

38. Staff Development Policy

At La Petite Academy we value our staff highly. We believe that ongoing personal and professional development is essential for the delivery of high-quality learning and development opportunities for children in their early years.

We take the safety and welfare of our children and staff seriously. This policy ensures staff behave in an appropriate manner to act as a role model for and protect all children in their care, and as a framework to support staff to develop effectively in their role.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Personnel policy and Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy.

Expected staff behaviour

Within our nursery we expect our staff to put our children first. The safety, welfare and ongoing development of children is the most important part of their role.

All staff sign a Code of Conduct as part of their induction and have regular supervision meetings, appraisals and observations.

Staff are expected to immediately report to management any changes in their personal life that may impact on their ability to continue in their role. These may include (but are not limited to) changes in police record, use of medication or any social service involvement with their own children.

Within the nursery we:

- Conduct regular peer observations using all staff and management, during which we observe interactions between staff and children
- Have regular supervisions with all staff in which ongoing suitability is monitored and recorded
- Have a Whistleblowing policy that enables team members to discuss confidentially any concerns about their colleagues
- Have a method of reporting and recording low level concerns about staff
- Operate staff suitability checks and clauses in staff contracts to ensure any changes in their suitability to work with children are reported immediately to management
- Ensure all new staff members are deemed suitable with the appropriate checks as detailed in the Personnel policy

- Follow our procedures in the Personnel and/or Safeguarding policies should concerns dictate.

Staff Development and Qualifications

The overall quality of our nursery is underpinned by our staff having the appropriate qualifications, training, skills, knowledge, and a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Every staff member is given the opportunity to further develop their training, knowledge and skills through a comprehensive and targeted programme of professional development. High-quality professional supervision and appraisal are also provided, to support, coach and train each staff member and promote the interests of the children. Each meeting is planned based on individual performance related targets, consistent and sharply focused observation and evaluations of the impact of staff's practice.

We aim for at least 75% of staff to be qualified to Level 3 (or equivalent) or above in childcare and education or Early Years Educator or actively working towards this. Other staff working at the nursery are either qualified to Level 2 or undertaking training to reach this level. Where necessary staff will be supported to achieve a suitable Level 2 qualification in English (as defined by the Department for Education on the Early Years Qualifications List) for the completion of the Early Years Educator. We ensure staff have adequate maths knowledge for effective delivery of the EYFS curriculum, for example through the Maths Champions resources.

We will ensure setting managers appointed on or after 4 January 2024 hold a level 2 maths qualification, or they achieve one within 2 years of starting in the position.

In addition to this, we ensure that all level 2 and/or level 3 qualified staff (on or after 30 June 2016) have either a full PFA or an emergency PFA certificate within three months of starting work and ongoing in order to include them in the required staff: child ratios at level 2 or level 3.

Supervision and Appraisal

We implement a system of supervision and appraisal for all our staff following successful completion of their 6-month induction and probation period. Supervision is part of the nursery's overall performance management system and promotes a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous

improvement. It encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues including the opportunity for staff and their managers to:

- Discuss any issues – particularly concerning children’s development or well-being, including child protection concerns
- Identify solutions to address issues as they arise
- Receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness
- Develop their own skills or training needs to progress in their role
- Identify appropriate targets for staff to work towards
- Discuss any concerns relating to changes in personal circumstances that might affect an individual’s ability or suitability to work with children. (This should include any incidents resulting in a reprimand, caution or prosecution by the police, any court orders or changes to their health. These changes are recorded as a declaration on the individual member of staff’s supervision form and appropriate action is taken, where applicable, in line with the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy and Disciplinary procedure).

The frequency of supervision and appraisal meetings is 3 monthly, or more frequently according to individual needs. A template agenda is used in all meetings to ensure consistency across the nursery. This clearly sets out who does what and the timeframe, i.e. what the manager is responsible for and what the practitioner needs to do.

Supervision meetings are focused on the staff member’s wellbeing and appraisal meetings are more focused on their professional development.

There should always be something that a member of staff can discuss, e.g. a particular child’s development, strengths or concerns. However, if there are times where staff may be struggling to identify areas to discuss in a supervision, we may ask them to identify aspects they have enjoyed about their job or that they have done well since the last meeting and one thing they have least enjoyed or requires further improvement. They will be asked to complete this prior to supervision (as set out in their responsibilities).

There may be times when supervision may be increased for members of the team as and when needed, i.e. if they have concerns about a child or if they are going through personal circumstances at home, for new starters, staff returning after long-term illness or on request from staff.

It is the responsibility of the manager to plan time to ensure that all staff receive supervision. All supervision will be carried out by a member of the leadership team. All members of staff responsible for carrying out supervision are trained and supported.

Staff have a responsibility to ensure that they are available for supervision meetings and that the necessary paperwork is complete in good time. Information shared in supervision sessions is confidential, unless a safeguarding issue has arisen. The supervision process is used as part of the overall performance monitoring system at the nursery.

We strongly promote continuous professional development, and all staff have individual training records and training plans to enhance their skills and expertise, which are based on discussions at supervision meetings and appraisal meetings. We have a training budget which is set annually and reviewed to ensure that the team gain external support and training where needed.

To facilitate the development of staff we:

- Coach, mentor, lead and offer encouragement and support to achieve a high level of morale and motivation
- Promote teamwork through ongoing communication, involvement and a no blame culture to enhance nursery practice
- Provide opportunities for delegation based on skills and expertise to offer recognition and empower staff
- Encourage staff to contribute ideas for change within the nursery and hold regular staff meetings and team meetings to develop these ideas. Regular meetings are also held to discuss strategy, policy and activity planning
- Encourage staff to further their experience and knowledge by attending relevant external training courses
- Encourage staff to pass on their knowledge to those who are less experienced and share knowledge from external training with small groups of staff within the nursery
- Provide monthly in-house training in staff meetings relevant to the needs of the nursery. Staff attendance at these is expected unless by prior arrangement with the manager, as per staff contracts
- Develop a training plan that sets out the aims and intended outcomes of any training, addressing both the qualification and continuous professional development needs of the nursery and individual staff

- Carry out a training needs analysis for all individual staff, the team, and for the nursery every six months
- Promote a positive learning culture within the nursery
- Carry out full evaluations of training events and use these to evaluate the training against the aims set to enable the development of future training programmes to improve effectiveness and staff learning
- Provide inductions to welcome all new staff and assign a 'mentor' to coach, mentor and support new staff
- Offer ongoing support and guidance as required
- Offer varied information sources including membership of local and national organisations, resources, publications and literature to all staff.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
14/05/2025	<i>Seren Brown</i>	30/04/2027