

## **44. Transitions Policy**

At La Petite Academy we recognise that young children will experience many transitions in their early years; some of these planned and some unplanned. We are sensitive to the impact of such changes to children and this policy sets out the ways in which we support children going through these transitions.

Some examples of transitions that young children and babies may experience are:

- Starting nursery
- Moving between different rooms within the nursery
- Starting school or moving nurseries
- Family breakdowns
- New siblings
- Moving home
- Death of a family member or close friend
- Death of a family pet.

Staff are trained to observe their key children and to be sensitive to any changes in their behaviour and personality. We respectfully ask that parents inform us of any changes in the home environment that may impact on their child so staff can be aware of the reasons behind any potential changes in the child's behaviour and support them effectively. We understand that some information is very sensitive for families to share, and this will be done on a need-to-know basis for the benefit of your child.

### **Settling-In to Nursery**

We recognise that starting nursery may be difficult for some children and their families. Our aim is to work in partnership with parents to help them become familiar with the setting and offer a settled relationship for the child. We know children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, we build positive relationships with parents to ensure we can meet children's individual needs and help them settle quickly into nursery life.

All our staff know about the importance of building strong attachments with children. They are trained to recognise the different stages of attachment and use this knowledge to support children and families settling into the nursery.

Our settling in procedure includes:

- Allocating a key person to each child and his/her family, before he/she starts to attend. The key person welcomes and looks after the child, ensuring that their care is tailored to meet their individual needs. He/she offers a settled relationship for the child and builds a relationship with his/her parents during the settling in period and throughout his/her time at the nursery, to ensure the family has a familiar contact person to assist with the settling in process
- Reviewing the nominated key person if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child's needs are supported
- Providing parents with relevant information about the policies and procedures of the nursery
- Working with parents to gather information before the child starts on the child's interests, likes and dislikes and their favourite things available at settling sessions, e.g. their favourite story or resource, as well as completing a baseline of the child's current development to plan, and meet, the individual needs of the child from the first day
- Encouraging parents and children to visit the nursery before an admission is planned and arranging home visits and/or online video meetings where applicable such as for children with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or those with an allocated social worker
- Planning tailored settling in visits and introductory sessions (either 9:15 to 11:15 am or 2:15 to 4:15pm), following any necessary government advice. For children attending on a term time only funded package without additional wrap around care, settling in sessions will take place during their first week of funding. For all other children, 2 free 2-hour sessions will be offered the week prior to their start date.
- Allowing parents to stay with their child for a while, where needed, during the first few weeks until the child feels settled and the parents feel comfortable about leaving their child. Settling in visits and introductory sessions are key to a smooth transition and to ensure good communication and information sharing between staff and parents
- Encouraging parents to send in family photos to display and for Family Books to help settle the child
- Reassuring parents whose children seem to be take a little longer to settle in and developing a plan with them, for example shorter days, where possible
- Providing regular updates and photos of the children settling through Tapestry

- Encouraging parents, where appropriate, to separate themselves from their children happily and successfully
- Assigning a co-key person to each child for when the key person is not available (e.g. due to annual leave, training and sickness). Parents are made aware of this to support the settling process and attachment
- Respecting the circumstances of all families, including those who are unable to stay for long periods of time in the nursery and reassure them of their child's progress towards settling in
- Not taking a child on an outing away from the nursery until he/she is completely settled.

### **Moving rooms procedure**

When a child is old enough and developmentally ready to move to a different room in the nursery, we follow the process set out below and work with the parents to ensure this is a successful process in which the child is fully supported at all stages. This may include a handover meeting between the existing key person, new key person and parents where needed and/or requested.

