

STAFF BABYSITTING POLICY

Information for parents on private babysitting arrangements

It is natural that once your child has a bond with their early years' practitioner, you might want to ask them to babysit for you privately. However, it is important that you know that we do not promote staff entering into private babysitting arrangements with parents and carers outside of the child's normal pre-school attendance.

Why do we do this?

- It is important that children understand boundaries in order to develop and grow into resilient and confident young people and adults. It can be very confusing for a child when boundaries are blurred between the practitioner and educator in the setting, and a family friend. Not many of us would find it appropriate to ask our child's school teacher to babysit, and the practitioner is no different to a teacher in this respect.
- Your child's developmental and educational journey in the setting is carefully monitored, observed, assessed, recorded and planned for. Your child's practitioner has a key role to play in this, but also works as part of the wider team, and with Ofsted, all of whom have your child's interests at heart. This ongoing monitoring of your child must take place within the setting, not within your home.
- Practitioners work to very strict policies and procedures within the setting, and it is highly unlikely that these are reflected in the way in which you and your family live your lives (all our policies are available for you to see). This can place the practitioner in a very difficult position, if they are expected to behave in a way that goes against normal pre-school procedures. You might imagine too that this can also be confusing for a child. For example, a child will learn that within the setting there are rules that their key person follows and expects the child to follow too. However, at home these rules are often different and your child may find this very difficult when they see their key person acting in a different way.
- Practitioners in the setting are subject to rigorous safeguarding procedures in terms of recruitment and ongoing performance, attitude and behaviour. From time to time, things can go wrong, but this is extremely rare because the whole team oversees a practitioner's work and behaviour, and whilst we have safeguards and insurances in place, these are not active outside of normal pre-school hours.

So where does this leave you?

We do know however that some of you already have close personal relationships with pre-school staff, either because you were friends prior to your child's attendance in the pre-school, or because you have family connections. In these instances, you need to understand that:

- If these arrangements are in place they are separate to your agreement with the Pre-school.
- The Pre-school and its management cannot accept any liability for the actions of individuals outside of their contracted work within the Pre-school during its normal hours of operation.
- The Pre-school takes no responsibility for any actions, or covers any party on its insurance during babysitting sessions. This includes any safeguarding issues.
- Practitioners have been made aware that anything witnessed outside of the Pre-school must be dealt with by them as an individual rather than an employee of the Pre-school, and confidentiality of both Pre-school, and private home matters must be upheld. Practitioners have also been informed that any information known about any child and their family as part of their part of their practitioner role cannot be shared outside of the pre-school. Any breaches of confidentiality will result in disciplinary action.