

"Little Hands" Nursery School

Policies of Practice

Last amended September 2013

In this folder you will find of the policies on which "Little Hands" bases its practice and also an outline of how we use the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to plan the children's care and education.

When signing your admission form you agree to abide by the policies. Similarly all members of staff agree to abide by the nursery's policies and sign their contract and training record to indicate their agreement.

To include information about all our practice makes this quite a lengthy document we have therefore written brief statements about our main policies in the information booklet. More detailed policies are used by the staff and you are welcome to read these if desired.

After looking at the folder today you are welcome to take it home to read and share with other family members. We have complete copies or can photocopy or email any part you wish to keep.

If there are any questions arising from this policy folder please do not hesitate to discuss them with a member of staff.

Jane Marshall
Proprietor

Policies are formulated using the following legislation

Childcare Act 2006

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012

The term "parent" is used throughout the document to refer to any adult who is legally the child's guardian.

The term staff member is used to refer to any adult employed by "Little Hands" Nursery Schools

Previous review September 2012

Next full revision planned for Spring Term 2015

Individual policies will be revised if necessary.

Parents are informed when policy changes are made

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Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Information - 2012

Planning

Example of the annual rebooking form

Lunch leaflet

Current Inspection Reports

Admissions Policy

The nursery will draw up a waiting list with the names of children whose parents wish them to attend the nursery, together with preferred starting dates and number of sessions requested per week.

When sessions are oversubscribed preference will be given to children who have been on the waiting list the longest. The manager will have the final decision regarding taking new bookings to ensure that sessions are correctly staffed.

The nursery will contact parents if their ideal sessions are not available and offer alternatives.

Approximately one term before the requested start date, you will be sent a booking leaflet and form so that your child's sessions can be formally booked. A deposit is not required but on receipt of the booking form nursery will start to plan for your child's admission and therefore parents are committed to the first half term's fees whether or not their child attends.

On receipt of the booking form, nursery will send parents an information package; containing an information booklet outlining the main nursery policies and procedure, examples of two full nursery policies, confirmation of the sessions booked for your child and a healthy lunch box leaflet. It will also contain two forms (admission and "All About Me") asking for information about your child and family which will help us settle and care for your child at nursery.

Parents must sign and return the booking and admission forms as these form the contract between nursery and parents; stating that parents have read and agree to the nursery policies and agree to pay the first half term's fees whether or not their child attends.

The completed admission form also gives essential contact numbers, health record and family information, it is therefore essential that the form be updated regularly.

The information booklet will ask you to ring nursery and organise pre admission visits for your child to attend nursery with you. There is no charge for pre-admission visits and you can make as many visits as you feel your child requires before being left.

At the pre-admission visits

The role of keyworker will be explained and if possible you will be introduced to your child's keyworker.

An individualised plan will be made for your child starting booked sessions.

You will be informed about the review meeting offered in the first weeks after starting booked sessions.

You will be given a communication sheets which can be used by parents and nursery to supplement the daily verbal communication

Allergies, Intolerances and Dietary Requirements

Information regarding your child's dietary needs/requests should be clearly stated on their admission form and it is the parents or guardians responsibility to inform the nursery of any changes. The nursery will ask that any changes are made in writing.

Before giving food or drink to any child at nursery the staff will check the "Allergy & dietary list" which contains information on all attending children's allergies, intolerances, food preferences, and cultural dietary needs. This list is on display for the staff in the nursery at all times. If staff were unsure of your child's dietary needs you would be contacted before food and drink other than water were offered.

Your child's lunch boxes and drinks flask must be named. Staff will name any unnamed lunch boxes and drinks flasks, this action is taken for the safety of children having allergies.

Parents are responsible for checking their child's lunch box to ensure the items do not contain any ingredients that their child cannot have.

During snack and lunch time staff ensure that children with known allergies or dietary needs are closely supervised and not sat near a child having the food or drink which they are not allowed. Staff will actively discourage children sharing food.

Before any cooking activity staff will check the allergy and dietary list to ensure all children can be included in the activity.

Treats brought to nursery by parents to share with all children (e.g.: birthday cake) which do not have detailed labelling will be handed out at the end of the session so that each parent can decide if it is suitable for their own child.

If your child has a severe allergy, their prescribed emergency medicine can be left at nursery in case it was needed. Full arrangements for this would be made with the nursery manager. (Also see the medicine policy)

Policy for Managing Children's Behaviour

At Little Hands we believe that both children and adults flourish best in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them, and children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to provide an environment in which children can develop self-discipline and self esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

In order to achieve this:

Rules governing the conduct of the group and the behaviour of the children will be discussed and agreed within nursery and explained to new adults, and to new children as is developmentally appropriate.