- Planning according to the individual needs of the child and when they are ready to move based on their age/stage of development, length of time in their current room and number of sessions per week attended. The manager will contact parents shortly before the planned move with allocated dates/times for transition
- Enabling the child to spend short sessions in their new room, with their key person initially, prior to the permanent move to so they feel comfortable in their new surroundings and have a familiar person always present. Should parents/staff feel that more transition sessions are required before the final move, these will be planned in
- Wherever possible we transition groups of friends together to enable these friendships to be maintained and support the children with the peers they know
- Keeping parents informed of all visits and the outcomes of these sessions, e.g. through photographs, discussions or diary entries
- Only transitioning the child when they feel settled and ready to move. If a child requires more support this will be discussed between the key person, parent, manager and/or room leader of the new room to agree how and when this will happen. This may include moving their key person with them on a temporary basis.

Children will generally move from the Baby Unit to Toddlers just after their second birthday and from Toddlers to Pre-School at the start of the term

following their third birthday. However, children may need to remain in their current room a little longer than this due to SEND, toilet training issues or having only just settled in their current room. This is especially important when moving into Pre-School as the ratio of staff to children is around double that of Toddlers. In addition, we have to ensure that legal ratios in each room are maintained, and at the start of each term when many children join the setting that their settling-in process is completed prior to moving existing children into a new room to enable staff to complete accurate handovers and support all children to settle effectively.

In all cases we endeavour to move children into the new room by the term after usually scheduled for them to socialise with their peer group. At all times, the best interest of the children will be paramount.

Parents are reminded that funded prices are different in each room, due to differing levels of Government funding, and therefore the price for funded care will change at these times. All funded price lists are available from the office on request.

### **Starting school or moving childcare providers**

Starting school is an important transition and some children may feel anxious about the move. We will do all we can to facilitate a smooth transition and minimise any potential stresses. This following process relates to children going to school. However, wherever possible, we will adapt this process to support children moving to another childcare provider, e.g. childminder or another nursery:

- We provide a variety of resources that relate to the school, e.g. uniform to dress up in, a role play area set up as a school classroom, photographs of all the schools the children may attend and of the teachers. This helps the children to become familiar with this new concept and will aid the transition
- Build relationships with local schools where possible throughout the year and invite them to key events or attend key events, e.g. nativity, sports day
- Invite school representatives into the nursery, where possible, or invite them to talk via online platforms such as Zoom so they can introduce themselves to the children
- Where possible we use other ways to support the transition to school, e.g. inviting previous children from the nursery who have moved on to school to come back and talk to the children about their school experiences

- Each key person will talk about school with their key children who are due to move and discuss what they think may be different and what may be the same. They will talk through any concerns the child may have and initiate activities or group discussions relating to any issues to help children overcome these
- We produce a comprehensive report through the Transition Portal on every child leaving the setting and with parental permission will share this with the school to enable teachers to have a good understanding of every child received. This will include their interests, strengths and level of understanding and development in key areas. This will support continuity of care and early learning
- With parental permission around school allocation day, we may share details of the school's children are going to so parents can see which children may be going to the same school. This can offer some reassurance for the children to know that are moving with some familiar peers.

### **Other early years providers**

Where children are attending other early years settings or are cared for by a childminder, we will work with them to share relevant information about children's development and contribute to progress checks and transition reports as appropriate. Where a child is brought to nursery or collected from nursery by a childminder, we will ensure that key information is being provided to the child's parent by providing the information directly to the parent via email or telephone.

### **Family breakdowns**

We recognise that when parents separate it can be a difficult situation for all concerned. We have a Parents and Carers as Partners policy that shows how the nursery will act in the best interest of the child in these cases.

### **Moving home and new siblings**

We recognise that both these events may have an impact on a child. Normally, parents will have advance notice of these changes, and we ask parents to let us know about these events so we can support the child to be prepared. The key person will spend time talking to the child and providing activities that may help the child to act out any worries they have, e.g. through role play, stories and discussions.

## **Bereavement**

We recognise that this may be a very difficult time for children and their families and have a separate Bereavement policy, which we follow to help us offer support to all concerned should this be required.

If parents feel that their child requires additional support because of any changes and/or transitions in their life, we ask that you speak to the nursery manager and/or the key person to enable this effective support to be put into place.

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