

11. Attendance, Arrivals and Departures

EYFS:3.7, 3.63

Attendance

This policy outlines the procedure that La Petite Academy follows regarding children's attendance at the setting and ways in which we promote the benefits of good attendance to parents and children. It also outlines the procedure that the setting will follow in the event of a child not attending the setting when they are scheduled to do so. Concerns regarding non-attendance may be escalated using the setting's Safeguarding Children Policy.

Where the term 'parents' is used, this signifies all adults with responsibility for the child.

Values

At La Petite Academy we believe good attendance is essential if children are to be happy and settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them at nursery. At a young age, continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress. We believe that good attendance and punctuality should be the 'normality' for all children and valued by staff and parents. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late, meaning they have less access to education and the full nursery curriculum.

Children should be at nursery, on time, every day that the setting is open and they are scheduled to attend, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. In all cases of absence, we ask that parents inform us in advance of known absences (eg holidays, medical appointments) and as soon as possible on the day when a child has an unplanned absence (eg sickness).

Whilst the nursery understands the law regarding non-statutory attendance, on accepting a child into the nursery we become responsible for their well-being and safety in line with current safeguarding legislation and have a legal duty to respond to factors that may place the child at risk from harm. As part of our ongoing commitment to safeguarding, we ensure that all unknown absences are followed up.

We ask that children attending for the morning session arrive by 9:15am and by 1:30pm for the afternoon session. Arrival after these times disrupts the learning of the other children.

Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the nursery, the parents, and the child. Children could sometimes be reluctant to attend nursery for a variety of reasons. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Co-operation between home and nursery is the best way to support children's well-being needs. Parents are requested to contact nursery at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. Developing good attendance patterns before statutory school age will ensure that children have good habits embedded when they do start school. This is especially important in Pre-School where we are supporting the children to be 'school ready'.

Where children receive Government funding and attend during school term times only, the Local Authority expects parents to take their holidays during the school holiday periods when the child is not scheduled to attend.

Promotion of Regular Nursery Attendance

We promote good attendance via a range of methods such as through social media, monthly newsletters, discussions with parents and children and via the nursery website.

We read stories to the children about going to school and nursery to help them understand the importance of this part of their life.

Where attendance concerns arise, the most appropriate member of the leadership team will discuss this with the parents and offer support, for example through an Early Help Assessment.

As well as the financial implications of missed sessions, children also suffer from missed learning and social interactions and a lack of routine.

Children Missing from Education

Where the setting has not been informed of a child's absence the appropriate Room Leader must ensure that the following is carried out in all cases, from 10am for morning session absences and 2:15pm for afternoon session absences:

- Ask the manager on duty if a message has been received regarding the child's absence. If not, then:
- Use the child's contact card to telephone the parent(s) to establish where the child is. If the phone is not answered, leave a message requesting a call back, from both parents where applicable.
- If the parent is contacted and gives a reason for absence record this on the monthly absence sheet and register.
- If a parent cannot be contacted, check with the manager on duty if there are any current safeguarding concerns for the child and inform them that messages have been left.
- After 30 minutes if there is no call from parents, call again and inform the manager of the outcome.
- After a further 30 minutes, if there is no call from parents then all emergency contacts should be contacted.
- If a sibling's school is known, the school is to be contacted to find out if they are in school, if the school know why they are absent and if the school have any current safeguarding concerns.
- If all contacts have been exhausted and the child's whereabouts remain unknown this is to be recorded on the monthly absence sheet.
- Where there are current safeguarding concerns in nursery and/or a sibling's school, the DSL is to inform the child's social worker/family support worker of the absence. If the family do not have a designated worker, then the DSL is to take advice from the Professionals' Advice Line (07812 300329, 10am – 4pm) on whether the absence should be referred to social care.
- If there has been no contact by the following day, then the process is to be repeated daily.
- If the child returns to the setting before contact has been made, then the parent must be asked to explain the absence. This is to be recorded on the monthly absence sheet.
- After one week, or sooner in the case of safeguarding concerns, parents will be sent a letter requesting contact with the setting.
- If after one month there has been no contact, the child's name will be removed from the register and the place allocated to another child on the waiting list.
- A home visit may be undertaken by the DSL at any point in this procedure dependent upon current safeguarding concerns and any previous

absences, and a record of the absence and actions taken placed on a safeguarding concern log.

- If it is not possible to find out the whereabouts of the child, the safeguarding policy will be followed, and a referral made to Children's Social Care (Derby City: 01332 641172; Derbyshire: 01629 533190) .

