

Parkside Playgroup

12. Employment

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

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 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.

Recruitment, criminal records checks and regulated activity

- We follow the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), safer recruitment requirements and current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) legislation and guidance when determining the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- All required suitability and criminal records checks are completed before an individual begins work or volunteering where this is required by the EYFS or other legislation.
- From 1 September 2026, a new employee must not commence employment until the provider has received the criminal records check required for their role.
- Enhanced criminal records checks are required for volunteers in accordance with the EYFS, including supervised volunteers where required.
- From 1 September 2026, the supervision exemption from the definition of regulated activity with children has been removed. A person who teaches, trains, instructs, cares for or supervises children may therefore be undertaking regulated activity even where their work is supervised by another person.
- Where a role constitutes regulated activity with children, the setting will obtain an enhanced DBS check including Children's Barred List information where legally permitted and required.
- The setting will assess each staff or volunteer role against the current statutory definition of regulated activity and will not rely solely upon whether the person is supervised when determining the appropriate level of safeguarding check.
- It is a criminal offence for a barred person to engage in regulated activity with children and for an organisation knowingly to permit a barred person to undertake regulated activity.
- Occasional volunteers who do not meet the legal definition of regulated activity will be risk assessed and appropriately supervised. The setting will determine the appropriate level of criminal records check in accordance with the EYFS, DBS eligibility requirements and current statutory guidance.

- The setting keeps an appropriate record of recruitment and suitability checks undertaken, including the date and type of check, while complying with data protection requirements.
- During our recruitment process we explore candidate's use of spoken and written English allowing us to meet the standards of the EYFS.
- Staff must have the relevant qualifications, training and have passed any required checks to fulfil their roles. We will take the appropriate steps to verify qualifications, including in cases where physical evidence cannot be produced.
- All staff who obtained a level 2 and/or level 3 qualification since 30 June 2016 must obtain a PFA qualification within three months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff: child ratios at level 2 or level 3 in an early years setting. To continue to be included in the ratio requirement the certificate must be renewed every 3 years.
- 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.
- Where the DBS Update Service is used, the setting obtains the individual's consent and undertakes status checks in accordance with DBS requirements. Providers may require subscription to the Update Service as part of their own safer-recruitment arrangements.
- 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.

Ongoing suitability

- Suitability to work with children is an ongoing requirement and does not end once recruitment checks have been completed.
- The setting informs staff and prospective staff that they must disclose any information which may affect their suitability to work with children, in accordance with the current EYFS.
- This includes relevant information arising before appointment or during employment, including arrests, charges, convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands, warnings or other information that may affect an individual's suitability to work with children, subject to the legal rules relating to protected convictions and cautions.
- Staff must inform the setting manager without delay if any such information arises during their employment.
- The setting will consider any information disclosed in accordance with safeguarding requirements, employment law, data protection legislation and DBS filtering rules and will take appropriate action to safeguard children.
- Staff suitability is kept under review throughout employment.

- 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.

Notifying Ofsted of changes

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

Training and staff development

- Our manager holds an approved level 3 qualification or above. Managers appointed on or after 1 January 2024 must have already achieved a suitable level 2 qualification in maths or must do so within two years of starting in the position.
- At least half of all other staff holds at least an approved level 2 qualification. We ensure there is a named deputy who, in our judgement, is capable and qualified to take charge in the manager's absence.
- Managers are responsible for ensuring staff have the right level of maths knowledge to effectively deliver the EYFS curriculum.
- To count within 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-service 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 Child Protection 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 kept out of reach of the children at all times.

- 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. Where a staff member may need to take time off for any reason other than sick leave or training, this is agreed with our manager with sufficient notice.

Or

- Our manager organises our 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.
- We have contingency plans to cover staff absences

Further guidance:

[Early years qualification requirements and standards - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/early-years-qualification-requirements-and-standards)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

Parkside Playgroup

Held on

Sept 2026

Date to be reviewed

Sept 2027

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Brenda Henrick

Role of signatory

Chairperson