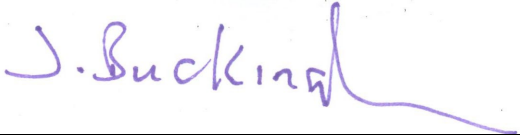


Services covered by this policy:	General Pre-school Children's Service
Post holder(s) responsible for this policy:	Children's Service Senior Manager Preschool Manager
Date approved:	23 rd October 2024
Approved by:	Children's Service Senior Manager – Jayne Buckingham
Signed:	
To be reviewed:	2 yearly

A. Policy statement

Our belief is that everyone at The Hamlet should be happy and safe, is unique and valued, can explore choice and opportunities, is encouraged to unlock their potential, can communicate in their own way and is part of the wider community.

We provide a staffing ratio in line with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality. Our staff are appropriately qualified, and we carry out enhanced checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service in accordance with our DBS policy and statutory requirements.

B. Purpose of this policy and why we have it

- To ensure that we meet the requirement of the statutory framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- To ensure safe supervision of children at all times.
- To ensure that all children have sufficient staff to support their needs at all times.
- To meet SEN needs of all children and ensure EHCP requirements are fulfilled.

C. Scope of this policy

- The Hamlet Users
- Parents/carers/home support staff of Hamlet Users
- The Hamlet staff
- The Hamlet Volunteers
- Educational or work placements e.g., Occupational Therapy or Nursing
- Visitors

D. Policy

Staff to Child Ratio In-Building

- For children aged two we ensure at least one member of staff for every five children; at least one member of these will hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification; and at least half of all the other staff will hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification. Our aim is that there is two level 3 staff and two level 2 staff present on shift at all times.
- For children aged three, four or five, we ensure at least one member of staff for every five children; at least one member of these will hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification; and at least half of all the other staff will hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification. Our aim is that there is two level 3 staff and two level 2 staff present on shift at all times.
- Preschool cannot offer 1:1 support for children unless this is funded from outside agencies and in place prior to the child starting.
- We are able to include those staff aged 17 years or older that are on placement or volunteers within our ratios. However, we use these as additional to the core staff to support learning opportunities.
- A minimum of two staff/adults are on duty at any one time.
- Staffing levels will be increased at times to meet the needs of individual children. “Ofsted may determine that providers must observe a higher staff to child ratio than outlined to ensure the safety and welfare of children.”
- Staff are trained to manage health conditions the children may present with. We aim for a minimum of two trained staff are on shift at all times.
- Our Preschool Manager deploys adults working with children in order to give adequate supervision of indoor and outdoor areas, ensuring that children are always within sight or hearing of staff at all times.
- Our staff, placements and volunteers inform their colleagues if they have to leave their area and tell colleagues where they are going.
- The Preschool Manager will deploy staff to cover any lunch breaks and meetings that other staff need to attend to ensure staff to child ratios are met.

Outings

- Our adult to child ratio is higher than the minimum requirement, normally one adult to two children, depending on their age, needs and the type of venue, as well as how it is to be reached.

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- A minimum of two staff or one staff member and a competent adult e.g. placement or volunteer accompany children on outings. Unless the whole setting is on an outing, a minimum of two staff from the children's centre will remain behind with the rest of the children.

E. Procedures and monitoring

Recruitment

When recruiting we will consider the skill level needed for the service to ensure staff to child ratio is upheld.

Staff Absence

In the event that a staff member is absent or on holiday, if cover cannot be found, the Preschool Manager will work directly with the children and as a level 6, will uphold The Hamlet's staff to child ratio.

Cancellation

In the event that staff to child ratio cannot be met with the inclusion of the Preschool Manager, we will cancel children attending the service.

In the event that there are no specialist trained staff to manage a child's health condition on shift, we will cancel the child who requires this support until a suitably trained staff member is identified.

All measure's will be taken to ensure planned absences are covered and that other staff are relocated to cover absences. However, in rare cases, we may not be able to cover absences, especially at short notice. Management will use their discretion to ensure cancellation's are fair and do not affect families disproportionately, using a RAG rating where required.

F. Regulations (Health and Social Care Act) and other legal references

- Early Years Foundation Stage (Latest Version)
- Development Matters (Latest Version)

This policy should be read in conjunction with any other relevant Hamlet policies and accompanying procedures.

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