Staffing Policy

Staffing Structure and Ratios

- The nursery is staffed by a **Manager**, a **Deputy Manager**, and **two Room Supervisors**.
- The Manager, Deputy, or one of the Supervisors (known as **Third in Charge**) is always in attendance.
- Other staff work on a rota basis to adhere to required statutory ratios:
    - **1:8** for children aged between **3 and 5 years**.
    - **1:5** for children aged between **2 and 3 years**.
    - **1:3** for children aged between **3 months and 2 years**.

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2. Staff Qualifications

- At least **one member of staff in each room** will hold a **Level 3 qualification**.
- At least **half of all other staff in each room** will hold a full and relevant **Level 2 qualification**.

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3. Safer Recruitment and DBS Checks

The Orchard Nursery follows safer recruitment procedures in line with KCSIE 2026, EYFS 2026 and Plymouth CAST recruitment procedures. All recruitment processes are designed to ensure that adults working with children, including students over 16 and regular volunteers, are suitable, safe, and committed to safeguarding children.

Before appointment, the nursery completes the following checks:

- Enhanced DBS checks, including barred list checks where required.
- Identity checks.
- Qualification checks.
- Verification of references.
- Full employment history checks, including exploring any gaps.
- A safeguarding-focused recruitment process.
- Additional criminal record checks for anyone who has lived or worked abroad, where required.

References

The nursery ensures references are obtained safely and appropriately:

- Open references such as “To whom it may concern” are not accepted.
- References are obtained directly from employers where possible.
- At least one reference must be from the applicant’s current or most recent employer.
- References must be completed by an appropriate senior person.
- References from family members are not accepted.
- Electronic references are verified to ensure they are from a legitimate source.

DBS Checks and Update Service

- DBS checks are completed for all new staff and regular volunteers.
- The nursery pays the initial cost of the DBS check.
- New staff are required to join the DBS Update Service and renew their subscription annually (£16 payable by the staff member).
- If a staff member does not maintain their DBS Update Service subscription, they will be required to fund a new DBS check.
- DBS certificate status checks are completed online every 6 months by the Manager, where applicable.

Single Central Record (SCR)

The nursery maintains a secure Single Central Record (SCR) containing all required recruitment and vetting information. The SCR is regularly monitored by management and the safeguarding committee representative**.**

Ongoing Suitability

All staff and volunteers must:

- Disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, or other information that may affect their suitability to work with children.
- Inform the Manager immediately of any changes that may affect their suitability during employment.
- Follow nursery procedures where concerns regarding suitability arise.

Staff Ratios and Supervision

Staffing ratios meet the requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework 2026. Children are supervised effectively at all times to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

English Language Skills

The Orchard Nursery ensures all staff have sufficient understanding and use of English to safeguard and promote children’s wellbeing. Staff must be able to communicate effectively with children, families and professionals, complete records in English, understand health and safety procedures, and seek emergency assistance when required.

4. Key Person and Buddy System

- A **Key Person system** is used to ensure each child and family has a designated staff member for discussion and consultation.
- A **Buddy Key Person system** is in place, assigning an additional member of staff in the main Key Person's absence.

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5. Equality and Recruitment

- The nursery works towards offering **equality of opportunity** by using **non-discriminatory recruitment and selection procedures**.

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6. Roles, Responsibilities, and Job Descriptions

- All staff receive a **job description** outlining their roles and responsibilities.

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7. Induction and Probation

- Staff receive **induction training** carried out by the Manager.
- A **6-month probationary period** is in place to ensure staff maintain high standards of care and support for children. Regular meetings with senior leaders take place during these 6 months.
- Induction during the **first day of employment** includes:
    - Health and Safety Policy and Procedures.
    - Safeguarding Children.
    - Fire Safety.
    - Other key policies, including behaviour and manual / positive handling.
- The second meeting comprises of EYFS, areas of development, Orchard Goals, assessments, Observations and training on eyLog is completed.
- A **mentor/buddy system** is used, pairing new staff with experienced staff members.

