

30. Recruitment, Selection and Suitability of Staff

EYFS: 3.9 – 3.26

At Little Oaks Children's Nursery we are vigilant in our recruitment procedures aiming to ensure that all people working looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role and will meet the requirements for references as set out in the EYFS under 'suitable people'. We have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners and any other person who may have regular contact with children are suitable.

Legal requirements

- We abide by all legal requirements relating to safe recruitment set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and accompanying regulations including our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2021
- We also follow any requirements or guidance given by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in relation to carrying out checks; and abide by the employer's responsibilities relating to informing the DBS of any changes to the suitability of their staff, whether this member of staff has left the nursery or is still under investigation. Please refer to the child protection/safeguarding policy for further information.

Advertising

- We use reputable websites to advertise for any vacancies
- We ensure that all recruitment literature includes details of our equal opportunities policy and our safe recruitment procedures; including an enhanced DBS check and at least two independent references for every new employee.

Interview stage

- We shortlist all suitable candidates against a pre-set specification
- All shortlisted candidates will receive a job description, a person specification, an equal opportunities monitoring form and a request for identification prior to the interview
- The manager will decide the most appropriate people for the interview panel. There will be at least two people involved and both are involved in the overall decision making
- At the start of each interview all candidates' identities will be checked using, for example, their passport and/or photocard driving licence. All candidates will be required to prove they are eligible to work in the UK. The interview will also cover any gaps in the candidate's employment history
- All candidates reaching the interview stage are questioned using the same set criteria and questions. These cover specific areas of childcare, including safeguarding the children in their care, planning suitable activities to enhance the child's development and their understanding of the legal frameworks applied to childcare and used in the nursery. The questions will be value based and will ensure the candidate has the same values as the nursery with regards to the safety and welfare of the children in their care
- Candidates will be given a score for their answers including a score for their individual experience and qualifications
- Every shortlisted candidate will be asked to take part in a supervised practical exercise which will involve spending time in a particular age group in the nursery interacting with the children, staff and where appropriate parents and completing an observation template.
- The manager and deputy will then select the most suitable person for this position based on these scores and their knowledge and understanding of the early years framework as well as the needs of the nursery
- Every candidate will receive communication from the nursery stating whether they have been successful or not. Unsuccessful candidates are offered feedback.

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Starting work

- The successful candidate will be offered the position subject to at least two references (One must be their last/most current employer) from previous employment or, in the case of a newly qualified student, their tutor or professional (Childcare related role preference) reference. These references will be attained BEFORE employment commences. This may be verbal initially and then followed up with a written reference which will form part of their personnel file
- The successful candidate will be asked to provide proof of their qualifications, where applicable. All qualifications will be checked and copies taken for their personnel files
- Prior to employment but after the job has been offered a health check questionnaire will be given to the employee and its results will be taken into account in making an overall decision about suitability. The nursery reserves the right to take any further advice necessary in relation to a person's physical and mental fitness to carry out their role. Please see the absence management policy for more details about how the nursery manages health problems including access to medical records
- All new starters, other than those who have registered for the continuous updating service (see below), will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This will be initiated before the member of staff commences work in the nursery and they will not have unsupervised access to any child or their records before this check comes back clear.
- The nursery will record and retain details about the individual including staff qualifications, identity checks carried out and the vetting process completed. This will include the disclosure and barring service reference number, the date the disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it. The nursery will not retain copies of the disclosure itself once the employment decision is taken
- There may be occasions when a DBS check is not clear but the individual is still suitable to work with children. This will be treated on an individual case basis and at the manager's/owner's discretion taking into account the following:
 - seriousness of the offence or other information
 - accuracy of the person's self-disclosure on the application form
 - nature of the appointment including levels of supervision
 - age of the individual at the time of the offence or other information
 - the length of time that has elapsed since the offence or other information
 - relevance of the offence or information to working or being in regular contact with children.
- If the individual has registered on the DBS system since 17 July 2013 managers may use the update service with the candidate's permission instead of carrying out an enhanced DBS check
- New starters are required to sign on our staff suitability form to state that they have no criminal convictions, court orders or any other reasons that disqualify them from working with children or unsuitable to do so. This signed declaration is further repeated at every 12 weekly supervision and at annual appraisals
- All new members of staff will undergo an intensive induction period during which time they will read and discuss the nursery policies and procedures and be assigned a 'mentor/ buddy' who will introduce them to the way in which the nursery operates
- During their induction period all new staff will receive training on how to safeguard children in their care and follow the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection policy and procedure, emergency evacuation procedures, equality policy and health and safety issues

