Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Suitable People

Employment

Policy statement

Ready Steady Grow Pre-School is committed to ensuring that all adults working with or having contact with children are safe, suitable, appropriately qualified, well-trained and effectively supervised.

We comply with:

- • The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective from 1 September 2026
- • Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- • Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, where relevant as supplementary safer-recruitment good practice
- Requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- • Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP) procedures, including the BSCP Minimum Standards for Safer Recruitment

We ensure that children are cared for by suitable people at all times, and we maintain robust safer-recruitment and ongoing suitability processes for all staff, students, visitors and volunteers.

We are an equal opportunities employer and do not discriminate on any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Safer Recruitment Procedures

We use recruitment procedures that deter, identify and reject people who might pose a risk to children.

• Recruitment decisions are based on a documented safer-recruitment process. The setting will not rely on a DBS check alone when deciding whether a person is suitable to work with children.

Advertising

All job adverts include:

- A clear commitment to safeguarding and promoting welfare
- Statement that all applicants will undergo safeguarding checks, including Enhanced DBS + Barred List
- Requirement for full employment history and explanation of gaps
- • References will be sought directly from referees and scrutinised as part of the safer-recruitment process. References must not be accepted from family members or from people writing solely in a personal capacity.

Application Process

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Applicants must provide:

- A completed application form (CVs accepted only as supplementary)
- Full employment and education history with explanations for gaps
- Details of two professional references, including most recent employer
- Proof of qualifications
- Right to work documents (Home Office compliant)

Shortlisting

Shortlisting is conducted by at least two staff members, including the Manager or Deputy.
Shortlisting checks include:

- Scrutiny of employment history and reasons for leaving
- Unexplained gaps identified and followed up before interview

Interview Process

Interviews include:

- Questions relating to safeguarding, values and attitudes
- Exploration of past conduct, professionalism and suitability
- Verification of identity and original qualification certificates

Where a candidate has worked with children previously, we ask:

- Whether they have been the subject of a safeguarding investigation
- Whether they have ever been dismissed, disqualified or barred

References

We obtain:

- • At least two satisfactory references, including the most recent relevant employer where applicable. Where the applicant has worked with children, the setting will seek information about their suitability to work with children and any substantiated safeguarding concerns.
- Clarification of concerns where information is vague or incomplete
- • Verification that the reference is genuine and that the referee is appropriately placed to comment on the applicant. Any discrepancy, concern, vague statement or missing information will be followed up before appointment.

Vetting & Suitability Checks

Before starting work (or supervised duties), the following checks are completed:

Mandatory checks

- Enhanced DBS with Children's Barred List
- Right to Work check
- Identity verification
- Qualifications verification
- Health and physical capacity declaration
- Overseas police checks, where required

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- Disqualification Declaration Form (Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018)

No member of staff may have unsupervised access to children until all checks are complete.

• In exceptional circumstances, where a DBS application has been made but is not yet complete, a person may only start under a written risk assessment and must never be left unsupervised with children; children must remain within sight and hearing of a suitably checked person.

DBS Update Service

- • Staff are encouraged to subscribe to and maintain the DBS Update Service where appropriate. For staff whose suitability is decided by the provider, Update Service membership is not a statutory requirement.
- • Where a member of staff is subscribed, the setting may carry out status checks with the individual's consent as part of a proportionate, risk-based approach to ongoing suitability.
- • If a status check indicates that certificate information may have changed, the setting will obtain the appropriate new DBS check and reassess suitability before allowing unsupervised work with children.

Ongoing Suitability

All staff must:

- Report any arrests, investigations, cautions or convictions immediately
- Report any changes in circumstances relevant to suitability
- Sign an annual Ongoing Suitability Declaration
- Inform the Manager of any incidents that may impact their ability to safeguard children

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006

• The setting follows the Childcare Act 2006 and the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018. Disqualification by association does not generally apply to staff working in non-domestic early years premises.

- • Staff and managers must disclose relevant information that may affect their own suitability or disqualification status.
- • Where a person is disqualified, they must not carry out the relevant childcare or management role unless a waiver has been granted where legally available.

• The Manager/Provider will take immediate steps to protect children, obtain advice where necessary, and make any required notification to Ofsted.

