****

**Employment and Staffing Policy**

**Reviewed February 2021**

At Free Rangers Forest Schools Ltd we provide a staffing ratio in line with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This ensures children have sufficient individual attention and the guarantee of high-quality care and education. All of our staff are employed following safer recruitment guidelines. Our staff are appropriately qualified, and we carry out checks through the Disclosure and Baring service (DBS) in accordance with statutory requirements.

**Procedure**

**Ratios**

To meet this aim we use the following ratios of adult to children:

Children under two years of age: 1 adult to 3 Children

Children Aged two years: 1 adult to 4 children

Children aged three to seven years: 1 adult to 8 children

Qualified teachers and EYP’S/ EYT’S 1 adult to 13 children over three years

A minimum of two staff/adults are on duty at any one time per group of children.

We use a key person approach to ensure that each child has a named member of staff with whom to form a relationship. The Key person plans with the parents and carers for the child’s well-being and development whilst at Free Rangers. The key person has regular communication, in a range of ways, with families for discussions and consultation on their child’s progress and development.

Room staff have regular meetings to undertake curriculum planning and discuss children’s progress, their achievements and any difficulties that may arise from time to time. These happen every other Friday from 5 - 6pm.

**Vetting and Staff Selection**

We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment selection

All staff have job descriptions which set out their staff 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 marital status, age, gender, culture, religious belief, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by our imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.

We use Ofsted guidance on obtaining references and DBS Checks (Disclosure and Barring service) for staff and volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children. This is in accordance with requirements under the safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006 for the vetting and barring scheme

We keep records relating to employment of staff and volunteers, in particular those demonstrating that checks have been done, including the date and number of the DBS Check.

**Changes to Staff**

We Inform Ofsted of any changes in the person responsible for our setting

**Training and Staff development**

Free Rangers Manager and Deputy Manager hold a level 6 or an equivalent qualification and all staff will hold or be working towards a level 3 or equivalent or higher qualification.

We provide staff induction training in the first week of employment. This induction includes our health and safety policy and safeguarding children and child protection policy. Other policies are introduced in the induction pack.

We support the work of our staff by holding regular support and supervision meetings as well as room and team meetings.

We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practices.

**Managing staff absences and contingency plans for emergencies**

The manager organises staff annual leave so that ratios are not compromised

Where 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 contract of employment

We have contingency plans to cover staff absences. We use a regular agency called Monarch and have bank staff who know Free Rangers and are DBS checked.

Covid-19- during the covid-19 pandemic we work in bubbles and in times of lockdown we are unable to cover staff absence with staff from other bubbles. During these times, if cover cannot be found, it may not be possible to except all children in for their session to ensure ratios are adhered too. In such cases the child’s daily fee cost will be refunded.

During the Covid-19 pandemic there may be times when whole bubbles are required to close for isolation, this includes staff and children. There are separate policies to inform parents of the details of this situation

**This policy was first adopted at a meeting of Free Rangers Forest Schools ltd held on 1ST August 2011 and reviewed last on Jan 2017 and then in Sept 2018 and November 2019,**

Signed: Role: Owner

Signed: Role: Management Team

Signed: Role: Management Team