

All About the Child



Inspiring and nurturing young minds

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Admissions Policy

It is our intention to make Little Companions accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. We aim to ensure that all sections of our community have access to the setting through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures.

Procedures

- We will ensure that the existence of our Nursery is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.
- We will ensure that information about our Nursery is accessible, in written and spoken form and, where appropriate, in more than one language. Where necessary, we will try to provide information in Braille, or through British Sign Language. We will provide translated written materials where language needs of families suggest this is required as well as access to an interpreter.
- Our waiting list is on a first come first served policy. In addition our policy may take into account the following:
 - The length of time a child and their family have been on the waiting list.
 - If the child has siblings already attending the setting.
 - If the child and their family are already a member of the Little Companions mother and baby group.
- We will keep a place vacant, if this is financially viable, to accommodate an emergency admission.
- We describe our Nursery and its practices in terms that make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including childminders.
- We describe our Nursery and its practices in terms of how it treats each child and their family, having regard to their needs arising from their gender, special educational needs, disabilities, social background, religion, and ethnicity or from English being a newly acquired additional language.

- We describe our Nursery and its practices in terms of how it enables children and/or parents with disabilities to take part in the life of the Nursery.
- We will monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the group to ensure that our intake is representative of social diversity.
- We will make our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality Policy widely known.
- We will consult with families about the opening times of the Nursery to ensure we accommodate a broad range of family need.
- We aim to provide flexibility regarding attendance patterns to accommodate the needs of individual children and families, providing these do not disrupt the pattern of continuity in the Nursery that provides stability for all the children.

Behaviour Policy

At Little Companions we believe that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

Children need to learn to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. This is a developmental task that requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example. The principles that underpin how we achieve positive and considerate behaviour exist within the programme for promoting personal, social and emotional development.

Procedures

It is the responsibility of all staff to support the children's personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour.

The managers are responsible for:

- keeping up-to-date with legislation, researching and thinking about promoting positive behaviour and handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support;
 - access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development ; and
 - Check that all staff have relevant training on promoting positive behaviour and keeping a record of staff attendance at this training.
- We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of - and respect - those used by members of the setting.
 - We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
 - We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the setting's behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.
 - We expect all members of our Nursery - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.
 - We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person. We work with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour

- We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable

and supporting children to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.

- We ensure that there are enough popular toys and resources and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns.
- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
- When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.
- We never send children out of the room by themselves, nor do we use a 'naughty chair'.
- We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with these.
- We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children.
- We use physical restraint, such as holding, only to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property.
- If a child is being aggressive, violent or inconsiderate towards children or members of staff, staff can ask the child to take 'time out' so that they can calm down and reflect on their actions. This should be no longer than 3-4 minutes or earlier if the child has calmed down. The child should be supervised and should not be ignored, rather the member of staff should try to speak to the child, help them to reflect on their actions and encourage them to behave in a more considerate manner.

- Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of the Nursery manager and are recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parent is informed on the same day.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's inconsiderate behaviour.

Children under three years

- When children under three behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those for older children.
- We recognise that babies and very young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.
- Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.
- If tantrums, biting or fighting are frequent, we try to find out the underlying cause - such as a change or upheaval at home, or frequent change of carers. Sometimes a child has not settled in well and the behaviour may be the result of 'separation anxiety'.
- We focus on ensuring a child's attachment figure in the setting, their key person, is building a strong relationship to provide security to the child.

Rough and tumble play and fantasy aggression

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not intentional hurtful behaviour or bullying,

although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using strategies as above.

- We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or aggressive.
- We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.
- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently dramatic strategies, blowing up, shooting etc., and that themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies' and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.
- We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

Hurtful behaviour

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child, especially if their emotions are high at the time, but it is not helpful to label this behaviour as 'bullying'. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without cognisance of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

- We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them.
- We will help them manage these feelings as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.

- We understand that self-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that take place when triggers activate responses of anger or fear.
- Therefore we help this process by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour. By helping the child to return to a normal state, we are helping the brain to develop the physiological response system that will help the child be able to manage his or her own feelings.
- We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child's rage as that will have the opposite effect.
- Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them through holding and cuddling. Verbal children will also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we offer them an explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.
- We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they experience. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. "Adam took your car, didn't he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn't like it when he took it, did you? Did it make you feel angry? Is that why you hit him?" Older children will be able to verbalise their feelings better, talking through themselves the feelings that motivated the behaviour.
- We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings. "When you hit Adam, it hurt him and he didn't like that and it made him cry."
- We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. "I can see you are feeling better now and Adam isn't crying any more. Let's see if we can be friends and find another car, so you can both play with one."
- We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing and turn-taking develop. In order for both the

biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.