Maintaining Safer-Recruitment and Suitability Records

We maintain an up-to-date central record of recruitment and suitability checks, including:

- Identity checks
- DBS checks (number, date, type)
- Update Service checks
- Right to work documentation
- Qualifications
- Health declarations
- Safer recruitment completion

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- References received
- Risk assessments for workers awaiting checks
- Supervision/induction completion dates

• These records are kept securely and are available for inspection by Ofsted. The setting records the date and outcome of required checks without retaining DBS certificate information longer than necessary.

Induction, Training & Professional Development

Induction (completed within first week)

Induction includes:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing & Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Staff Conduct & Code of Practice
- Health and Safety Policy
- Emergency procedures
- Behaviour and Mobile Phone/Camera policies
- Key Person role
- EYFS curriculum and teaching expectations
- Tour of premises & routines

Mandatory training

All staff must hold or complete:

- Recognised Paediatric First Aid (12-hour) – always at least one PFA on site
- • Safeguarding training that meets current EYFS requirements, with knowledge refreshed at least annually and formal training renewed in line with the setting's safeguarding training programme and local BSCP expectations
- • Prevent duty training/awareness appropriate to the role, including recognising and responding to concerns about radicalisation
- Health & Safety and Food Hygiene
- SEN/Inclusion training, as appropriate

Manager qualifications

Our Manager, Karen Lockley, holds:

- NCFE CACHE Level 3 Diploma for the Early Years Educator
- Level 3 SENCO qualification
- (Add additional leadership/DSL qualifications here if applicable)

• Staffing and qualification deployment will meet the current EYFS 2026 staff:child ratio and qualification requirements for the ages of children attending, using qualifications that meet the current DfE early years qualification requirements and standards.

Ongoing Development

We provide:

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- Termly supervisions
- Annual appraisals
- Opportunities for CPD through Bromley Council and external agencies
- Mentoring, observations and reflective practice

Allegations, suitability concerns and referrals

• Any allegation that an adult has harmed a child, may have harmed a child, may have committed an offence against or related to a child, or may pose a risk of harm to children will be managed immediately under the setting's allegations procedure and Bromley LADO arrangements.
• Bromley LADO referrals are made through the Children, Young People and Families Hub Portal. Out of hours, Bromley Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Team can be contacted on 0300 303 8671.
• The setting will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where the legal referral criteria are met, including where a person is removed from regulated activity (or would have been removed had they not left) because they harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child.

Staff Conduct, Health & Use of Substances

Medication

Staff must:

- Disclose medication that could affect performance
- Only continue working if medically confirmed safe
- Store personal medication securely, out of reach

Alcohol or drugs

If a staff member is suspected of being under the influence:

- They will be removed from duty immediately
- Children's safety will be prioritised
- Disciplinary action may follow
- A safeguarding referral will be made where necessary

Staff Absence & Contingency Planning

Planned leave

- As a term-time setting, staff take annual leave during closures.
- Any other leave must be requested with reasonable notice.

Sickness

- Staff must follow the Sickness & Absence Procedure.
- Sickness is monitored, and occupational health referrals may occur if needed.

Emergency cover

- We ensure ratios are maintained through:
- Pre-approved bank staff (fully vetted)
- Increasing hours for part-time qualified staff

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- Manager/deputy stepping in when needed
- Emergency agency staff (only if DBS-cleared and identity verified)

Parent volunteers

- Asking parents to take children home is not compliant with the EYFS and has been removed.

Notifying Ofsted

We notify Ofsted of:

- • Changes that the EYFS/registration requirements require the provider to notify, including relevant changes to the manager, nominated individual or registered person
- • Significant events or information affecting suitability where notification is required
- • Disqualification or other suitability matters where notification is required
- • Any significant event likely to affect the suitability of the provider or the smooth running of the provision where Ofsted notification is required
- • Allegations of serious harm or abuse by a person living, working or looking after children at the premises, and other incidents that meet Ofsted's notification criteria, as soon as reasonably practicable and within the statutory timescale

• Notifications are made through the current GOV.UK/Ofsted notification route rather than relying on a telephone number in this policy.

Data Protection

All personal information is stored securely in line with:

- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Our Data Protection & Privacy Policy

Policy Review

This policy is reviewed at least annually and sooner where legislation, EYFS requirements, DBS guidance, Ofsted requirements or Bromley safeguarding procedures change.

- Recruitment, induction, supervision, staff conduct concerns and safeguarding incidents are reviewed for learning and improvement.