All staff at nursery will ensure that the rules are applied consistently, so that children have the security of knowing what to expect and can build up useful habits of behaviour.

All staff will provide a positive model for the children with regard to friendliness, care and courtesy.

Staff in nursery will praise and endorse desirable behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.

All staff in nursery will take positive steps to avoid a situation in which children receive adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.

Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated. Staff will take appropriate steps to change the behaviour whilst supporting and ensuring the well-being of the victim(s).

Positive self esteem will be promoted for children and staff (see self esteem policy)

When children behave in unacceptable ways:

Physical punishment such as smacking or shaking will neither be used nor threatened.

Physical intervention is only used if a child loses control of their behaviour in such a way that they may be a danger to themselves or others. If physical intervention is used it is fully documented on an incident form and parents informed.

Children will never be sent out of the room by themselves.

Techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children such as "a naughty chair" will not be used.

Children whose behaviour is inappropriate will be given one to one adult support dealing with the behaviour and working towards a better pattern.

Where appropriate this might be achieved by a period of "time out" with an adult.

In cases of serious misbehaviour, the unacceptability of the behaviour and the attitudes will be made clear, immediately, but by means of explanation rather than personal blame.

In any case of inappropriate behaviour it will always be made clear that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unwelcome.

Staff will not shout, or raise their voices in a threatening way.

Staff in the nursery will make themselves aware of, and respect, a range of cultural expectations regarding interactions between people.

Any behaviour problems will be handled in a developmentally appropriate fashion, respecting interactions between people.

Recurring problems will be tackled by the whole nursery, in partnership with the child's parents, to ensure consistency using objective observation records to establish an understanding of the cause. A care plan may then be used to develop good behaviour and this would be formulated and shared with the child's family.

Staff will be aware that some kinds of behaviour may arise from a child's special needs.

Booking Term Time & Holiday Club Sessions

Term Time Bookings

Bookings at Little Hands are valid for the whole of the academic year or the remainder of the academic if your child starts part way through.

Little Hands opens 08.30 - 16.30. Booking is flexible and made by the hour between 09.00 and 16.00 with 30 minute Early starts and Late finishes available to extend the day.

The nursery day is organised into two main sessions

Morning 09.00-12.00 and afternoon 13.00-16.00

In order for your child gain the maximum benefit from the social and educational opportunities offered we strongly advise that bookings are made around session times.

Lunch hour with a parent provided packed lunch can be booked from 12.00-13.00

There is no dropping off or collection at 11.00 or 14.00 - this allows the children two core uninterrupted hours in each session.

Within availability we allow you to choose where to place the hours/sessions in the week.

We advise a minimum of six hours per week.

Your main booking will be for term time only which is 38 weeks per year and each term follows the term arrangements for Cambridgeshire Education Authority. However Holiday Clubs are available during the school holidays - see below. They are bookable separately from term time to give parents greater flexibility.

Sessions can be increased as soon as they become available and are charged from when they are increased only. Occasional extra sessions can be booked if available and are charged on the following half terms invoice.

There is no refund for sessions missed e.g.: for holidays or because of sickness, however we do offer "make-up" sessions under certain conditions.

Make-up sessions must be taken in the half term in which the missed sessions occurred.

It may not be possible to replace all the sessions missed.

Make-up sessions for sessions missed due to illness should not be booked until your child is sufficiently recovered to manage their usual week.

Make-up sessions cannot be carried over from term time to holiday club or vice versa.

Make up sessions are booked at the managers discretion and will not be allowed to affect our high staff to child ratio.

Should you wish to cancel or reduce the number of sessions - 7 weeks term time notice in writing is required. During the notice period fees remain payable and your child's sessions remain available.

In the Spring term, if your child is remaining at Little Hands after the summer, you will receive a new booking form for the following academic year. This should be completed and returned to nursery to secure your booking for the following academic year -an example of the current form is included at the end of the policy. This allows you the chance to rearrange, increase or decrease your sessions. Notification of any price increase for the following academic year is given with the booking form's information.

Early Years Funding 3 & 4 year olds

Early Years Funding is available for all children the term after their third birthday. Please note that for the purpose of eligibility, the Education Department state that terms are from 1st January, 1st April and 1st September irrespective of the actual date the term starts.

There is no charge for funded hours. Taken over term time each child has a maximum of 15 hours of funding per week for 38 term weeks per year. The 15 hours must be taken over a minimum of three days per week with no more than 13 hours over two consecutive days. Funded hours can be spread to include holiday club weeks.

