

## 6. 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 and late/non-collections at the end of sessions. Concerns regarding non-attendance or late/non-collection may be escalated using the setting's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection 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 learning and development 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 (e.g. holidays, medical appointments) and as soon as possible on the day when a child has an unplanned absence (e.g. 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. Absences during term times may not be authorised.

#### 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, e.g. by phone or email. 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 and a manager informed.
- 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 Lead Practitioner for monitoring.

The Lead Practitioner 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 (e.g. grandparent, childminder) at the end of the session, there is an agreed procedure that must be followed to identify the designated person. Photo identification (e.g. 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 usually allow anyone under the age of 18 to collect. If this happens without prior authorisation, the parent/carer will be contacted. Where parents ask for collection by someone aged 16 or 17 (e.g. an older sibling) this must be done in writing to the manager and acceptance of this request is at the manager's sole discretion and will be made on a case-by-case basis. Collection by anyone under 16 years of age will not be allowed in any circumstances.

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 in line with appropriate policy. Where applicable, all medicines should be recovered from the first aid cabinet/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 a prior agreement has been made. 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 procedures below). 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 non-collection procedures below 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 the 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, using the staff register.

### **Late and Non-Collection**

Parents are able to collect their child from the nursery flexibly within their session time period. We ask them to be no later than 10 minutes prior to the session end time, for example if they attend the afternoon or all-day session we ask them to collect no later than 5:50pm. This is so that a full handover can take place. We understand that some parents may arrive earlier to collect their child, which is acceptable. However, the full fees still remain in place for the allocated session times.

We give parents information about the procedures to follow if they expect to be late. These include:

- Calling the nursery as soon as possible to advise of their situation and expected time of arrival;
- Agreeing a safety password with the nursery in advance to be used by anyone collecting a child who is not the parent or designated adult who usually collects;
- Asking a different designated adult to collect their child wherever possible;
- Informing the nursery of this person's identity so the nursery can talk to the child if appropriate. This will help to reduce or eliminate any distress caused by this situation;
- If the designated person is not known to the nursery staff, the parent must provide a detailed description of this person, including their date of birth where known. This designated person must know the individual child's

safety password in order for the nursery to release the child into their care. This is the responsibility of the parent;

- Where children are collected later than 10 minutes prior to their session end time then a full handover cannot be given, and only child protection/accident/medication information will be discussed.

If a child has not been collected from the nursery after a reasonable amount of time has been allowed for lateness (10 minutes after the session end time), we initiate the following procedure:

- The nursery manager will be informed that a child has not been collected;
- The manager will check for any information regarding changes to normal routines, parents' work patterns or general information. If there is no information recorded, the manager/room leader will try to contact the parents on the telephone numbers provided for their mobile, home or work. If this fails, the manager will try the emergency contacts shown on the child's records;
- The manager or staff member in charge and one other member of staff must stay behind with the child (if outside normal operating hours). During normal operating times, the nursery will plan to meet required staff ratios wherever possible. If the parents have still not collected the child, the manager will telephone all contact numbers available every 10 minutes until contact is made. These calls will be logged on an incident record;
- In the event of no contact being made after one hour has lapsed, the manager/person in charge will ring the local authority children's social services emergency duty team;
- The nursery will inform Ofsted as soon as convenient, and always within 14 days;
- At least two members of staff will remain in the building until suitable arrangements have been made for the collection of the child;
- The child's welfare and needs will be met at all times and to minimise distress staff will distract, comfort and reassure the child during the process;
- In order to provide this additional care a late fee of £15 per part of every 15 minutes will be charged to parents. This will pay for any additional operational costs that caring for a child outside their normal nursery hours may incur. The fee is payable once each set of 15 minutes has begun. Parents should note that this fee is payable in all instances of late collection, not just outside of normal operating hours.

**Contact numbers:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact No</b>
Social Services Emergency Duty Team	01332 786968
Ofsted	0300 123 1231

<b>This policy was adopted on</b>	<b>Signed on behalf of the nursery</b>	<b>Date for review</b>
<i>31/03/2026</i>	<i>Seren Brown</i>	<i>30/04/2027</i>