Absence Codes

Where a child does not attend their scheduled session then the correct code must be placed on the register:

H: Holiday/family day

S: Sickness absence

M: Medical Appointment (eg doctor, dentist)

R: Religious Observance

C: Other circumstance (specify on monthly absence sheet)

U: Unknown (this must be followed up as per above procedure)

Y: Setting closed to children (eg due to very bad weather)

Attendance Monitoring

Each Room Leader is responsible for ensuring that the monthly absence sheet is completed in a timely fashion for all absences. At the end of each month this is to be passed to the Assistant Manager for monitoring.

The Assistant Manager completes monthly monitoring of attendance and reviews this at the end of each term. This includes absence patterns (eg having the same day off regularly), regularity of absence and length of absences. Where children are term time only, holidays/family days in term time are also monitored.

Parents of children whose attendance is inconsistent/persistent (15% absence or more) will be contacted by the Room Leader or other member of the Management Team and their future attendance monitored more closely. An Early Help Assessment may also be offered to the family to ascertain if additional support may be required to reduce barriers to attendance, such as from the Health Visiting Team/Family Support Worker. In more urgent cases, Social Care may be contacted.

The nursery is regularly audited by the Local Authority and attendance of children with Government funding is part of this audit.

If any staff member has concerns regarding a child's non-attendance or irregular attendance, they should discuss this with the DSL as they would with any other safeguarding concern.

Arrivals and Departures (Handovers)

At La Petite Academy we give a warm welcome and goodbye to every child and family on their arrival and departure as well as ensuring the safety of children parents/carers, visitors, employees, volunteers and students at the setting.

Parents are requested to pass the care of their child to a specific member of staff who will ensure his/her safety (this is usually a child's key person or another member of staff working in the base room). The staff member receiving the child immediately records his/her arrival in the daily attendance register. The staff member also records any specific information provided by the parents, including the child's interests, experiences and observations from home. To allow for this important handover parents should be aware that they may need to wait for a staff member to be available.

If the parent requests the child is given medicine during the day the staff member must ensure that the medication procedure is followed, including completion of the medication form.

If the child is to be collected by someone who is not the parent or usual person who collects (eg grandparent, childminder) at the end of the session, there is an agreed procedure that must be followed to identify the designated person. Photo identification (eg driving licence, passport) and a password are also required for the designated adult. Parents are informed about these arrangements as their child starts with us and reminded about them regularly. Other than the parents or legal guardian of the child, we do not allow anyone under the age of 18 to collect. If this happens, the parent/carer will be contacted.

The child's key person, or other nominated staff member, must plan the departure of the child. This should include opportunities to discuss the child's day with the parent in addition to what may already be shared via electronic systems, e.g. meals, sleep time, activities, interests, progress and friendships.

The parent should be told about any accidents or incidents and the appropriate records must be signed by the parent before departure. Where applicable, all medicines should be recovered from the medicine box/fridge after the parent has arrived and handed to him/her personally. The medication policy is to be followed regarding parental signature.

The nursery will not release a child to anyone other than the known parent or usual collector unless an agreement has been made at the time of arrival. In the case of any emergency such as a parent being delayed and arranging for a designated adult to collect a child, the parent should inform the designated person of the agreed procedure and contact the nursery about the arrangements as soon as possible.

If in any doubt the nursery will check the person's identity by ringing the child's parent or their emergency contact number (please refer to the late collection policy). If none of the contacts can be reached to verify the person's suitability to collect the child, then we will not allow the collection to take place and the 'Late Collection and Non-Collection' policy will be followed.

On departure, the staff member releasing the child must mark the child register immediately to show that the child has left the premises.

Parents/carers will be informed and reminded not to allow any other person onto the premises when dropping-off or collecting, this is to ensure the safety of all children at all times.

In the unlikely event that someone gains unauthorised access to the premises and if it feels safe to do so, a member of staff will ask the person what the purpose of their visit is and if needed the lockdown procedure will be initiated and the police called.

In any cases where unauthorised access is gained, we will revisit and review our procedures.

Adults arriving under the influence of alcohol or drugs

Please refer to the alcohol and substance misuse policy.

Arrivals and departures of visitors

For arrivals and departures of visitors the nursery requires appropriate records to be completed on entry and exit e.g., in the visitors' book. Please refer to supervision of visitors' policy for further information.

Staff, students and volunteers are responsible for ensuring they sign themselves in and out of the building, including at break and lunchtimes.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>30/04/2022</i>	<i>C. Daly</i>	<i>30/04/2025</i>