The funding can be stretched to include holiday clubs giving a child approximately 11.5 hours over 50 weeks a year

Funded hours must be booked for a whole term - increases and reductions to funded hours cannot be made mid-term. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, funded hours cannot be changed once the parent declaration form has been completed each term.

The nursery manager will give parents the necessary form to complete the term before each child is eligible for funding. Little Hands processes the Early Years Funding application and receives the funding direct. The Early Years Funding team check each application to ensure parents are using the funding as directed and not over claiming.

Early Years Funding 2 year olds

Two year old Funding is available for children whose families meet certain criteria based on income and/or family need.

For children receiving two year old funding the arrangements are as for 3 & 4 year old funded children.

The nursery manager can help eligible families apply for two year old funding

Holiday Club Bookings

Little Hands offers Holiday Club during all the school holidays Except between Christmas and New Years.

Holiday Club opens most days except bank holidays, during nursery hours. Holiday Club bookings are independent from term time bookings using a separate form. The fees are the same as term time and must be paid in full before holiday club starts.

The nursery is staffed with Little Hands staff to our usual ratio of one member of staff to every four children and is open to children aged two to eight years allowing older brothers and sisters to join us.

Extra sessions can be booked during the holiday club period if they are available and these are charged on the following half term's invoice. Sessions missed during Holiday Club are not refundable but make-up sessions may be available within the same holiday club at the manager's discretion.

Payments for any pre-booked holiday club made after the holiday club period has started will be subject to a £20 late pay penalty.

Holiday Club opens with demand; therefore should there be a very small number of bookings for a session the manager may take the decision not to offer that session. This would first be discussed with any parent who had hoped to use the session and it may be possible to offer a booking at one of the other Little Hands.

Policy and Procedures for Child Protection

Named staff member.....

We intend to create at Little Hands an environment in which children are safe from harm and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. In order to achieve this we will:

Exclude all known abusers

It will be made clear to applicants for staff posts at Little Hands that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and a Criminal Records enhanced disclosure (DBS) will be sought.

All staff working at Little Hands whether voluntary or paid will be interviewed before their appointment and not left unsupervised until nursery vetting is completed. Students vetting will be undertaken by the supervising college. Staff working (voluntary or paid) for more than 2 weeks will be subject to full nursery vetting to ensure their suitability to work with children. Nursery vetting is the responsibility of the nursery proprietor and includes enhanced criminal records (DBS) check, two verified references (one which will be the last employer) verification of qualifications and a supervised induction period. If these checks show the person as unsuitable to work with children the staff member would be discharged immediately.

Training

We will seek out training opportunities for all staff involved with the group to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

Prevent abuse by means of good practice

Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or with small groups. An adult who needs to take a child aside, for example, for time out after inappropriate behaviour, will remain in range of hearing.

Adults who are awaiting a Criminal Records Check (DBS) will not be left unsupervised with children, and will not take children unaccompanied to the toilet or change nappies.

Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable the children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

The layout of the nursery rooms will permit constant supervision of all children.

Respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse

Changes in children's behaviour / appearance will be investigated.

Parents will normally be the first point of reference; though serious suspicions would be referred to the Social Care Team without discussion with the child's carers should this be judged to be in the child's best interest.

All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the session leaders and staff present on the sessions the child attends and the nursery manager. Registers of staff and children's attendance are always maintained.

If a member of staff were suspected they would be removed from contact with the children during the investigation. If the allegations were proven instant dismissal would occur.

Keep Records

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific and confidential record will be set up, quite separate from the usual ongoing records of children's' progress and development. The record will include, in addition to the name address and age of the child; timed and dated observations describing objectively the child's behaviour / appearance without comment or interpretation and where possible the exact words spoken by the child with the dated name and signature of the recorder.

Such records will be kept with the child's admission form and will not be accessible to people in the nursery other than the nursery manager, session leader and staff involved.

When a child moves to a new setting all records are transferred to that setting. In addition Little Hands would make every attempt to refer outstanding concerns about a child to a relevant professional should the child leave the nursery unexpectedly.

This policy follows closely statutory guidance from Government "Working Together to Safeguard Children (www.education.gov.uk/publications) and guidance from Cambridgeshire Early Years and Childcare Service.

Useful Numbers:

Social Care Team	0345 045 5203
Emergency Duty Team (out of office hours)	01733 234 724
Early Years Safeguarding Manager	01223 714760
Local safeguarding Children Board - allegation helpline	01223 727967

Child Protection - Whistle Blowing

Whistle blowing is the term used when someone who works in or for an organisation wishes to raise concerns about malpractice in the organisation and the cover up of these.