- We support social skills through modelling behaviour, through activities, drama and stories. We build self-esteem and confidence in children, recognising their emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.
- We help a child to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we do not force children to say sorry, but encourage this where it is clear that they are genuinely sorry and wish to show this to the person they have hurt.
- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons for very young children to engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are that:
 - they do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs– this may be in the home and it may also be in the setting;
 - their parent, or carer in the setting, does not have skills in responding appropriately, and consequently negative patterns are developing where hurtful behaviour is the only response the child has to express feelings of anger;
 - the child may have insufficient language, or mastery of English, to express him or herself and may feel frustrated;
 - the child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse;
 - The child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
- Where this does not work, we support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to a Behaviour Support Team where necessary.

Bullying

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. It is characterised by intent to hurt,

often planned, and accompanied by an awareness of the impact of the bullying behaviour.

A child who is bullying has reached a stage of cognitive development where he or she is able to plan to carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress in another.

Bullying can occur in children five years old and over.

If a child bullies another child or children:

- we show the children who have been bullied that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them;
 - we intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child or children;
 - we explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is not acceptable;
 - we give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied;
 - we help the child who has done the bullying to recognise the impact of their actions;
 - we make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practise and reflect on considerate behaviour;
 - we do not label children who bully as 'bullies';
 - we recognise that children who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves, or be subject to abuse or other circumstance causing them to express their anger in negative ways towards others;
 - We recognise that children who bully are often unable to empathise with others and for this reason we do not insist that they say sorry unless it is clear that they feel genuine remorse for what they have done. Empty apologies are just as hurtful to the bullied child as the original behaviour;
 - we discuss what has happened with the parents of the child who did the bullying and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour;
- and

- We share what has happened with the parents of the child who has been bullied, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

Celebrating Birthdays

At Little Companions we recognise that some parents will want to acknowledge their child's birthday and we will work with parents to make this day special at nursery.

Although Little Companions promotes healthy eating as well as ensuring children with allergies are kept safe, we will for this day allow parents to bring a birthday cake in for their child to share with the other children at the playgroup. We request that parents hand the cake over to the practitioner when entering and make them aware of the ingredients if the cake is homemade.

We thank parents for their cooperation on this matter.

Complaints Procedure

It is our policy at Little Companions to provide parents with courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our service and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns. We aim to resolve all concerns through informal discussions, however if this is not achieved we have a set of procedures or dealing with concerns.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern talks to the manager and informal discussion takes place in order for complaints to be resolved.

Stage 2

- If the outcome is not satisfactory, or the problem re-occurs the parent puts the concerns or complaint in writing to the Little Companions' playgroup manager.

- The setting stores written complaints from the parents in the child's personal file. However, if there involves a detailed investigation, the setting leader may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate designated file.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the manager will meet with the parents to discuss the outcome.
- Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the managers. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the manager should have the support of the co-manager present.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All the parties present at the meeting should sign the record and receive a copy of it.
- This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If after the meeting the parent and setting cannot meet agreement, an external mediator is invited to help settle the complaint. This person should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to define the problem, review action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. She/he can hold separate meetings with the nursery manager or management committee and the parent, if this is deemed helpful. The mediator must keep an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and any advice he or she gives.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded his/her investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the nursery manager and management committee is held in order to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice is used to reach the conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.

- A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy. The signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the settings registration requirements, Ofsted must be involved to ensure that the welfare requirements of the EYFS are adhered to.

The number to call Ofsted with regards to a complaint is: 0300 123 4666

If a child appears to be at risk, the setting works with Ofsted and the Local Social Work Team to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint is carried out, followed by appropriate action.

Records

A record of complaints against the nursery and/or the children and/or the adults working in the setting are kept, including the date, the circumstance of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.

The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaints Summary Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

All complaints will be recorded and placed in the 'complaints file', logged on the

'Complaints Summary' and the guidelines set by Ofsted will be followed , ensuring that

the matter is dealt with, within the stipulated time of 28 days.

