2.1 Employment and staffing

(Including vetting, contingency plans, training and development)

Policy Statement

We meet the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, 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.

.

Procedures

1. ***Ratios***

1.1 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 five years of age: 1 adult : 8 children.

1.2 A minimum of two staff/adults are on duty at any one time.

1.3 Staff, students and volunteers are never left alone with the children until they have had a Disclosure and Barring Service check; and all children must always be within sight and hearing of a checked person.

1.4 We use a key person approach to ensure that each child has a named member of staff with whom to form a relationship. The key person meets regularly with the family for discussion and consultation on their child's progress.

1.5 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.

2. ***Vetting and staff selection***

2.1 We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.

2.2 All our staff have job descriptions, which set out their roles and responsibilities.

2.3 We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered on the basis of 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.

2.4 We follow the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage 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) check 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.

2.5 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.

2.6 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.

2.7 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.

2.8 Our staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children – whether received before, or at any time during, their employment with us.

2.9 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.

2.10 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.

3. ***Notifying Ofsted of changes***

3.1 We inform Ofsted of any changes to our Registered Person (trustees/director(s)/owner(s) our provision) and our manager.

4. ***Training and staff development***

4.1 Our manager and deputy hold at least a Level 3 qualification in child care and at over half of our other staff members hold at least a Level 2 qualification.

4.2 We provide regular in-service training to all our staff - whether paid staff or volunteers - through Gloucestershire's early years' team or external agencies.

4.3 Our budget allocates resources to training.

4.4 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 Child Protection Policy. Other policies and procedures are introduced within an induction plan.

4.5 We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervision meetings and appraisals. These are done once a term. Supervisions are completed during the Autumn and Summer terms and the annual staff appraisals are done in the Spring term.

4.6 We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.

5. ***Staff taking medication/other substances***

5.1 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.

5.2 Staff medication on the premises will be stored securely and kept out of reach of the children at all times.

5.3 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.

6. ***Managing staff absences and contingency plans for emergencies***

6.1 Our staff take their holiday breaks when the setting is closed. 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 with sufficient notice.If Staff need to swap a shift with another member of staff this must be discussed with Management first before making arrangements. This must only occur when absolutely necessary.

6.2 Where our staff are unwell and take sick leave in accordance with their contract of employment, we organise cover to ensure ratios are maintained.

6.3 Sick leave is monitored and action is taken where necessary, in accordance with the individual's contract of employment.

6.4 We have contingency plans to cover staff absences, as follows:

- The committee members who have all had a DBS check

- Staff to work overtime shifts

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	St Christopher's Playgroup	name of setting
Held on	September 2026	(date)
Date to be reviewed	September 2027	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	KJCookes	
Name of signatory	Karen Cookes	
Role of signatory (chair)	Playgroup Manager	