Whistle blowing is different from a complaint or a grievance. It applies when you are acting as a witness to misconduct or malpractice that you have observed.

Raising concerns

If it is appropriate to do so, raise the concerns with the nursery manager first.

If you feel unable to do this perhaps because your concern relates to the nursery manager or the concern you raised was not dealt with appropriately - raise the concern with the named person for child protection and/or the proprietor.

If you have a serious allegation, do not feel it is appropriate to raise the concern internally or despite raising the concern feel it has not been adequately dealt with - you can take the concern to an external organisation using the contact details below.

Little Hands procedure for dealing with concerns regarding staff misconduct or malpractice is

Any serious allegation made against staff would be dealt with immediately in accordance with Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board Child protection procedures with allegations being raised with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The allegation would be reported to Ofsted and advice sought as to the most appropriate body to investigate the allegation.

Action would be taken to remove the staff member from contact with children whilst the allegation was recorded and investigated (see also: staff disciplinary procedure)

Informal queries raising child protection issues against staff would be dealt with by the proprietor and would involve discussion with the concerned adult raising the query. (See also: complaints procedure) However the above procedure would commence at any time the query became an allegation.

Contact numbers

LADO helpline Telephone 01223 727967

Ofsted whistle blowing hotline

Telephone 0300 123 3155 E-mail whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

Children who are Unwell

It is very difficult for a young child to attend a session when they are feeling unwell. Children can become poorly quickly and may leave home feeling fine only for us to contact you an hour later to ask you to collect. Children cannot always express in words that they are not feeling well, or may appear fine at home after being poorly for a few days but not be well enough yet to cope with nursery.

Parents are advised in the information book not to send their child to nursery if they are unwell or could be infectious. If your child becomes unwell at nursery we would contact you immediately to collect them. It is therefore very important that your contact numbers are kept up to date.

If a member of staff suspects your child has an infectious disease on arriving at nursery you would be advised to take your child home and what action to take next.

On returning to nursery following illness please discuss your child's current health with a member of staff.

We have current information regarding infectious diseases; with their incubation and exclusion periods at nursery should you need any advice. If the staff have any doubts the nursery's local health centre will give the staff general advice. Notifiable diseases and clusters of food poisoning are reported to Ofsted.

Children who have been infectious should have a 24 hour "infection free" period at home. If your child has sickness and/or diarrhoea they should not return to nursery for 48 hours following the last symptoms, but also you should ensure they are eating and drinking normally for 24 hours before they return.

Any non prescribed medicines including those for reducing temperature or alleviating "cold virus" symptoms will not be given at nursery. If your child still requires this medication they are not yet fit enough to return to nursery.

Little Hands offers a limited number of "make-up" sessions for children who miss attending nursery through illness. Make-up sessions must be arranged within the half term they fall, but the session leader will need to be satisfied that the child is fully recovered enough to cope with their ordinary nursery week before arranging extra sessions. There may be times when it is not possible to make up all sessions lost due to illness and the final decision as to whether sufficiently staffed sessions spaces for "make-up" sessions rests with the manager.

Collection of children from nursery

This policy follows guidelines from Cambridgeshire Early Years and Childcare Services. . In normal circumstances children will leave the nursery only with a parent or adult who is authorised on the child's admission form and who is known to the staff. **The key to safe and happy collection is to have as few "authorised collectors" as possible, to provide the nursery with up to date information about who will be collecting and for the collectors to be prompt and approach the staff.** All staff are aware of the system in operation for children's arrival and departures. A member of staff will be at the door during departures.

Responsibility for collection of each child lies with the parents who should authorise any changes of collection or contact numbers, to the nursery in writing as soon as possible. Alternative contact numbers should be given on each child's admission form and all "authorised collectors" must be over 18 years. The alternative contact person should visit nursery with the parents and be introduced to the staff on or around the child's start day, it is also helpful to provide nursery with a photograph of your additional contacts.

Rarely, if requested in writing by a parent, staff will release a child to an adult not authorised on the admission form. If the collecting adult is not already known to the staff they must bring a form of photo identification with them when collecting the child.

In emergencies parents may make a telephone request to the session manager, to release their child to an unauthorised adult. Staff will establish a password to be used on collection and photo identification would be preferred.

For families where the child's parents are separated, we cannot refuse collection to the parent who is not living with the child without either a court order or proof that the parent does not have parental responsibility. In all cases proof of relevant documentation would be required.