The pre-school regulator is OFSTED. Our regional office can be contacted at:

The National Business Unit
 Early Years Ofsted
 The Royal Exchange Buildings
 St Ann's Square
 Manchester
 M2 7LA

Curriculum Policy

At Little Companions the curriculum provided to the children follows the Early years Foundation Stage (EYFS) as implemented by the government in

September 2008 for the birth to five years age range and since then has been reviewed for a newly developed EYFS starting implementation in September 2012. We work in establishing the EYFS with the child's individual interests and backgrounds paramount when catering for the unique child. The 7 key areas in learning as defined by the EYFS are as follows:-

- Communication and language
- Understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Literacy
- Personal, social and emotional development (PSED)
- Mathematics
- Expressive arts and design

Within these 7 key areas, 3 have been highlighted as particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas are known as the prime areas. These are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Within the 7 Key areas practitioners will apply a holistic approach to learning so children can appreciate their sense of belonging and identity as they develop. We will ensure children of all backgrounds are catered for and allow children to maintain a mutual respect for varying cultures and faiths. We also support and promote the sharing of British values, consideration for one another in all we do.

At Little Companions we encourage children to develop in these areas through play and close interaction with the stimulating environment provided for them. There are specific times during the daily routine allocated for planned structured activity and circle times where the children will interact with the nursery practitioners in activities both adult and child initiated. The nursery staff aid the children in developing their learning through supporting

and scaffolding their knowledge and skills in order to reach their next stage of development.

Each child's learning is monitored individually through observations allowing for any child with special educational needs and English as additional language to be catered for accordingly. The Special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) of the setting and child's key worker will tailor the curriculum to suit the child's developmental needs. In specialised cases the nursery will work closely with parents and outside professionals to provide the necessary support to the child's learning.

The nursery practitioners will provide feedback to parents/carers via daily reports, profiles and informal discussions. We value a close parent-practitioner partnership enabling staff to provide the most productive learning environment for the children.

For further in depth information about the EYFS framework please refer to the parent's notice board situated in the entrance of the nursery and/or visiting the Department of Education website <http://www.education.gov.uk/> and typing EYFS in the search engine.

The preschool has also achieved champion status for 'FIVE TO THRIVE' and have created an ethos of a learning environment with warmth, and tailoring our care to individual needs.

Extra elements which may be added to the curriculum depending on interest

- Arabic for those who specify – this will be done in small groups, and will provide an introduction to this language working within the EYFS framework. A specialist teacher will provide the Arabic in a manner suitable for this young age range
- Physical structured activities for preschool age with specialist practitioners (dependent on interest and availability)
- We also run schemes such as PALS (play and learning to Socialise) for children 3-5, Attention Hillingdon to support concentration, please attached relevant information linked to this.

Attached

- Five to thrive
- Attention Hillingdon

- PALS

Home visit policy- linked to the REAL project Raising Early Achievement In literacy

These home visits can support parents during settling and at any time the parent feels they require support in developing their child in key areas of the Early years development

Aim of Home Visit

- To build up a warm caring relationship with the child and parent/carer
- To meet the child and interact with them in their natural environment and to establish a friendship to ease the settling in period.
- To ensure that the child has met staff on familiar territory. This can help the children feel more confident about making the transition from home to Preschool.
- To encourage parents to share with us as much information as possible about their child. This information will help us get to know the child's needs and to plan appropriate settling in activities.
- To allow parents/carers to share things in private and without interruption.

Procedure

Staff should attend home visits in pairs for their own security. They must leave a list of where they are going and leave a mobile number with the Pre-School

- One of the staff should be the key worker for the child being visited.
- Home visits will not be done uninvited. Staff will have arranged a date and time well in advance of the visit. Parents/carers do not have to have a home visit if they do not wish it. They will be offered the option when they enrol their child or attend the settling in meeting.
- During the visit one adult focuses primarily on the child if this appropriate and the other adult gathers information about the child from the parent/carer.
- It is important that this does not become merely a question and answer session. The most important thing is to build up a relationship with the family. (See appendix for information that should be discussed.)
- It's important that the parent/carer has the time and opportunity to ask questions about the setting

CONFIDENTIALITY SHOULD BE RESPECTED AT ALL TIMES.

