DBS certificate, and the multiple conviction rule has been removed, meaning that if an individual has more than one conviction, regardless of offence type or time passed, each conviction will be considered against the remaining rules individually, rather than all being automatically disclosed.
- Where we become aware of any relevant information which may lead to the disqualification of an employee, we will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children. In the event of disqualification, that person's employment with us will be terminated.

Recruitment Checks

Obtaining references

As part of our commitment to safer recruitment Harvard Park will always obtain references from applicants for roles in our setting. Robust recruitment checks are essential to ensuring that unsuitable persons cannot have contact with children through employment with us.

Obtaining references is an essential element of our recruitment process. We will always obtain a reference prior to employment commencing in line with the requirement of the EYFS as follows:

- Our application process requires candidates, to supply us with the contact details of a suitable referee from:

- Their current employer, training provider or early years education and care setting.
- A senior person within the organisation who is authorised to provide a reference.
- o If the applicant is not currently employed, or is not currently working with children we will:
 - Obtain verification of the applicants most recent relevant employment if they are not currently employed.
 - Obtain a reference from the applicants most recent relevant employer from the last time they worked with children.
- o If the applicant has never worked with children we will obtain a reference from their current employer, training provider or education setting.
- o We do not accept references from:
 - Family Members regardless of their profession
 - A generic reference, for example 'to whom it may concern'.

Once a reference is received:

- o A reference received electronically will be checked to ensure it originates from a legitimate source.
- o We will compare information on the original application form against relevant information given within the reference, for example, checking dates align, roles and responsibilities are listed and are consistent. Where this is not the case, we will take up any discrepancies with the applicant.
- o If information is incomplete or we feel it is insufficient for us to make an informed decision about the applicants suitability, we will contact the referee for clarification.
- o Before an offer of employment is made, we will ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily.
- o In line with best practice, we will seek to gain explanations for any gaps in employment.

Notifying Ofsted of changes

We inform Ofsted of any changes to our Registered Person and/or our manager.

Training and staff development

- o Our manager holds an approved level 3 qualification or above. Managers appointed on or after 1st January 2024 must have already achieved a suitable level 2 qualification in maths or must do so within 2 years of starting in the position.
- o At least half of all other staff holds at least an approved level 2 qualification. We ensure there is a named deputy manager and third-in-charge who, in our judgement, is capable and qualified to take charge in the manager's absence.
- o Managers are responsible for ensuring staff have the right level of maths knowledge to effectively deliver the EYFS curriculum.
- o To count with the ratios at level 3, staff holding an Early Years Educator qualification must also have achieved a suitable level 2 qualification in English.

- We provide regular in-house training to all our staff - whether paid staff or volunteers - through the local authority and external agencies.
- Our budget allocates resources to training.
- We provide our staff with induction training in the first week of their employment. This induction includes our Health and Safety Policy and Safeguarding Children and Confidentiality Policy. Other policies and procedures are 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.

Staff taking medication/other substances

- If a member of staff is taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, we ensure that they seek further medical advice. Our staff will only work directly with the children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly.
- Staff medication on the premises will be stored securely and always kept out of reach of the children.
- If we have reason to believe that a member of our staff is under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that may affect their ability to care for children, they will not be allowed to work directly with the children, and further action will be taken.

Managing staff absences and contingency plans for emergencies

- Our staff take their holiday breaks when the setting is closed (Pre-Schol, Isleworth). Where a staff member may need to take time off for any reason other than sick leave or training, this is agreed with the manager and/or directors with sufficient notice.

Or

- Our directors organise staff annual leave so that ratios are not compromised.
- Where our staff are unwell and take sick leave in accordance with their contract of employment, we organise cover to ensure ratios are maintained.
- Sick leave is monitored, and action is taken where necessary, in accordance with the individual's contract of employment.
- If absent for up to and including 7 days, staff should obtain a sick note from their registered GP.
- Where a staff absence is prolonged, we take the necessary steps to ensure that ratios are adhered to, and the care of the children is not compromised. A suitable replacement will be put in place to support the children and their development.