Once a parent or carer takes a child off the nursery premises they are the sole responsibility of that adult and the nursery can accept no responsibility for incidents occurring in the nursery car park or beyond.

Should a child not be collected they will remain at nursery whilst staff attempt to contact all authorised collectors named on the child's admission form starting with the parents. Should the nursery be unable to contact any of the people named one hour after the close of nursery then it would be assumed that a major problem had arisen and the police would be contacted to find the whereabouts of the main authorised collectors.

Repeated late collection of children can be distressing for the child and make organisation of staffing difficult. If a child is repeatedly collected late a fee of £10 per 15 minutes will be charged. Parents would be advised in advance if this penalty was to be introduced.

Complaints Procedure for Parents

Little Hands nursery school aims to provide quality care and education for all our children, and a welcoming and informative environment for their families. In order to achieve this it is essential that we have feedback from parents about any aspect of the nursery on which they feel necessitates a comment.

At Little Hands we have an open door policy allowing suggestions and concerns to be dealt with easily, however should you ever have any concerns about nursery that you find difficult to address the following procedure is in place to help both yourselves and the nursery work through the problem.

Should you have any concerns:

Firstly talk through your concerns with the nursery manager, or the session leader either at nursery or by telephone.

It would be very unusual for the Little Hands staff to be unable to resolve your concerns at this initial stage, however if there is not a satisfactory outcome within two weeks, or the problem recurs, you should put your concerns in writing and request a meeting with the nursery manager or the proprietor for further discussion. At this point you may wish to have another adult with you and the nursery will make a written copy of the meeting. The proprietor investigates all written complaints and will report back to you within 20 days, giving the results of the investigation and the action to be taken

If you still feel your concern is unresolved and that a satisfactory agreement cannot be reached between yourselves and the nursery manager or proprietor then an external mediator possibly from the Preschool Learning Alliance, will be used. The mediator will help define the problem, review the action so far, and suggest further ways it might be resolved. The mediator would keep all discussions confidential, meet with both parties either at the nursery or a neutral venue, and would keep a written record of any meetings held.

For a serious complaint you may also involve OFSTED, the nursery's registering body, at the address below and they would also investigate the complaint.

National Business Unit
Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
0300 123 1231
enquires@ofsted.gov.uk

Policy on Confidentiality and Information Sharing

To meet the needs of all the children in our care it is important to share information concerning a child's progress and development with parents and between all staff in the nursery. We also share information with any other settings caring for a child and new settings children transfer to, including primary schools.

Parents are encouraged to share their child's records with other carers and settings involved with their child, so that all carers involved can plan the best care and education for each child

With parents' permission an initial summary of their child's two year old progress record are shared with the child's health visitor.

With parents' permission a general summary of their child's progress record, the "transition document" is sent to a new setting or school when their child leaves Little Hands.

Parents can request that certain information be on a "need to know basis" either within the nursery or between settings. Any request to limit the access of a child's information should be made to the nursery manager who would be the key information holder.

It may also be necessary in some circumstances for the nursery to seek the help and advice from outside professionals. In most cases if this action is taken the parent's permission will first be sought. In cases of grave concern for the child's safety social services would be consulted without parents consent. (See also Child Protection and Data Protection & Information Security policies)

All staff at Little Hands have a duty to treat information regarding families with confidentiality both in and outside of nursery. To assist with this we ask parents to only request information regarding their child whilst on the nursery premises, when confidentiality can be best assured. Staff will decline to give information at any other time e.g. school playground, or supermarket.

Staff are given policy guidance regarding sharing information digitally. This ensures that staff consider nursery confidentiality when using social networking sites, twitter, blogs, computer documents and mobile smart devices. (Staff policy available at nursery)

Staff will not give address and phone information regarding your child to other parents.

Policy for Data Protection and Information Security

Data Protection

Little Hands Nursery Schools, like other schools and establishments dealing with education, hold information on pupils in order to run the education system, and in doing so have to follow the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act (2000) This means, among other things that the data held about pupils must only be used for specific purposes allowed by law.

This policy details the type of data held, why that data is held and to whom it may be passed on.

Little Hands Nursery Schools hold information on pupils in order to support their teaching and learning, to monitor and report on their progress, to provide appropriate pastoral care, and to assess how well the Nursery School is doing. This information includes contact details, National Curriculum assessment results, attendance information, characteristics such as ethnic group, special educational needs and any relevant medical information.

From time to time we are required to pass on some of this data to the Local Authority (LA) to another school or nursery to which the child is transferring, and to the Department for Education.

