SANDCASTLES POLICY

*SAFEGUARDING & PROMOTING CHILDREN’S WELFARE*

CONTINGENCY – STAFF ABSENCE

We avoid working to minimum staff to child ratios, therefore we generally have some built in flexibility to cover e.g. short staff absence.

The majority if not all of our practitioners are trained in first aid, several are cleared by Ofsted as managers (Helen, Judith, Nicky).

Within our small, long established team every duty can be replicated.

**In the event of several staff being absent at once, we would:**

* Calculate minimum legal staff ratios across the whole setting using max ratio e.g.1:5 and proportion of qualified to unqualified as specified in EYFS
* Suspend staff PPA / non-contact time
* Re-adjust roles so both Helen Baines and Helen O’Hagan in ratio (EYP/ EYT Status = 13 three & four year olds and this also extends to other L3 qualified staff in ear and eye line of Helen)
* Merge / split children to best reflect staff availability across two age ranges
* Contact our part-time staff to work overtime
* Enlist present staff to work overtime
* Deploy cook to support practitioners
* Postpone plans requiring intensive staffing e.g. trip out
* Delay staff holidays
* Consider agency staff (Key stage supply Lancaster 01524 597170)
* Local childminders, several parents and some extended family members are CRB/DBS cleared and could be called upon in an extreme emergency once checked on the DBS update service but must remain within supervision of our permanent staff.
* Phone parents inviting them to swap attendance
* Contact parents in order (not working first) to explain we are not able to accommodate their child today.
* If this staff shortage is likely to persist plan for offering a reduced service – can we offer 6 hours of opening a day to max care with minimal staff (staff lunch break required after 6 hours).
* Contact Ofsted Tel: 0300 123 1231 to inform of any exceptional measures.

**In the event of staff not arriving at nursery in preparation to open and welcome children in the morning:**

* 2 staff members are required to open nursery.
* If 2nd member of staff does not arrive before 8:01 – staff member on site will call Helen O’Hagan
* If 2nd member of staff does not arrive before first child – the parent or carer accompanying this child must be asked to wait until a 2nd member of staff arrives
* Staff working the 8am shift should be onsite, ready to work (coat off, lunch away etc) and signed in for 8am.

*If after one hour a missing team member has not been successfully contacted we would alert the people listed as emergency contacts for that staff member to safeguard their welfare*

M. E. Coates, Helen O’Hagan 30 Oct 2024. To be reviewed by Oct 2027