Further guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-qualification-requirements-and-standards>

Staff : child ratios

Policy Statement

We aim to provide a staffing ratio in line with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the EYFS to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality. Our Staff are appropriately qualified, and we carry out checks for enhanced criminal records and barred lists via DBS in accordance with statutory requirements.

Procedures

To meet this aim, we use the following ratios of adult to children:

Children under two years of age: 1 adult: 3 children:

- at least one member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification and is suitably experienced in working with children under two.
- at least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification.
- at least half of all staff have received training that specifically addresses the care of babies; and
- where there is an under two-year-olds' room, the member of staff in charge of that room has suitable experience of working with under twos.

Children aged two years: 1 adult: 5 children:

- at least one member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification; and
- at least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification.

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

- at least one member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification; and
- at least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification.

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements where a Qualified Teacher, Early Years Professional or other suitable level 6 qualified person is working directly with children aged three and over between the hours of 8am and 4pm as follows:

- there is at least one member of staff for every 13 children; and
- at least one other member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification.

The number of children for each key person considers the individual needs of the children and the capacity of the individual key person to manage their cohort.

- A minimum of two staff/adults are on duty at any one time; one of whom is either our director, manager, deputy manager or third-in-charge.
- We only include those aged 17 years or older within our ratios where they are competent and responsible, we may include students on long-term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and apprentices (aged 17 or over), where we deem them to be suitably qualified and experienced.
- We assign each child a key person to help the child become familiar with the setting from the outset and to ensure that each child has a named member of staff with whom to form a relationship. The key person plans with parents/carers for the child's well-being and development in the setting. The key person meets regularly with the family for discussion and consultation on their child's progress and offers support in guiding their development at home.
- Our manager deploys our staff, students, agency workers, assistants and apprentices and volunteers to give adequate supervision of indoor and outdoor areas, ensuring that children are usually within sight and hearing of staff, and always within sight or hearing of staff always. Staff, agency workers, assistants, apprentices, students and volunteers inform their colleagues if they must leave their area and tell colleagues where they are going.
- Our children are adequately supervised, including whilst eating.
- Our staff, students and volunteers always focus their attention on children and do not spend time in social conversation with colleagues while they are working with children.
- Our staff, students and volunteers inform their colleagues if they must leave their area and tell colleagues where they are going.
- We hold regular staff meetings to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss children's progress, their achievements and any other difficulties that may arise from time to time.
- All staff have job descriptions which set out and specify their staff roles and responsibilities explicitly. These are updated on a necessary basis and given to staff should a change or a change in job role occur.

Staff Deployment

Members of staff, including assistants, agency or bank staff and students (where eligible to be counted in ratios) at Harvard Park, are deployed to meet the care and learning needs of children and to always ensure their safety and well-being.

- Two members of staff are on the premises before children are admitted in the morning and at the end of the day; one of which should be a director, manager, deputy manager or third in charge.
- Only those staff aged 17 or over are included in ratios. Staff working as apprentices (aged 17 or over) may not be included in ratios at any time. Only apprentices aged 17 years and over may be included in ratios if deemed suitable by a manager.
- At least 1 paediatric First Aider must always be onsite when children are present. At least 1 paediatric first aider must be present and within sight and sound of children at mealtimes.

Consideration will be given around staff breaks, lunchtimes and absences from the setting so that Harvard Park is compliant with Paediatric first aid requirements.