APPENDIX

Idea of activities can be taken from the REAL training. Although the focus is primarily for literacy, they may overlap many of the key areas of the EYFS and should be holistic on in their approach.

Parents/carers can be supported to develop these ideas at home to encourage a parent/practitioner partnership enabling their child's early years foundation to be as consistent as possible

**REAL- <http://www.real-online.group.shef.ac.uk/>
<http://www.real-online.group.shef.ac.uk/organising-with-parents.html>**

Key Person and Settling-in

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the Nursery is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the Nursery and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the Nursery.

We aim to make the Nursery a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

The Nursery allocates a key person for each child. The key person should help the child to become familiar with the environment and to feel confident and safe within it, developing a genuine bond with the child and the child's parents and offering a settled and close relationship. The key person should meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour, talking to parents to make sure that the child is being cared for appropriately.

Procedures

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- The key person is responsible for settling the child into the nursery.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
- The key person acts as the key contact for the parents and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a childminder, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- A key person is responsible for developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents to keep those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our Nursery and at home.
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.
- In the absence of a child's key person the manager or deputy manager acts as key contact to the parents.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our Nursery, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.

Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend the Nursery, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), information about activities available within the Nursery, individual meetings with parents and parent coffee mornings.
- We provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the Nursery.
- We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend; the key person welcomes and looks after the child and

his/her parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.

- We may offer a home visit by the person who will be the child's key person, if we feel it would help the settling-in process and to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.
- We use pre-start visits and the first session at which a child attends to explain and complete with his/her parents the child's registration records.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for most of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
- Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be on hand to re-settle them.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person; for example the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left. We expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay for at least the first week.
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.

- Within the first four to six weeks of starting we will discuss and work with the child's parents to start to create their child's portfolio.

Mealtime Policy and Healthy eating guidance

At Little Companions we encourage the children to follow appropriate etiquette during mealtimes. Children will be handed over their packed lunch by their key worker and can find their own seat on the table which will have their name tag placed there. This helps the children to recognise their names and gain independence.

Children will follow example of the practitioners and be expected to:

- Sit in one place during mealtimes
- Encourage children to give thanks at the beginning and end of the meal.
- Due to allergies we will ensure children do not share their food unless they have brought in something specifically for sharing for example on a special occasion, or festival.

Practitioners will give the children independence to eat during mealtimes but in the case of cutting food up, help with eating utensils, we will provide the necessary support.

In some cases, especially when children start nursery, they may not want to sit in one place and eat their lunch. In such a situation practitioners will positively encourage the child but not force them to sit down. Their food will be kept at the table during the lunch session to allow them to feel welcome to come to the table when they are ready. Parents will be made aware of how easily their child ate during mealtimes via the daily diary and key workers will work closely with them to make mealtimes at nursery as enjoyable as possible.

Healthy eating guidelines

At present we request parents/guardians to send in packed lunch for their children. At Little Companions we strongly promote a healthy eating policy for both children and practitioners so children learn through example. The following are our 'do's and don't's' for packed lunches:

DO

- Provide a sensible amount for your child as too much food can get wasted so their packed lunch should be according to their general appetite.
- Send in main starchy item such as sandwiches with healthy fillings for example, cheese, meat, tuna and adding small vegetables such as cucumber/sweet corn etc
- Parents can also send in small portions of food which we can heat up for the children in the microwave, such as rice, pasta, soup, so children do have the option of a hot meal if they prefer.
- Fruit is a good packed lunch filler as well as dried fruit such as raisins- do add variety in selection of fruits.
- Yoghurt is always popular with the children
- Finger food salads such as chunks of cucumber/ carrots/ tomatoes/peppers
- Crackers with cheese dips
- Parents can provide a small pudding item for example low sugar custard, rice pudding, jelly, plain cake, plain biscuit

DONT'S

- No fizzy drinks or sweet juice drinks
- No crisps
- No chocolates or chocolate biscuits
- No sweets

Nursery practitioners will ensure your child has fresh water and children will be encouraged to finish their lunch. Any uneaten items will remain in their lunch box. For assistance in varying packed lunches and what to add to make up a healthy packed lunch please refer to:

- <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/childhealth6-15/Pages/Lighterlunchboxes.aspx>
- <http://www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/schools/projects/packed-lunches/packed-lunch-ideas>
- <http://www.netmums.com/family-food/food-for-kids/lunchbox-ideas>

Little Companions is thankful to parents for their cooperation.

