**Staff Ratio & Supervision Policy**

**Purpose of Policy**

This policy is to ensure at all times that staff with relevant skills, knowledge and ability are employed within the setting in appropriate numbers and that they are deployed at all times to meet and deliver quality care and learning experiences for all children as per guidance from Care Inspectorate.

**Responsibility**

The nursery manager is responsible for all staff, students, volunteers and agency workers receiving information on health and safety in the nursery in order to supervise the children in their care suitably.

Staffing arrangements are organised to meet the needs of the children and ensure their safety. The manager is responsible for ensuring that all children are adequately supervised and that practitioners are deployed to ensure that children’s needs are met.

Colleagues should be aware of their own position and those around them, ensuring ratios are met at all times and that children receive high quality experiences are not left unattended whilst routine jobs are completed.

It is the responsibility of the nursery manager to read, understand and adhere to all policies and procedures and act in accordance with current legislation and good practice. It is also the manager’s responsibility to support team members to do the same and ensure all policies and procedures are followed correctly.

All staff must read, understand and adhere to all policies and procedures relevant to their role at all times.

**Attendance Records**

Staff must accurately record the arrival and departure times on the daily register as a child arrives or leaves the nursery. Staff should record the exact time and who dropped off or collected the child.

The nursery manager will check to ensure that the registers accurately reflect the attendance of all children on a daily basis.

**Headcounts**

Staff must undertake regular headcounts and update the headcount chart displayed within the room, so that all staff are aware of how many children should be in the room. The frequency of these must meet the individual needs of the playroom and could be:

* Every time there is a change to the group.
* A child arrives or leaves the nursery.
* A child arrives or leaves the room on a settling session.
* The group move between areas (i.e. from outside to inside etc.)
* Two rooms join together.

Management will monitor the number of children and staff in each playroom several times throughout the day to ensure staff are deployed appropriately for the number of children. Staff are expected to know at all times who many children are present and management will check the headcount chart to ensure this reflects the number of children present at all times.

**Supervision**

Staff must be vigilant and aware of the position of all children at all times, including free flow whether children are in or out of the playroom, they must be supervised at all times. Children must be within sight and hearing of staff.

The supervision of children and the deployment of staff should ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children at all times. Staff should be aware of their own position and that of those around them, ensuring children are cared for, ratios are met at all times and that children are not left unattended whilst routine jobs are completed.

When a staff member is required to complete a task which will momentarily take them away from the main group of children (i.e. taking a child to the toilet or fetching something) they must communicate this to their colleagues. The other staff must then ensure that supervision and deployment is adapted accordingly. If a child is leaving the room with them (i.e. for nappy changing etc.) this must also be communicated.

Children must be supervised at all times when eating, toddlers and babies should be closely monitored. Babies should never be left alone with a bottle and will always be bottle fed whilst being held by the key person. Children should be closely supervised when they are using large apparatus, scissors, knives for cooking activities etc.

**Adult to Child Ratio**

The nursery will ensure that staff are adequately deployed to comply with the following ratios, as set by Care Inspectorate.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Age Range** | **Ratio** |
| 0-2 years | 1 adult to 3 children |
| 2-3 years | 1 adult to 5 children |
| 3-5 years | 1 adult to 8 children |

Due to the needs of the industry, staff can be asked at any time to work later than their rostered shift to ensure the rooms maintain regulatory ratio requirements. Staff are not permitted to end their shifts if their absence would leave the rooms out of ratio

**Lone Working**

Rainbow Nursery strives to ensure that staff are not left alone during their working shift - particularly when working with the main group of children - to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and adults in the group. However, Rainbow Nursery recognises that there may be times when this isn’t always possible when it comes to:

* Non-contact time;
* Office work;
* Comforting a child in a quiet area;
* Following a child’s interest;
* Supporting children in the toilet area or that may have had an accident;
* Nappy changes;
* Opening/closure of setting;
* Cleaning & maintenance procedures;
* Off-site work such as training, visits, meetings etc.

The Care Inspectorate recommends that two adults be present in the premises when children are being cared for. It is the responsibility of both management and the staff team to identify the hazards and minimise the risks of working alone.

Staff must understand the protocols and procedures required (i.e. emergency or first aid procedures), be alert and use a common sense approach to lone working. Any potential risks should be identified, managed and rectified, where possible, through the Risk Assessment process.

Staff who are lone working should have suitable equipment and security (i.e. first aid kits, walkie talkies, etc.), ensure there is a contactable person in case of emergency and are regularly checked on by their line manager. Staff with certain medical conditions should not be left alone.

Staff must report any unsafe practises, possibilities of harm report, all accidents, injuries and near misses. Any incidents of harm or injury from lone working will be fully investigated and the potential of further or repeated risk minimised.

Staff should not undertake any lone working when there is a reasonably practical alternative.

**Date Completed: October 2023**

**Review Date: October 2024**

*This policy will be monitored in line with relevant legislation and good practice guidelines*