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8. Staff Training and Development

- Regular **in-house training** is provided, which may take place after working hours. Attendance is **paid**.
- Training is also available through **Bournemouth Early Years**, covering up-to-date legislation. This may take place in evenings or weekends, and attendance is **paid**.
- Online training is delivered via **"Noodle Now"** and **"SSS"**, which can be completed at home or during work time when ratios allow.

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9. Staff Meetings

- Regular staff meetings are held to discuss:
    - Nursery issues.
    - Curriculum planning.
    - Policy and procedure updates.
    - Safeguarding updates.
    - Quizzes and knowledge refreshers.
- Attendance at staff meetings is **paid**, and staff members are requested to attend.

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10. Staff Holidays

- Staff holidays are arranged by completing a **Holiday Request Form**.
- All requests are recorded on the yearly planner.
- Holidays are confirmed only by the **Manager or Deputy**.
- Only **one (sometimes two) member of staff at a time** may be on holiday.
- The Manager must ensure at least **one familiar and consistent staff member remains on duty in each room**.
- Staff must reserve **3 or 4 days of holiday** for the Christmas closure week.

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11. Students and Volunteers

The Orchard Nursery welcomes students and work experience placements as part of developing the future early years workforce. All students are subject to the nursery's safeguarding and safer recruitment procedures.

- Before starting a placement:
- The student's suitability is assessed. At least one reference is obtained.
- Appropriate DBS checks are completed.
- Students receive an induction covering safeguarding, confidentiality, health and safety, and nursery procedures.
- Students are made aware of their responsibility to maintain children's privacy and confidentiality.

Students, apprentices and long-term volunteers are welcomed at The Orchard Nursery and must follow all safeguarding procedures.

Anyone under 17 must not be included in staff ratios or left unsupervised with children, except apprentices aged 16 or over.

Students and long-term volunteers aged 17 or over, and apprentices aged 16 or over, may be included in ratios at the level below their level of study only where they are assessed as suitable, competent and responsible, and hold a valid current paediatric first aid qualification.

All students, apprentices and volunteers receive an induction and work under the supervision of experienced staff.

12. Appraisals and Supervisions

- Staff undergo **annual appraisals**.
- Staff also receive **two additional supervisions** within the year.

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13. Mobile Phones and Cameras

- Mobile phones and personal cameras are **not permitted in the nursery**., and must be stored in the office in a dedicated box.
- They may be used on staff lunch breaks, where no children are present.

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14. Staff Uniform

The staff uniform consists of:

- Polo shirt with nursery logo / zipped fleece with logo (**provided**).
- Black trousers.
- Flat, comfortable shoes/trainers.
- Indoor shoes, slippers, or socks to be worn inside the nursery.

Summer uniform may include:

- Black cropped trousers or long shorts.
- Suitable vest tops.
- Sandals (no flip flops).

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15. Health and Safety Appearance Rules

- Nails should be clean and a reasonable length to care for children appropriately.
- Acrylic nails may be worn but must be kept at a reasonable length.
- Only stud earrings or small hoop earrings may be worn.

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6. Babysitting Policy

Purpose

This policy provides clarification regarding private babysitting arrangements between staff and parents/carers.

Policy Statements

- The nursery will not be held responsible for any private arrangements or agreements made between staff and parents.
- Out-of-hours work arrangements must not interfere with a staff member's employment at the nursery.
- Confidentiality of employment must be adhered to and respected at all times.
- Parents should be aware that adults accompanying the babysitter may not have DBS clearance and may not be appropriate to care for children.
- The nursery will not be held responsible for health and safety or other issues arising from private babysitting arrangements.

Safeguarding Duty

The nursery has a duty to safeguard all children **while on nursery premises and in the care of nursery staff**.
This duty also **extends** to private arrangements between staff and parents/carers outside nursery working hours.

Signed on behalf of the nursery.....Emma Middleton.....**Date**:..... August 2026.....