MOBILE PHONE USE INSIDE THE SETTING- GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

Little Companions request that parents switch their phones off when inside the setting. If a parent/guardian needs to answer a phone call or text, please do so outside the setting. If a parent/guardian is on a phone call when coming for pick up or drop off, we kindly request that any conversations are completed before entering the setting.

This is an Ofsted requirement as well as allowing parents to have complete focus on their child when in the setting.

We thank you for your cooperation on this matter.

Nappy Changing Policy

If children have not begun toilet training at the time of registration and there is nothing preventing the child and family from beginning toilet training, parents are advised to begin training the children and the staff will advice and support children and families with this process. However, no child is excluded from the nursery if they are not yet toilet trained and still wearing nappies.

The nursery has facilities and hygiene practices in place in order to accommodate children who are not yet toilet trained.

We regard toilet training as an important self-care skill that children will be encouraged and have the opportunity to learn whilst at the nursery and will benefit from full non-judgemental care and support of the staff.

Procedures

- The nursery has a list of children who are in nappies or pull ups.
- Regular changing times are set out in the nursery routine.
- Key persons are responsible for changing young children in their key group; in their absence another appropriate member of staff may change the children.
- Changing areas are in the bathroom, the area is warm, safe and well lit.
- Each child has their own changing bag with their nappies or pull ups, wipes and nappy sacks.
- Gloves and aprons are worn by staff before changing starts and the changing area is prepared and wiped with antibacterial cleaner if necessary. A paper towel is put down on the changing mat freshly for each child.
- Staff should follow hygiene procedures when changing nappies.
- Staff should be relaxed and ensure the child is comfortable and happy. Staff should be gentle and not appear negative or repulsed. This time can also be used to encourage children's independence by encouraging appropriate self-care.
- Staff should encourage children to use the toilet, even if the children just want to sit on the toilet. Children should be praised for this.
- Children should be encouraged to wash their hands; staff take this opportunity to teach children the importance of hygiene and cleanliness. This should be an enjoyable time and children should be allowed to play and enjoy the feeling of the water and soap.

- Older children are encouraged to use the toilet when they feel the need. Independence is encouraged and children should be praised when asking for the toilet. Staff may remind children if they feel this is helpful.
- Children should be taken to the toilet as soon they need to go, they should not be made to wait as this may result in an accident and be damaging to the child's confidence.
- Dirty nappies and pull ups are disposed of hygienically. The nappy is bagged and put in the bathroom bin. This bin is emptied daily. Cloth nappies or ordinary pants that are soiled should be emptied in the toilet, rinsed and bagged for the parents to take home at the end of the session.
- Children should never be left in wet or soiled nappies, pull ups or clothes in the nursery as this constitutes neglect and will result in disciplinary procedures.

OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY/ SAFETY

Physical play is an integral part of the curriculum and learning environment at Little Companions both indoors and outdoors. The children are encouraged to play at varied levels, have spaces and times within the daily routine to move and travel in diverse ways, using resources to promote their coordination and muscle movement. Our outdoor area is part of the holistic learning environment and children have supervised times when they can free flow inside and outside for both structured and child initiated play. The play can involve elements of forest schooling and risk play and this is SUPERVISED, with sufficient interaction and engagement. Children are supported through this type of play.

Prior the doors opening outside, the children are reminded of the golden rules of play, if any areas are coned off outside, they are explained the reason, with clear signs and simple instructions. Children are dressed in the suitable and appropriate clothing for the weather and sun cream is applied if necessary.

Early years practitioners ensure:

- A risk assessment has been carried out prior to outdoor play
- A headcount is carried out
- A minimum of two practitioners are ready to go out with the children – number of practitioners can increase to 3 if many children decide to do outside play or if there is a focus activity being led outside.
- The outside gate is locked and the key is clearly upon an outside practitioner
- Practitioners are assigned areas to support play – around the gate and path area/ around the back of the building
- Risk play is supervised at ALL times and supported when required
- Water jug and cups are kept outside during outdoor play to support independent access to water when the children are thirsty
- If any visitors come during this period the gate is unlocked and relocked and the visitor is escorted to the indoors to the practitioners/ manager inside
- There are 2 practitioners inside to support indoor play
- Upon the children coming in, they are given a 5 minute period to prepare the transition indoors, encouraged to tidy up and come inside
- As the children come inside, one practitioner carries out a headcount, one practitioner carries out a final outside check/ unlocking the gate and ensuring all the children have come in. The doors are then closed. Information is shared with the staff accordingly.
- Any accidents or falls outside are documented and shared immediately with the manager inside.

