

Recruitment, Staffing and Employment Policy

In accordance with regulations, we aim to have at least half of our staff qualified in day care or education relating to young children. We pride ourselves on maintaining good adult-to-child ratios and aim to operate above the legal requirements of 1:8 for children aged 3 and over and 1:4 for children between 2 and 3 years of age. Our Key Person system ensures each child and family has one particular staff member who takes a special interest in them. They will also observe them and use this information to plan activities suitable for their learning and development. Regular staff meetings provide opportunities for staff to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss the children's progress and any difficulties.

We aim to meet the Nursery's staffing needs as far as possible with regular staff employed on permanent contracts. From time to time, we employ other staff members on a casual basis, for example to cover emergencies, or on fixed-term contracts, typically to meet particular short-term needs.

We ensure that all staff members are given the opportunity to do appropriate training to update their skills and underpin their knowledge and understanding of pre-school children. There are a number of training courses run by the local authority and our staff members are encouraged to attend these whenever possible.

We are an 'Equal Opportunity Employer and are committed to implementing the Nursery's Equality and Diversity Policy will form part of the job description for all staff. We have an Equal Opportunities Policy, seeking to offer job opportunities equally to both women and men, with and without disabilities, and from all religious, social, ethnic and cultural groups.

A member of staff to be employed on a permanent basis will be interviewed by the Manager or occasionally by the Director. The selection panel takes responsibility for the creation or checking of recruitment information such as the job description, person specifications and advertisements. This panel takes an active role in shortlisting and interviewing the applicants using standardised interview procedures. We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation.

The Manager is authorised to recruit staff being employed on a casual basis to cover staff illness or absence or to meet a short-term need.

All staff positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and they must be prepared to disclose any convictions they may have had or orders they have against them. All successful applicants must agree to the appropriate checks on criminal records and health as required by the relevant statutory authorities.

In accordance with our Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures, all appointments will be subject to a probationary period (usually six months). We use guidance in obtaining references and criminal records checks through the Criminal Records Bureau for staff and volunteers who have substantial access to children. The appointment will not be confirmed unless the checks are satisfactory.

We provide staff induction training in the 6 months of employment. This induction includes our Health and Safety Policies and Procedures and Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures. The appointed mentor – within an induction plan – will introduce other policies and procedures.

Staff members should restrict the number of private telephone calls received at work to a minimum. Mobile phones may not be used at any time while working with children. They can only be used off the premises, during breaks and in the staff room.

We support the work of our staff by holding regular staff meetings and through supervision and appraisals with the Manager. If any member of staff reveals, through action or attitude, a lack of positive feeling towards themselves or for our work then the Manager or Deputy Manager will invite the member of staff to discuss the situation and seek to resolve this issue through discussion.

Whilst the Nursery is very aware that its members of staff will themselves be encountering issues in daily life which may cause problems and discomfort, the Nursery must insist that the undertaking of the role of working in this Nursery requires a positive attitude and approach on all occasions.

All staff are employed and paid by Little Pumpkins Nursery using money from the Nursery funding and fees. Our Nursery's budget includes an allocation towards training costs.

The Manager and Deputy Manager have an annual review and appraisal with the Directors. Other members of staff have the opportunity for an annual review and appraisal with the Manager.

Policy on staff numbers

It is the policy of this Nursery to ensure that there is always sufficient staff to give the children the care and attention they need and in particular that staff numbers do not fall below the recommended staff to child ratios set by. For this reason, we follow the principles:

- The number of permanent staff members is, where possible, in excess of requirements. In particular, the Manager is supernumerary but can be called on to take over in the event of unplanned staff absence
- The Nursery has a standby list of people who can be called on if necessary in the event of staff absence. These people may already work in the Nursery on a part time basis
- In the event of supply staff not being available, agencies may be called upon

Staff shortage procedure

In all cases of staff absence, the Manager/Deputy Manager must ensure staff to child ratios are maintained in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage welfare requirements (DFES).

Staff sickness

In the event of a member of staff being off sick, substitute staff members should be deployed

suitably around the Nursery to cover child: staff ratios. If this is not possible, supply staff members are to be arranged. Wherever possible, current part-time staff members should cover for colleagues.

Staff training

Part-time staff/supply staff will cover staff training shortages. In the event of staff absence, it may be necessary to ask the member of staff attending training to return to the Nursery. In both cases, if the above cover is not available, the Manager will cover any shortages due to his/her supernumerary status.