- The setting manager deploys staff to give adequate supervision of indoor and outdoor areas, ensuring that children are always within sight or hearing of staff. Whilst eating, children must be within sight and hearing of staff and where possible, the staff member be sat facing the children when eating.
- All staff are deployed according to the needs of the setting and children attending. This may include visiting and working at our sister setting to help support in times of need.
- In an open plan setting, staff are positioned in areas of the room and outdoors to supervise children and support their learning.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring that equipment in their area is used appropriately and that the area is tidy at the end of the session.
- Staff plan their focus on activities to support development.
- Staff inform colleagues if they must leave the room for any reason.
- When outside is being used and climbing equipment is in use there are two members of staff outside, one is supervising any climbing equipment that has been put out.
- At other times, a qualified member of staff is monitoring the garden when in use and it is adequately and sensibly set up for use.
- The setting manager may direct other members of staff to join those outside, if the numbers of children warrant additional staff.
- Staff always focus their attention on the children whilst having a wider awareness of what is happening around them.
- Staff do not spend working time in social conversation with colleagues.
- Staff allow time for colleagues to engage in 'sustained shared interaction' with children and do not interrupt activities held by colleagues.
- Sufficient staff are available at story times to engage children.
- Key persons spend time with key groups daily; these times are not for focussed activities but for promoting shared times and friendship.

Induction of employees, volunteers and apprenticeships

Policy Statement

We provide an induction for all employees, volunteers, assistants, agency workers and apprenticeships to fully brief them about the setting, the families we serve, our policies and procedures, curriculum and daily practices.

Procedures

We have a written induction plan for all new staff, which includes the following:

- Introductions to all staff and volunteers.

- Familiarisation with the building, Health and Safety and fire and evacuation procedures through a walk-around and discussion.
- Ensuring our policies and procedures have been read, understood and are carried out. Questions are asked to show knowledge of these.
- Introduction to parents/carers, especially parents/carers of allocated key children where appropriate.
- Familiarisation with confidential information where applicable in relation to any key children.
- Details of the tasks and daily routines to be completed.
- The induction period lasts 6 months.
- The manager inducts new staff apprentices and volunteers. The senior manager/director inducts new managers.
- We reserve the right to extend this period if we feel necessary.
- During the induction period, the individual must demonstrate understanding of and compliance with policies, procedures, tasks and routines.
- Successful completion of the induction forms part of the probationary period.
- Following induction, we continue to support our staff to deliver high quality performance through regular supervisions and appraisal of their work.
- Suitable students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (17 years or over) may be included in ratios at the level below their level of study, if the provider is satisfied that they are competent and responsible and if they hold a valid and current Paediatric first aid (PFA) qualification.

Staff Children, Grandchildren and/or young relatives

- Where members of staff have their own children, grandchildren and/or relatives with them at the setting, the age of the child must fall within the stipulated ages of the settings Ofsted registration.
- Where members of staff are likely to be working directly with their own children, grandchildren or other young relatives this is subject to discussion before commencement with the setting manager/directors.
- Where it is agreed that a member of staff's child, grandchild or other young relative attends the setting, it is subject to the following:
 - The child, grandchild or other young relative is treated by the parent/carer and all other staff as any other child would be.
 - The child, grandchild or other young relative will not be in the parent/carers key group of children.
 - The key person and parent/carer will work towards helping the child, grandchildren or other young relative to make a comfortable separation from the parent/carer, allowing the parent to fully undertake their role as a staff member of the setting.

- The key person will take responsibility for the child's needs throughout the day, unless the child is sick or severely distressed.
- Time and space are made for a parent to breastfeed during the day, if that is their chosen method of feeding.
- The situation is reviewed as required, to ensure that the needs of the child are being met, and that the parent/carer can fulfil their roles as a member of staff.

If is the setting manager's child, grandchild or other young relative, their director ensures that the criteria above are being met.

Safer recruitment

When recruiting new staff and volunteers, Harvard Park will follow the relevant safer recruitment processes. We will follow the checking and risk assessment processes for volunteers.

Volunteers are not left unsupervised under any circumstance. Harvard Park will follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Harvard Park will keep the single central record up to date.

This Policies and Procedures pack was adjusted by Harvard Park.

Date meeting was held on 30/04/2026

Signed on behalf of the Directors and Proprietors

Nicki Saunders and Tracey Milstead