

Clutton Playgroup Recruitment and Employment Policy



Statement of Intent

We provide a high staffing ratio to ensure that children have sufficient attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality. Our staff are appropriately qualified and the 'Safer Recruitment' guidelines are followed to ensure all Safeguarding procedures are completed.

Aims

To ensure that children and their parents are offered safe, high quality pre-school care and education.

Recruiting

Clutton playgroup is an equal opportunities employer and will try to ensure that any vacancies are advertised in places that are open to a wide range of applicants

- Local post office
- Temple cloud garage
- Chew Valley gazette
- Somerset Guardian

In the case of advertising for a Senior Practitioner the Committee will first advertise the post internally, within the existing staff. In the case of no suitable applicant being found the post will be advertised as in the first paragraph.

All respondents to any advert are to be sent an application form.

We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applications 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 us imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.

Clutton Playgroup will follow the procedures set out in the "safer recruitment and safe organisations checklist" (attached) to appoint a suitable person, the steps are as follows:-

- Post Vacancy
- Consider Applications (Managers and Committee)
- Short list
- Invite to attend session to meet staff and children
- Interview (Officers of committee & Manager)
- Appoint
- Induction
- Continued development/reviews

All staff will be given a prospectus, which shows the aims of the playgroup and all policies that have been agreed by the playgroup committee. At the first staff meeting following their appointment copies of all playgroup procedures will be given to the new staff member. At the meeting they will be read through and explained if necessary.

- We use the ratios of adult to children of 1:8 whenever possible.
- A minimum of two staff/adults on duty at any one time.
- We use a key person system to ensure that each child and each family has a particular member of staff for discussion and consultation.
- We hold regular staff meetings to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss children's progress, their achievements and any problems that may arise from time to time. Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities and Health and safety are on the agenda at all Staff meetings.
- All our staff have job descriptions which set out their roles and responsibilities.
- All the staff hold a level three qualification in working with children as well as required training in first aid and safeguarding.
- We encourage staff, whether staff or volunteers, to attend training sessions and provide in-service trainings as necessary.
- Our playgroup budget allocates resources to training.
- We provide staff induction training in the first weeks of employment, in line with the 'Safer Recruitment' guidance. This induction includes our policies and procedures.

Appraisals and Supervision meetings

Play leader's performance will be appraised yearly by the playgroup committee. At this appraisal the committee will ensure that the job description is being met, record the development of the leaders throughout the year and take notice of any training or other needs that may come to light.

Play leaders will appraise the staff in the same way. These appraisals are also to be carried out once a year. The Play Leader will pass the appraisals to the playgroup committee for their approval.

One-to-one supervision meetings will be held and, bi-monthly, observations of the staff's inter-actions with children will be carried out and discussed.

The playgroup staff are considered a vital part of playgroup life. The way that the policies and procedures are put into practice determine the way that the playgroup is viewed by the parents and children. The views of the staff are important and should be made known at committee meetings. One of the play leaders should attend each meeting (except if the meeting concerns pay or other confidential issues).

Training

We recognise the importance of Staff Training, both for the personal career development of the staff member and the benefit of Clutton Playgroup.

- We provide regular in-service training to all staff, whether paid staff or volunteers, through the Pre-school Learning Alliance or others.
- Clutton Playgroup's budget allocates resources to training and we will always strive to offer financial assistance for training purposes when such a request is made by a staff member. In such cases course fees and out-of-pocket expenses will be met by Clutton Playgroup. Where local authority courses are highly recommended by OFSTED and the Pre-school Learning Alliance, Clutton Playgroup will also reimburse staff for their time spent attending the course. All other requests for courses will be considered individually.
- Each request will be considered equally, however, group finances at the time of the request will have to be taken into consideration.
- When financial assistance is offered, it may (dependant on course cost/length) be subject to a training contract being signed. This may detail a return of service required of the member of staff who attended the course.

Grievance procedure

If any member of staff has a problem it should be dealt with as follows

1. The member of staff should approach one of the Management team to discuss the problem. If this is inappropriate at the playgroup session then an appointment should be made to discuss the problem in confidence. On some occasions it may be more appropriate for staff with problems to approach the Chairman with their problem without consulting the play leaders or to approach the SENCO (Sally Barter), the Child Protection Co-ordinator (Helen Bray) or the Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator (Sarah White) if they feel that their problem is within their field,
2. The meeting should be arranged for as soon as possible, ideally within 48 hours.
3. If the problem cannot be resolved at this informal meeting a date will be made for a grievance hearing with the Chairman of the playgroup committee. Ideally this meeting should also take place within 48 hours. Employees can be accompanied in any meetings by a colleague or union representative
4. At the meeting the problem should be resolved or an action plan formulated setting out time limits for each stage of the process.
5. If the problem cannot be resolved between the member of staff and the Chairman then our PLA worker will be approached for views and recommendations. At this meeting it will be explained how to appeal a grievance decision.
6. These recommendations will be put forward at a committee meeting and the problem will be fully discussed.

7. The decision reached by the committee will be final.

Disciplinary Procedure

1. The first stage in our procedure will be to carry out investigations without delay. In some cases this may require the holding of an investigatory hearing which will not, in itself, lead to disciplinary action. Employees may be accompanied at this meeting. In cases where suspension with pay is considered necessary, this period will be as short as possible and it will be made clear that this suspension is not considered disciplinary action.
2. The employee will be notified in writing of the time and date of the disciplinary meeting. They will be advised of their right to be accompanied at this meeting. This letter will also give information about the alleged misconduct or poor performance and its possible consequences to enable the employee to prepare an answer to the case. Copies of written evidence should be included with this letter, if appropriate.
3. At the meeting employers will explain the complaint against the employee and go through the evidence. The employee will be allowed to set out their case and answer any allegations that have been made. They can also ask questions, call witnesses and present evidence.
4. After the meeting the employer will decide whether or not disciplinary or any other action is justified and inform the employee in writing. Where misconduct is confirmed or if the employee is found to be performing unsatisfactorily it is usual to give a written warning. A further act of misconduct or failure to improve performance, within a set period, would usually lead to a final written warning. The written warning or final written warning will set out the nature of the misconduct or poor performance and the change in behaviour or improvement in performance required (with timescale). The employee will be informed of the consequences of further misconduct or failure to improve performance which could be dismissal or demotion.
5. A decision to dismiss will only be taken by Clutton Playgroup Management committee. The employee should be advised as soon as possible of the reasons for dismissal, the date on which the contract of employment will end, the appropriate period of notice and the right of appeal.
6. Some acts, termed gross misconduct, are so serious in themselves, or have such serious consequences, they may call for dismissal without notice for the first offence. These acts would include physical violence, child abuse or gross negligence (this is not an exhaustive list).
7. Where an employee feels that disciplinary action taken against them is wrong or unjust they should appeal against the decision. Employees should let the employer know the grounds for their appeal in writing. Where possible the appeal should be dealt with by Clutton Playgroup Management committee members who have not previously been involved in the case. The appeal should be dealt with without delay. The employee has a right to be accompanied at their appeal.

8. Employees should be informed of the results of their appeal in writing as soon as possible.

The above grievance and discipline policies and procedures have followed the guidance of the ACAS code of practice and all details are taken from that code.

The Acas Code of Practice isn't legally binding. However, an employment tribunal can reduce or increase any money awarded in a case by up to 25% if the code hasn't been followed.

[Download 'Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures - guidance from Acas' \(PDF, 171 KB\)](#)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Clutton playgroup held on

.....
Signed on behalf of Clutton Playgroup

This policy to be reviewed January 2019