Little Companions, understands the importance of support and supervision during outdoor and natural play. Children are allowed to explore nature in areas of the mud kitchen, rainy day games and we ask parents/ guardians to work in partnership to provide appropriate clothing for such play. Forest school play supports further interaction with the natural environment as well as elements of risk play. Practitioners leading this play have undertaken suitable training. Any accidents outdoors are documented in accordance with the Little Companions accident documentation policy. This is shared with Parents/ guardians.

Parental Involvement Policy

At Little Companions we believe that children benefit most when we work in partnership with parents.

Our aim is to support parents as their children's first and most important educators by involving them in their children's education and in the full life of the Nursery.

Some parents are less well represented in early years' settings; these include fathers, parents who live apart from their children but who still play a part in their lives as well as working parents. In carrying out the following procedures, we will ensure all parents are included.

When we refer to 'parents' we mean both mothers and fathers; these include both natural or birth parents as well as step-parents and parents who do not live with their children, but have contact with them and play a part in their lives. 'Parents' also includes foster parents.

'Parental responsibility' is all the rights, duties, powers and responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property.

Procedures

- We have a means to ensure all parents are included – that may mean we have different strategies for involving fathers or parents who work or live apart from their children.
- We consult with all parents to find out what works best for them.
- We ensure ongoing dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families.
- We inform all parents about how the setting is run and its policies through access to written information and through regular informal communication.

We check to ensure parents understand the information that is given to them.

- We inform all parents on a regular basis about their children's progress.
- We involve parents in the shared record keeping about their children - either formally or informally - and ensure parents have access to their children's written developmental records.
- We provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting.
- We inform parents about relevant conferences, workshops and training.
- We consult with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone.
- We provide information about opportunities to be involved in the setting in ways that are accessible to parents with basic skills needs, or those for whom English is an additional language.
- We hold meetings in venues that are accessible and appropriate for all.
- We welcome the contributions of parents, in whatever form these may take.
- We inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions and check to ensure these are understood. All parents have access to our written complaints procedure.
- We provide opportunities for parents to learn about the curriculum offered in the setting and about young children's learning, in the Nursery and at home.

In compliance with the Welfare Requirements, the following documentation is in place:

- Admissions policy.
- Complaints procedure.
- Record of complaints.
- Developmental records of children.

Managing children with allergies, or who are sick or infectious (including reporting notifiable disease)

At Little Companions we regard the welfare of the children in our care as paramount. Therefore it is our aim to care for the health of our children and promote health by identifying allergies and preventing contact with allergenic substances. Every effort is made to prevent cross infection of viruses and bacterial infections, the procedure for this is as follows:

Procedure for children with allergies

- When a child starts at Little Companions, the parents are required to fill out registration forms which include providing information on any allergies the child may have.
- If the child has an allergy, a risk assessment is carried out, which should include the following information:
 - The allergen (i.e. the substance, material or creature the child is allergic to such as, nuts, egg, bee stings, cats, etc)
 - The nature of the allergic reaction, e.g. anaphylactic shock reaction, including rash, reddening of the eyes, swelling, breathing problems, etc.
 - What to do in case of an allergic reaction, any medication used and how it is to be used.
 - Control measures – such as how the child can be prevented from contact with the allergen.
 - Review
- This form is kept in the child's personal file and a copy is displayed where staff can see it.
- A staff meeting is called so that staff are informed of the child's needs and measures that must be taken to ensure the child's needs are met.
- Parents train staff in how to administer special medication in the event of an allergic reaction. If additional training is required, this should be provided by the setting.
- It is the policy of Little Companions not to permit any nuts or nut products within the setting. Parents are made aware of this during registration so that no nuts or nut products are put in packed lunches or brought in, for example, in a party.
- For children suffering life threatening conditions or requiring invasive treatments, written confirmation must be obtained from the insurance provider to extend the insurance.

