Job Description: Practice Lead

Job Purpose: To provide senior pedagogical and operational leadership within the outdoor nursery setting. As a key member of the management team, Practice Leads are responsible for driving excellence in early years practice through direct mentorship, robust quality assurance, and strategic oversight of the learning environment. You will support the Nursery Head in the strategic growth of the service, acting as a bridge between management and the practitioner team to ensure a safe, high-quality, and nurturing environment for all.

Key Responsibilities

1. Operational Leadership & Safety Oversight

- **Strategic Oversight:** Maintain a constant "helicopter view" of the setting to manage staff-to-child ratios and operational flow effectively, ensuring the environment remains calm and purposeful.
- **Dynamic Risk Management:** Lead on-site health and safety, making high-level dynamic risk assessment decisions and ensuring full SSSC and Care Inspectorate compliance at all times.
- **Deputising Duties:** Take full responsibility for the service, site, and staff in the absence of the Nursery Head, maintaining quality standards and solving operational challenges creatively.
- **Protocol Mastery:** Oversee and audit critical safety protocols, including missing child procedures, emergency incident responses, and site security sweeps.

2. Mentorship & Professional Development

- **Clinical Mentorship:** Model exemplary outdoor pedagogical practice, demonstrating a deep understanding of the **Curriculum for Excellence** and **Realising the Ambition**.
- **Staff Coaching:** Provide "on-the-spot" coaching and structured feedback to practitioners, apprentices, and students to identify and bridge practice gaps.
- **Culture Leadership:** Foster a high-trust, "safe-to-fail" learning culture, acting as a supportive mentor, while maintaining a clear professional boundary between practitioners and apprentices in line with your role as a supervisor.
- **Professional Standards:** Handle difficult practice conversations with maturity and lead the team in role-modelling the organisation’s values and communication protocols.

3. Quality Assurance & Strategic Improvement

- **Audit Cycle Management:** Play a key role in supporting the internal quality assurance cycle, including technical compliance audits and monitoring including sampling of children's personal plans, Observations, to ensure all documentation meets national standards.

- **Educational Quality:** Monitor and improve the quality of team observations and learning journals, ensuring they accurately reflect and extend each child's developmental progress.

- **Strategic Contribution:** Actively contribute to the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) by leading specific setting-wide projects, For example ASN provision or environmental enhancements.

- **Management Voice:** Attend management meetings prepared with solution-oriented strategic ideas and progress updates, ensuring a strong link between daily practice and organisational goals.

4. Community & Professional Partnership

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Build deep trust with families through high-quality handovers and proactive communication regarding their child's learning and wellbeing. Handling concerns/complaints empathetically and professionally.

- **Brand Representation:** Represent the setting professionally to visitors, local authority partners, and other agencies, ensuring the organisation's reputation for excellence is upheld.

- **Community Integration:** Lead the planning and execution of community events and parent engagement initiatives to strengthen the nursery's local presence.