Information Security

This policy details how Little Hands Nursery Schools protects information on pupils from misuse whether internal or external, deliberate or accidental.

It is the responsibility of the Nursery Manager to compile record and store the necessary information on pupils as detailed in the Policy for Data Protection. It is the responsibility of the Proprietor, Jane Marshall, to ensure this data is kept safe.

Information on current pupils is held within a specific Nursery Management Software Package on the Nursery School computer at each setting. The information held on the Nursery School computer is specific to that setting. This software package is used in the day to day running of the Nursery School and is the principal application for the information on pupils. Access to this software is restricted to the smallest number of staff involved in administrative duties that is practicably possible. Access is protected by a password entry system. Hard (paper) copies of the information on past and present pupils, for each setting, is held in a locked cabinet at that setting for up to two years. Archives for all settings are held for seven years at the Little Hands Melbourn setting.

All staff receive policy guidance on information security regarding working on children's records off site.

Early Years Funding

The following regulations for using funded sessions are set by Government and cannot be changed by the nursery.

Funding is available for all children the term after their third birthday and for some eligible 2 year old children.

Please note that for the purpose of eligibility, the Education Department state that terms are from 1st January, 1st April and 1st September irrespective of the actual date the term starts.

There is no charge for funded hours.

Each child is allocated 570 hours of funding per calendar year, which can be taken during term time only, or spread over the whole year.

Taken over term time each child has a maximum of 15 hours of funding per week for 38 term weeks per year.

Taken over a calendar year each child has a maximum of 11 funded hours per week over a 50 week year. This gives 550 hours with the remaining 20 hours of funding added to the summer term. The 11 hours can be taken over 2 days a week.

Funded hours can be booked with a minimum of 2.5 hours and a maximum of 8 hours per day.

Funded hours must be booked for a whole term - increases and reductions to funded hours cannot be made mid-term.

Funding can be used between a maximum of 2 settings and parents do not have to use all of their entitlement if they don't want to.

Parents can book funded hours only, in which case there is no additional charge.

Parents can book a mixture of funded hours and full price sessions and will be invoiced for the full priced sessions as stated above.

The nursery manager will give parents the necessary form to complete the term before each child is eligible for funding. Little Hands processes the Early Years Funding application and receives the funding direct. The Early Years Funding team check each application to ensure par-

ents are using the funding as directed and not over claiming. Settings are also monitored to ensure they are offering funding in the correct way.

Policy for Equality of Opportunities

Named staff member.....

Little Hands is committed to providing equality of opportunities for all children and families and we therefore work in accordance with all the relevant children's legislation including:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Children's Act 2004 | (Care Standards Act 2000) |
| Disability Rights Act 1999 | Equalities Act 2010 |
| Race Equality 2000 | Race Relations Act 2000 |
| Human Rights Act 1998 | The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 |
| Special Educational Needs & Disability Act 2001 | |
| Employment Equality Regulations (age) 2006 | |

We believe that the nursery's activities should be open to all children and families, and to all children committed to their welfare. We aim to ensure that all those who wish to work at Little Hands have an equal chance to do so.

Children and their families

We aim to ensure that Little Hands is open to any family who express a desire for their child to join the nursery. It may be possible for special arrangements to be made for families who wish their child to join Little Hands but who find the fees prohibitive.

Little Hands offers a flexible payment system for families with differing means and all children eligible for Nursery Education Funding can book up to 15 hours per week with no extra cost.

The waiting list is not always operated on a "first come, first served basis" instead consideration is given to any special factors, at the manager's discretion.

Little Hands recognises that many different types of family successfully love and care for their children.

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all the major events in the lives of children and families in the nursery, and in our society as a whole, and to welcome the diversity of backgrounds from which they come.

Without indoctrination in any specific faith, the nursery will celebrate festivals specific to families attending. If the nursery is not familiar with the festival the family will be consulted, and will be invited to share their festival with the rest of the group, if they themselves wish to do so. Also the nursery will include in its curriculum a range of different festivals, together with the stories, celebrations, special food and clothing they involve as part of the diversity of life, and staff will seek advice on their detail from appropriate agencies when necessary.

Families' opinions regarding this policy will be sought and valued.

The Curriculum

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Appropriate opportunities will be given for children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Resources

These will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multiracial society. Materials will be selected to help children develop their self respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and derogatory pictures or messages about any group of people.

Special Needs

Little Hands recognises the wide range of special needs of children and families in the community, and will consider what part it can play in meeting these needs, (for further detail see SEN policy) Planning for any meetings involving staff or parents will take into account the needs of people with disabilities.