Life saving medication and invasive treatments

This procedure is set out for life saving medication, such as, adrenaline injections (Epipens) for anaphylactic shock reactions (caused by allergies to nuts, eggs, etc) or invasive treatments, such as, rectal administration of Diazepam for epilepsy.

- Nursery must obtain a letter from the child's GP/consultant stating the child's condition and what medication if any is to be administered.
- Parents must provide written consent allowing staff to administer medication.
- Nursery must also have proof of training in the administration of such medication by the child's GP, a district nurse, children's nurse specialist or a community paediatric nurse.
- If medical training/experience is required this should be provided for staff.
- Copies of these three documents should be sent to the insurance provider for appraisal. A written confirmation must be obtained that the insurance has been extended.

Procedure for children who are sick or infectious

- If a child appears sick, for example, temperature, vomiting, diarrhoea, the parents should be immediately contacted and asked to collect the child from the nursery.
- Whilst waiting for the parent the child should be kept away from the other children but not left alone. Efforts should be made to make the child feel as comfortable and happy as possible.
- If a child has a temperature, they should be kept cool, by removing top clothing, sponging their heads with cool water and kept away from draughts.
- The child's temperature should be taken.
- In extreme cases the child should be taken immediately to the nearest hospital and the parents informed.
- When parents collect the child, they are asked to take the child to the doctor before returning the child to the nursery. Children who are sick, unwell or have a contagious infection or disease can be refused admittance to the nursery.
- Where children have been prescribed antibiotics, parents are asked to keep the child at home for 48 hours before returning to the nursery.
- Also if a child has diarrhoea, parents are asked to keep the child home for 48 hours or until a formed stool has passed.
- The nursery has a list of excludable diseases and exclusion times please see separate list for this information.

Reporting of 'notifiable disease'

- If a child or adult is diagnosed suffering from a notifiable disease under the Public Health (Infectious Disease) Regulations 1988, the GP will report this to the Health Protection Agency.
- When the nursery becomes aware, or is informed of the notifiable disease, the manager informs Ofsted and acts on any advice given by the Health Protection Agency.

HIV/AIDS/Hepatitis procedure

- HIV virus, like other viruses such as Hepatitis, (A, B and C) are spread through body fluids. Hygiene precautions for dealing with body fluids are the same for all children and adults.
- Single use vinyl gloves and aprons are worn when changing children's nappies, pants and clothing that are soiled with blood, urine, faeces or vomit.
- Protective rubber gloves are used for cleaning/sluicing clothing after changing.
- Soiled clothing is rinsed and either bagged for parents to collect or laundered in the nursery.
- Spills of blood, urine, faeces or vomit are cleared using mild disinfectant solution and mops; cloths used are disposed of with the clinical waste.
- Tables and other furniture, furnishings or toys affected by blood, urine, faeces or vomit are cleaned using a disinfectant.

Nits and Head lice

- Nits and head lice are not an excludable condition, although in exceptional cases a parent may be asked to keep the child away until the infestation has cleared.
- On identifying cases of head lice, all parents are informed and asked to treat their child and all the family if they are found to have head lice.

Potty Training Policy

At Little Companions we encourage parents/guardians to work closely with their child's key worker when going through this phase of development. The nursery practitioners are there to provide support to both the parents/guardians and child to ensure potty training is as smooth and consistent as possible.

Our guidelines to parents/guardians are that once potty training is started at home then they should also start to maintain it at nursery. Please bring your child in pants and NOT nappies at this stage, in order to avoid any confusion for your child as well as lots of spare clothes. Practitioners will regularly ask your child, initially every 15 minutes or so if they need the toilet and eventually we feel confident that by working closely with parents and maintaining the potty training routine at nursery your child will be a confident toilet user. If

parents would like to bring in a potty or toilet seat into nursery that their child is comfortable using at home then please feel free to do so.

The potty training transition can be quite an anxious stage for both parents and children, but at Little Companions we will work to make this experience as positive as possible so children can settle into their new routine with ease.

Settling Policy

On starting the nursery, each child will go through a settling period in order to ease them into the nursery routine. At Little Companions we work closely with parents during this period to achieve a smooth transition for their child into the nursery environment.