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- The new member of staff will have regular meetings with the manager and their 'mentor/buddy' during their induction period to discuss their progress, support required and/or further training and professional development opportunities.

Delayed DBS checks

- Where possible, staff will have the checks completed prior to starting employment. As long as the DBS check has been applied for, if there are delays in the results coming through, staff may work in the nursery before these checks are completed as a last resort, but they must be supervised at all times by staff who already hold an enhanced check. All nursery staff will be informed of any staff awaiting enhanced DBS clearance.
- Staff awaiting these checks will **never**:
 - Be left unsupervised whilst caring for children
 - Take children for toilet visits unless supervised by staff holding an enhanced check
 - Change nappies
 - Be left alone in a room or outside with children
 - Administer medication
 - Administer first aid
 - Take photographs of any children
 - Be involved in looking at a child's learning and development log, but can contribute to it
 - Have access to children's personal details and records.
- While adhering to the above list, we recognise that it is vital that the staff member awaiting an enhanced disclosure is made to feel part of the team and we support them in participating fully in every other aspect of the nursery day.

Ongoing support and checks

- All staff are responsible for notifying the manager in person if any there are any changes to their circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children (staff suitability status will also be checked at each supervision and through the annual review process). This includes any incidents occurring outside the nursery. Staff will face disciplinary action should they fail to notify the manager **immediately**
- All members of staff will update a health questionnaire on an annual basis to ensure management have a good knowledge of any changes that may require support or additional resources to aid them to carry out their day-to-day duties. This will also be discussed at staff supervisions/review meetings. Management may require this more regularly where health circumstances change. There are more details about how the nursery deals with any health problems in the absence management policy
- The nursery manager and owner will review any significant changes to an individual's circumstances that may suggest they are no longer suitable to work with children and take appropriate action to ensure any unsuitable or potentially unsuitable employee does not have unsupervised contact with children until the matter is resolved. This may include requiring the individual to obtain a waiver from Ofsted in relation to any disqualification. Please see the Disciplinary Policy for further details
- Every member of staff will have one meeting a year with the manager: a formal appraisal. This will provide an opportunity for the manager and member of staff to discuss training needs for the following year as well as evaluate and discuss their performance in the previous 12 months
- The manager, deputy and room leaders will be responsible for any support the staff team may have between these reviews. This includes mentor support, one-to-one training sessions, ongoing supervision, work-based observations and constructive feedback

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- The nursery will provide appropriate opportunities for all staff to undertake professional development and training to help improve the quality of experiences provided for children.

Students and agency/supply staff

- All students will receive an interview to ensure they are suitable for the nursery and an induction process to ensure they fully understand and are able to implement the nursery procedures, working practices and values
- All students will be fully supervised to ensure they receive the appropriate support, training and information they may require
- We request confirmation that all necessary checks have been completed by the agency before using any supply or agency staff. Once checks are obtained we record the DBS check reference number, the date the check was obtained and details of who obtained it
- We have a short induction prior to agency staff working with the children. It is our policy that all agency and supply staff are fully supervised and not left alone with children.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
3rd March 2015	Amanda Horn – Company Director	September 2026
Latest review on		
26 th October 2021	Jade Holyoake – Nursery Manager	
18 th October 2022	Jade Holyoake – Nursery Manger	
27 th October 2023	Jade Holyoake – Nursery Manager	
25 th September 2024	Jade Holyoake – Nursery Manager	
27 th October 2025	Alicia O'Connell – Nursery Manager	