

St Michael's Pre-school

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Staff: Child ratios

Staffing arrangements must meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety

2.4 Staffing, Sickness, Absence and Leave

Policy Statement

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. St Michaels Pre-school recognises that employees may be absent from the organisation for a variety of reasons. To ensure that all staff are treated in a consistent and equitable manner, this document provides the framework for dealing with such circumstances.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe	2.4 Key person	3.4 The wider context	

Procedures

Sickness, absence and leave

If you are unable to work due to illness or other circumstance telephone/text the pre-school as soon as possible, preferably the evening prior if you think you will be unable to come in the next day. If you wake up unwell, please contact via phone/text before 8am. Early notification is essential to ensure that appropriate cover can be arranged.

The Manager is required to make every effort to ensure cover for the pre-school. If the Manager is too ill to arrange their own cover, the Deputy will arrange cover instead and inform the Chair of absence.

'Self-Certificates' are enforced at the Manager or Chair's discretion and is dependent on an employee's previous record of short-term sickness/absence.

Sickness absence which exceeds seven days (long term sickness/absence) requires an employee to obtain a 'Fit Note' from their GP and attend a 'Return to Work Meeting' with the Manager (The Manager's 'Return to Work Meeting' should take place with the Chair or nominated Committee Member). The 'Fit Note' and 'Return to Work Meeting' will establish the reason and cause for absence and consider whether there is anything the Manager or Organisation can do to help (make reasonable adjustments) and to confirm that the employee is fit to return to work. If the employee is deemed unfit for work, then they must return to their GP and the cycle of absence will be repeated until the employee is able to return to work or a formal process is triggered. This formal process will also be triggered if an employee's explanation for absence is not forthcoming, considered to be unsatisfactory or if absence is not reported following the procedure listed on page 2 of this policy.

In situations where an employee's sickness record is causing concern, the Manager will discuss those concerns with the employee, providing support where appropriate. If there is no obvious improvement in the health of the employee or signs of patterns emerging in an employee's absence, then the Manager has the right to trigger a 'formal' process and will arrange to meet the employee to review the employee's case. On completion of the 'formal' process and if employee's have failed to improve, an employee may be dismissed on the grounds of capability because of their inability to meet the acceptable standards of attendance required to maintain safe staff ratios at the pre-school.

Statutory Sick Pay

Normal Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) applies. To qualify for SSP staff must earn an average of at least £120 per week and be ill for at least 4 days in a row.

Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave

Absence relating to pregnancy will be recorded separately from sickness records. Employees are entitled to reasonable time-off to attend ante-natal clinics. Staff should endeavour to make routine appointments outside of work where possible. Statutory Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave pay will apply as appropriate.

Time Off For Dependants

In emergencies where normal childcare arrangements break down or where an employee is primarily or solely responsible for a child, dependant, relative or partner who becomes ill or incapable, then an employee can request a reasonable amount of time off to deal with the

emergency. This leave will be unpaid, and the request should be made to the Manager as soon as a problem is identified.

Unpaid Parental Leave

Eligible employees are entitled to 18 weeks unpaid parental leave for each child up to their 18th birthday, to look after their child's welfare. The limit on how much parental leave each parent can take in a year is 4 weeks for each child. Staff must take parental leave as whole weeks (e.g., 1 or 2 weeks) rather than individual days, unless their child is disabled. A 'week' equals the length of time an employee normally works over 7 days.

Bereavement/Compassionate Leave

Bereavement leave is paid leave that allows an employee time off to deal with their personal grief and related practical arrangements, primarily, but not limited to, when a family member dies. St Michael's Pre-school acknowledges that bereavement impacts all individuals differently and the guidelines below are intended to show the minimum paid leave an employee is entitled to in different circumstances. We acknowledge not all employees will need to take the full allowance, and some employees will need additional time, depending on their relationship with the person who has died and the circumstances of the death.

Two working days paid leave will be granted in the event of the death of a dependant. These two days can be used at the employee's discretion, for example funeral planning, or to attend a funeral. A dependant could be a:

- spouse, partner or civil partner (including same sex partners) *
- child**
- parent
- stepparent
- sibling
- person who lives in the employee's household (not tenants, lodgers, or employees)
- person who would rely on the employee for help in the event of an accident, illness, or injury, such as an elderly neighbour.
- person who relies on the employee to make care arrangements.

**Partner includes someone the employee is cohabiting with but is not the employee's spouse or civil partner.*

***Child includes children the employee is the adoptive parent, legal guardian, or carer for. If the child dies under the age of 18 or is stillborn the employee may be entitled to additional leave.*

If a non-dependant dies

In these circumstances, a day's paid leave may be granted on the death of someone who is not a child or dependant at Management's discretion. These circumstances would include (but are not limited to) situations where the employee is attending a funeral or responsible for funeral arrangements.

Giving notice for bereavement leave


An employee should notify the manager of their need to take leave as soon as possible or, at the latest, on the first day of absence. An employee's next of kin or family member can notify the employee's line manager on their behalf. In exceptional circumstances, applications for leave will be considered after the first day of absence. Managers have the right to exercise discretion in exceptional circumstances as outlined above. Leave days do not have to be taken consecutively.

Unpaid leave

Unpaid leave on compassionate grounds may be granted after bereavement at the discretion of management.

Holiday Entitlement/Annual Leave

All employees are entitled to 5.6 weeks paid holiday a year. Please refer to individual contracts of employment.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	St Michael's Pre-school
Held on	_____ (date)
Date to be reviewed	_____ (date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	
Name of signatory	_____ Ellena Lloyd
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	_____ Committee Chair

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Employee Handbook (2012)
- Recruiting Early Years Staff (2016)

- People Management in the Early Years (2016)