On average the settling period allocated for the child is 2 weeks, however this can be varied to suit the needs of the child - shortened and lengthened accordingly. During this period the nursery will not charge any fees if the child is so upset resulting in the parent/ key worker deciding their child is not ready to complete their contracted session. The fees will be credited for the next month.

For the first settling session, the parent/carer will have an opportunity to meet their child's key worker and share information about their child to ensure the key worker can cater for their child's needs appropriately. The key worker will also arrange the dates and times for the following settling sessions which are vital for the child to attend to ensure a happy transition into the nursery.

During the settling sessions parents are encouraged to leave their child at the nursery, gradually extending the time left on each session until the child starts permanently. The parents/carers can call the nursery for any updates on their child and the nursery staff will be readily available for any assistance they may require.

Little Companions appreciate parents/carers cooperation during this period and welcome all new parents/carers and children to our nursery.

Sun Safety Policy

Little Companions acknowledges the importance of sun protection and want children and staff to be protected from the harmful UV rays from the sun and we will work with staff, children and parents/guardians to achieve this through:

EDUCATION- The practitioners will communicate about sun sensible during circle time at the start of the summer term and before the summer holidays. Parents will be made aware at the beginning of the summer term via email/ parent notice board explaining what we are doing about sun protection and how they can help. Activities will be planned to encourage further understanding of sun safety and displays will be provided linked to the sun safety policy for children to view.

PROTECTION:

Staying shady- Pupils will be encouraged to play in the shade, wherever this is available.

Covering up- Children should wear sun hats with a sufficient brim that protects the ears/face and neck while outdoors.

Those with mobility issues for example the use of a wheelchair are at additional risk and should cover their legs if wearing shorts.

Children must not wear string vest tops and parents/guardians should ensure children are wearing t-shirts which cover the shoulders during the hot summer period.

Drinking lots- Water will available throughout the day and practitioners will encourage the children to drink in regular intervals.

Sun cream: Parents will be advised to put sun cream on the children before they come to pre-school. There will however be sun cream factor 50 available at the setting. Children will be applied sun cream before their outdoor play time.

IF ANY CHILD HAS ALLERGIES TOWARDS THE REGULAR SUN CREAM, PARENTS MUST NOTIFY THE SETTING AND PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE CREAM WHICH CAN BE USED.

During extreme hot weather periods, children will be kept indoors and alternative activities will be arranged for them.

Supporting children with special educational needs

We provide an environment in which all children, including those with special educational needs, are supported to reach their full potential.

- We have regard for the DfES Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2001).
- We ensure our provision is inclusive to all children with special educational needs.
- We support parents and children with special educational needs (SEN).
- We identify the specific needs of children with special educational needs and meet those needs through a range of SEN strategies.
- We work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting individual children's needs.
- We monitor and review our policy, practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.

Procedures

- We designate a member of staff to be the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and give his/her name to parents. Our SENCO is Reema Juttla (Co- Manager)
- We ensure that the provision for children with special educational needs is the responsibility of all members of the setting.
- We ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity.
- We identify, assess and respond to children's special educational needs.
- We work closely with parents of children with special educational needs to create and maintain a positive partnership.

- We ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education.
- We provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
- We liaise with other professionals involved with children with special educational needs and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools.
- We provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum for all children with special educational needs.
- We use a system of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing individual educational plans (IEPs) for children with special educational needs.
- We ensure that children with special educational needs are appropriately involved at all stages of planning and assessing, taking into account their levels of ability.
- We keep record of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with special educational needs.
- We provide resources (human and financial) to implement our Special Educational Needs Policy.
- We provide in-service training for parents, practitioners and volunteers.
- We raise awareness of any specialism the Nursery has to offer.
- We ensure the effectiveness of our special educational needs provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. Individual Education Plan reviews, staff and management meetings, parental and external agency's views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually.
- We provide a complaints procedure.
- We monitor and review our policy annually.

Water Bottle Policy

It is important that each child at Little Companions should be able to independently access drinking water when they feel the need.

We request that parents/carers bring a water bottle filled with fresh water on a daily basis. The nursery staff will replenish the water bottle when necessary during the day and then return the bottle to the parent/carer at the end of their child's nursery session to be taken home for cleaning.

Parents/carers should ensure all bottles are clearly labelled with their child's name. The bottles will be placed at the water station for children to access them throughout the day.