

39. Staff Working with Their Own Children/Close Relation Policy

At La Petite Academy we support all employees returning to work after having a baby or adopting a child and understand that there may be times when a member of staff chooses our nursery to provide childcare alongside them working or that there may be occasions when a member of staff is working in the same environment as a close relation, e.g. niece or nephew.

In these cases, we request the member of staff meet in advance with the nursery manager, and room leader where appropriate, to discuss how best this will work alongside the nursery business needs.

We believe children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, have their individual needs met and have a positive relationship with the staff caring for them. It is our policy that all staff remain neutral and treat all children as individuals with the same regard.

Staff need to organise their time so that they have conducted the handover to room staff prior to their shift start time and receive feedback after their shift is over. The nursery manager on duty will cover ratios if required where the staff member starts at 7:30am or finishes at 6pm to enable effective handovers. Whilst the nursery may offer subsidised childcare as a staff benefit, this may be withdrawn at any time should the needs of the business dictate and may affect an individual's tax payments as a 'benefit in kind'.

When looking to accommodate staff members working alongside their own child or close relative in the nursery, we will decide, and make an agreement based on the following circumstances:

- The individual needs of the child, including if they have any special educational needs and/or disabilities
- The number of rooms, number of staff, staff deployment and ratios already in place
- Age and/or stage of development of the child
- Staff member's expertise and experience, and where and when they usually work
- Days and times the child attends
- Transition arrangements.

Whether the child or close relation is better placed within the same room or a different room from the staff member will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Usually, staff will not work in the same room as their child in Baby Unit and Toddlers as younger children find it more difficult to accept their parent/family member has to give care and attention to other children instead of them. In Pre-School, decisions will be made more on the child's level of understanding and ability to 'share' their parent/family member with the other children. At all times the decision will be made regarding the best interests of the children in the setting, not the adult.

The effectiveness of care of other children in the setting shall not be negatively impacted by the child/relation of a staff member attending the setting and/or having their parent/family member working alongside them.

Once a decision has been made, an agreed set of guidelines will be developed between the nursery and the member of staff setting out the expectations of working with their child or close relation. This includes agreeing that during their time at nursery the child is in the care of the nursery, it is the nursery that retains responsibility for the child and their care and agreeing what they will do if they need to cover in different rooms, outdoor play etc. A similar agreement will be put in place for any staff who do not have direct care of the children, e.g. manager, cook, admin but whose own child or family member attends the setting. This may be formally recorded in writing or agreed verbally.

Staff caring for another staff member's child will treat them as they would any other parent and child. They will only contact staff in the same way that they would any other parent during their working day (e.g. to inform them of a head bump or gain permission to administer emergency medication).

Staff not directly working with their child/close relation will always place the children's needs above their own. They will not 'pop in' to see their child during their working time, which children may find upsetting and leave other children without effective supervision or have conversations with staff caring for their child that should be conducted during daily handovers. Additionally, they will not use the CCTV live stream or recordings to check up on their child and must adhere to the CCTV policy at all times.

Where this agreement is not working or is impacting on the care of the child or other children in the room, the manager will meet with the member of staff to review the agreement, and the following will be considered:

- Time left until the child is due to transition to the next room or school
- Temporarily moving the staff member to another room. It is nursery policy to move the staff member and not the child (unless transitioning) so the child continues to be in the appropriate age group and can forge consistent relationships with other children
- Where the staff member is already in another room but there are concerns, there will be an agreement between the staff member, manager and room leader about contact with the child during the nursery day which will need adhering to
- As a last resort, should concerns remain, the Disciplinary policy may be invoked.

Breastfeeding

Where a staff member's baby requires breastfeeding, the nursery will adapt the above guidelines to suit both the baby's and mother's needs. Cover will be provided during this time.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
14/05/2025	<i>Seren Brown</i>	30/04/2028