

Leadership and management

The heart of Woodlands is always the children, every decision we make is based around creating a culture of excellence where all children are given the opportunity to develop and excel. We believe that by employing passionate, highly qualified staff we are giving the children the best quality provision possible. To keep our high standards we monitor and encourage our staff's professional development through robust supervision and mentoring. As managers we are still an active part of the team although supernumerary, involving ourselves in every aspect of working with the children on a daily basis to lead by example and develop a whole team culture within.

We are reflective practitioners, encouraging staff feedback both formally and informally through staff meetings, questionnaires and daily practice. We encourage all of the team to participate in the development of our setting by valuing their opinions and experiences. Opportunities for this type of discussion happen at half termly supervision meetings where we formally monitor and evaluate staff development and practice. To ensure supervision actions are carried out we have organised a detailed coaching and mentoring system where we oversee and delegate mentors to all staff, including new staff, trainees and students. This system allows a continuous cycle of professional development throughout the whole team.

A regular updated log of staff training is kept and a budget is set to include not just statutory training courses but access to all training that enhance specific job roles and interests. As managers we play to our staff's strengths, delegating job roles and responsibilities based on aptitude and competency. We have implemented a daily job rota to ensure the whole team participate in each area of their job role for variety and self-development. Our session leaders are selected based on their ability to lead and communicate within the team.

We value keypersons knowledge of the individual children and within regular meetings we cascade all information and decision making down through the team. This ensures a effective approach to decision making and outcomes such as deciding how the children's Pupil Premium or Disability Access Fund can be best spent. This leads to best outcomes for all children's progress. Management ensure outcomes are documented through observations and evidence in children's learning journeys. Data is regularly analysed and monitored by management to track progress to narrow gaps.

Along with our committee, management develop and update policies to ensure they're in line with legislation and the settings requirements. We make sure these policies reflect equality and diversity ensuring all families have full access to the setting and the wide community fully benefit from all that Woodlands has to offer. Keeping our policies up to date is a vital part of our job description, the importance of which is demonstrated in the time devoted to keeping these current.

Many aspects of our professional development go into our policies. High regard is given to self-developed management training, regular attendance of network meetings, audits, liaising with other professionals and the good practice of keeping up to date with current literature and legislation. To make successful improvements and provide a rich learning environment for children takes strong leadership and management skills. The basis of this should be a thorough knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage supported by multiagency working and rigorous adherence to safeguarding

information. To manage this well, structure and organisation is in place in the form of achievable and time bound daily, weekly and monthly tasks. This leads to a well-managed preschool.

Year on year our safeguarding knowledge and practice is improved through training and experience. This knowledge is cascaded down through the team to ensure children are safe and protected, including radicalisation and extremism. We have strict policies and procedures in the setting to keep children safe. The children know the rules and boundaries of the setting and what is expected of them. We have a rules board which the children helped create through discussions and decision making as a group as to what they thought were expected behaviours. We regularly reinforce this by discussing it in small groups or during circle time.

As managers we have created a culture of vigilance where children's welfare is actively promoted. We require our staff to role model good practice and encourage older children to reinforce this for the younger children by setting a good example. Our regularly updated safeguarding knowledge ensures staffs confidence and ability to recognise and report any concerns. Children are listened to and feel safe with high ratios always being maintained so that all children are well supervised. Management risks assess the premises, equipment and staffing to ensure that high standards of health and safety are met throughout. This plays a vital part in safeguarding children's welfare.

We ensure all staff understand our Whistleblowing procedures which are introduced during the induction process and regularly revisited during staff meetings. Posters are displayed in the Kitchen & staff room with contact details of our committee members.

We believe to effectively care for children and progress their learning and development we must have a good communicative relationship with parents and carers. This begins at open afternoons when we first meet new families and develops further during home visits. Home visits are organised to include a member of management and the child's keyperson. Parents are given a communication book to be used for information sharing; this is especially beneficial for working parents, for children who attend more than one setting and families with language barriers. We use varied methods of effective communication including newsletters, emails, social media, informal discussions and parent's evenings. Together these methods enhance and develop our relationships with parents ensuring effective communication to support children and make parents partners in their children's learning and development. We actively seek parents, children's and staffs viewpoints when making new decisions to drive continual improvement.

Feedback gathered from communication methods such as questionnaires and management professional development lead to recent evaluations and adaptations of our teaching styles and methods to meet the individual needs of all children. This began with management research, leading to changes in teaching styles and the environment, ending in whole team training to consolidate understanding of new methods. In our pursuit of excellence we have developed our understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and have implemented and updated the learning environment to support children's play and exploration both indoors and outdoors.

Our learning environment supports children's learning and development through play by recognising individual children's current interests and motivators. We have taught staff to observe children's levels of involvement in their play and reflect on how their input can enhance learning. We have created a planning system and learning environment that encourages risk taking, creative play and

challenge which cover all aspects of the EYFS particularly the Prime areas. Our high expectations for children enthuse and motivate both staff and children to develop their learning.