Emergency staff shortages

In the event of unforeseen staff shortages, the following options may be actioned:

- Staff may need to redeploy into other areas of the Nursery
- The Manager/Deputy Manager may need to cover in other rooms
- It may occasionally be necessary to join rooms together to maintain staffing levels.

In the rare event of the Manager, Deputy Manager or Room Leaders not being present, staff members must contact the Manager or Deputy Manager to seek advice on how to cover shortages. It may, on rare occasions, be necessary for the Manager/ Deputy Manager to return to the Nursery to assist.

All staff members from agencies must have a DBS check, and have two references. Details of agency staff members' experience must be given to the Manager before commencing work at the Nursery.

Stress policy

Stress is defined as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them". This makes an important distinction from pressure, which can be detrimental to health.

We at Little Pumpkins Nursery are committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of our employees. We recognise that workplace stress is a health issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors. We do this by:

- Monitoring working hours and overtime to ensure that staff members are not overworking
- Monitoring holidays to ensure that staff members are taking their full entitlement
- Ensuring that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within the Nursery
- Being vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside of work e.g. bereavement or separation
- Ensuring any issues/concerns are raised with the Manager

Clothing and appearance

Staff must remember that in everything you do or say at work, or whilst you are out and about in your uniform, you are representing the Nursery. It is important that you present yourselves as professionals.

The Nursery will supply staff with t-shirts and jumpers with the Nursery logo embroidered on them. You will need to provide yourselves with trousers (3/4 length trousers are acceptable) in black. **Jeans and leggings are not allowed.** It is important that you are comfortable in the clothing that you wear.

Footwear should, again, be comfortable. For health and safety reasons your shoes must have a back to them to support your feet during the working day.

Make-up and jewellery should be kept to a minimum – no dangly earrings or rings with raised stones.

It is your responsibility to maintain your uniform to a good standard, ensure it is cleaned regularly and returned upon the Nursery's request. Uniform remains the property of Little Pumpkins Nursery.

Personal property

Little Pumpkins Nursery cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to personal property kept on the premises or in vehicles.

Sickness/Absence from work procedure

In the event of absence from work, due to illness or any other reason, you must telephone and speak to either the Manager or Deputy Manager as soon as you know when you will not be available. Contact needs to be made, at the very latest, by 6.30am, and you must ring back the same day by 4pm. It is your duty as part of the team to keep the Nursery informed of your progress to allow the Nursery to put contingency plans into action.

Please be aware it is not acceptable to “text” or leave a voice message.

You are also reminded that your contract states:

“Notification of absence from work due to illness or any further cause should be made prior to your starting time on the first day of absence to the Manager of the Nursery.

Overtime procedure

- The overtime procedure is incorporated alongside each employee's individual contract and job description
- If any member of staff works beyond their agreed working hours, they will be given the “Time off in Lieu” (TOIL). Any TOIL must be authorised by the Manager or Deputy Manager
- TOIL is recorded in the TOIL book and must be taken back at a convenient time for the Nursery. Consent form Manager or Deputy Manager must be sort
- Time must be used by the end of each year. If TOIL is not taken, it will be lost
- Room leaders are responsible for discussing the staffing needs of individual rooms to the Manager to ascertain if any staff cover is needed. In the event of rooms needing cover, where possible staff will support each other and be deployed throughout the Nursery if possible

Staff Appraisal and Reviews

End of probation reviews

Each member of staff begins their contract on a six month probationary period. When this period ends, staff members will be given an “end of probation review”. The review takes on a similar format to an appraisal and gives both the employee and employer an opportunity to discuss the previous three months. Assuming that a satisfactory probation period has been completed, the employee’s contract will be made permanent. This will be confirmed in writing. If there has been an unsatisfactory probation period, the contract will either be extended for another three month period or a new contract will not be issued, thus terminating employment.

Appraisals

Staff appraisals will take place annually and will consist of a one-to-one meeting with the Manager. Prior to the meeting, each member of staff will be given notice of the date and time of their appraisal and they will be asked to consider the following points so that they can be discussed during the appraisal meeting:

1. Immediate improvements that could be made in relation to the individual’s job
2. Immediate improvements that could be made in the Nursery
3. Long term plans or visions of how they see their role and the Nursery progressing
4. How we will implement any agreed targets
5. Any new areas of responsibility that may be investigated further
6. Training needs

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