Discriminatory behaviour and remarks

These are unacceptable at Little Hands. The response will aim to be sensitive to the feelings of the victim and to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices.

Language

Information, written and spoken, will be clearly communicated in as many languages as necessary. Multilingual children are an asset, and will be valued with their languages recognised and respected in the nursery. We are required to report any racist comments by adults or children to Early Years and Childcare Team.

Food

Medical, cultural and dietary needs will be met.

Staff Employment

Little Hands will appoint the best person for each job and will treat fairly all applicants for jobs, and all those appointed. Commitment to implementing the nursery's Equality policy will form part of the job description for all workers. No applicant will be rejected on the grounds of age gender, sexuality, class, means, family status, disability, colour, ethnic origin, culture religion or belief.

Training in equality will be available for all staff and an introduction will be given in the induction programme. Equality practices within the nursery will be reviewed at staff meetings and changes made within the operational plan as necessary.

Policy for Payment of Fees

As Little Hands operates with a higher than required staff ratio we rely on fees being paid on time according to the policy below.

We do have other arrangements for payment if needed for example: monthly or weekly, and this should be arranged with the nursery manager. If the fees become prohibitive to keeping your child at nursery reduced fees may be arranged at the managers discretion, Should any problem arise with payment of the fees please discuss this with the nursery manager who in most instances can help as the nursery always tries to be flexible to families needs.

Term Time Fees

The fees are invoiced for each half term which are between four and eight weeks.

Invoices will normally be sent out before each half term and are left for collection with your child's work.

Invoices will be dated the first day of the half term.

The invoice is due for payment within two weeks of the date on the invoice.

Parents paying by Childcare Vouchers must ensure that all payments reach the nursery bank within two weeks of the date of invoice. If parents wish to maximise the tax benefits of paying with vouchers, monthly payments can be made but each invoice must be paid within the two week invoice period; this will result in the monthly payments being made in advance - please speak to the nursery manager for further details.

The voucher company should be instructed to notify the nursery by e-mail janemarshall@littlehands.co.uk when the payment is due so that individual payments can be correctly tracked.

Parents paying by direct bank transfer or internet banking should reference their payments with their child's name and email a notification of payment to janemarshall@littlehands.co.uk

If sessions are to be reduced or cancelled seven weeks term time notice must be given in writing or the following half terms fees will be charged for the greater number of sessions.

An increase of sessions will only be charged from when they commence.

Any extra sessions taken in the half term will be charged on the following half terms invoice.

Persistent late collection of a child will be charged at £10 per 15 minutes and parents would be advised by the nursery manager before this penalty began. Persistently collecting a child late is distressing for the child and involves extra staffing costs.

Holiday Club

Parents are advised of holiday club sessions available with a booking form. A separate holiday club invoice with confirmation of sessions booked is issued approximately two weeks before holiday club begins. Holiday club fees must be paid in full before the holiday club sessions begin.

Holiday Club fees remaining unpaid after the start of the holiday club for which they are booked are subject to a £20 late pay penalty.

Unpaid Fees

If fees remain unpaid after a child has left nursery then Little Hands would write to the parents to try to resolve the issue and make arrangements for the outstanding fees to be paid.

If the fees remain unpaid after two letters Little Hands would pass the matter to a debt collection company.

Food and Drink

Staff receive in house training in food and general hygiene safety using Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2008) This system is also used to monitor hygiene procedures. In addition at least one member of staff will be externally trained in food hygiene every three years. The training is used to update all staff's practice and evaluate our monitoring procedures.

Children's allergies, intolerances and dietary requirements are considered whenever drinks and food are offered.

Rolling Snack

Snack and drinks are chosen in line with the School's Food Trust guidelines for Early Years settings. Snack is available over a prolonged time during each session. Visits to snack are monitored to ensure all children are eating and drinking healthily and regularly at each session.

A staff member is always present at the snack table to encourage, discuss and promote hygiene and healthy eating with the children and children are encouraged to access and prepare snack independently.

Lunch

Parents of all children attending lunch are given the Little Hands "Guide to Lunch" leaflet which outlines lunch session routine, staff deployment and gives guidance to healthy packed lunch options.

Lunch is a social time with children sat in small groups supervised by a staff member. The staff member uses the time to encourage social interaction, increasing independence and guidance on aspects of hygiene and healthy eating. The staff member will eat a healthy snack with the children.

There is a dedicated leader of the lunch session who maintains the register, organises the playtime after lunch and the transition time between lunch and afternoon session.

Water

Drinks of water will be available at all times throughout the day. Children are made aware that water is available at all times, and that they should ask for water when they require it. Children will be encouraged to ask for a drink when they need one.

Children will be assisted in obtaining a drink of water should they need help.

The intake of water by children will be monitored for abnormally high or low intake.

Holiday Club

The sessions you have booked for your child are for term time which is 38 weeks each academic year and follows closely the term times of Cambridgeshire Local Authority. During the school holidays Little Hands nurseries are open for Holiday Club as follows:

Booking forms for each Holiday Club are sent out at the beginning of the half term before.

Early Years Funding can be spread to cover Holiday Club but must be organised a term in advance.

We offer hourly bookings within morning, lunch and afternoon sessions

The sessions are run by some of the Little Hands term time staff to our usual one to four staffing ratio, irrespective of the children's ages.

The sessions are open to children from 2 to 8 years so older brothers and sisters can join us.

The group sizes are usually smaller than term time.

The activities are planned with the children around a theme or topic.

The planning takes into account the different ages of children booked into the session and for children aged 2-5 the Early Years Foundation Stage is used as guidance.

Make-up sessions from term time cannot be taken into Holiday Club.

The fees are priced the same as term time and must be paid in full before the holiday club starts.

Booked sessions will be confirmed and invoiced two weeks before holiday club starts.

For bookings made during the holiday club payment must be made with booking.

Intimate and Personal Care Policy

Little Hands welcomes children to join the nursery whether or not they can manage their own personal hygiene and provide appropriate support for each on an individual basis.

Personal care is less intimate and usually has the function of helping with personal independence e.g.: eating, drinking, washing and dressing. These tasks do not invade conventional personal, private or social space to the same extent as intimate care.

Intimate care involves tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, the genitals.

Whenever possible intimate care will be carried out by the child's keyworker. Should a child become distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be explored, outcomes recorded and parents consulted. Further advice would be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

For children having a high level of additional need which impacts on their intimate and personal care, the SEN coordinator will seek advice from specialists involved e.g.: physio occupational therapist..

During Intimate care staff will

Ensure all children who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; and the child's welfare and dignity are protected.

Will encourage each child to do as much for themselves as they can so they may achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible, given their age and abilities.

Respect each child's right to privacy. Wherever possible, one child will be cared for by one adult, unless there is a sound reason for having two adults present.

Ensure good communication with each child using their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc) to discuss needs and preferences in line with ability.

Staff will note physical changes in a child's presentation e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc and will immediately report concerns in line with our child protection policy.

Intimate care will be carried out within earshot of other staff and in line with the safeguarding and child protection policies.

Policy on Lost Children

There are a limited number of situations where a child could be lost and these are:

Where a child wanders off on a nursery outing (see *Policy on Outings*)

Where a child escapes from the nursery or garden.

Where a child is taken from the nursery by an un-approved adult (see *Policy for the Collection of Children*)

Should a child become lost the following action should be taken:

Alert the member of staff in charge or proprietor who will make enquiries of relevant members of staff as to when the child was last seen and where.

Remember the safety of the other children, with regard to supervision and security.

Ensuring that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure, one or preferably two members of staff should search the building, garden and immediate vicinity.

If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes then the Police and parents must be informed.

Staff will continue to search, opening up the area, keeping in touch with mobile phone if available.

When the situation has been resolved members of staff should review the reasons for it happening and ensure measures are taken to ensure that it does not happen again.

Medical Needs Policy

Little Hands is committed to the inclusion of children with long term medical needs. All children have short periods of illness and medical intervention however this policy refers to children who have an illness that requires medical intervention on a long term basis for chronic or permanent conditions.

Admission

Children with medical needs are admitted to Little Hands using our standard admission policies.

If your child has medical needs, or may need treatment or therapy at nursery this must be discussed with the nursery manager before your child starts. You may be asked to write about your child's needs and how you would like us to deal with them.

For complex medical needs the nursery manager may organise an individual health care plan to guide nursery in dealing with these needs. The only barrier to an immediate start at nursery for your child would be if the treatment or therapies needed at nursery require staff training to be delivered or if staff support was not available from within nursery.

Medication

Medicines can be given regularly and long term at nursery should this be required, however regular medicines should be prescribed out of nursery hours if at all possible. (Please see the medicine policy)

Individual Health Care plan

An individual medical plan is a plan written between parents and the nursery manager to outline the best way to provide for any medical needs at nursery. Most long term medical needs will not require a full plan but parents are asked for a written statement of their child's needs and how they would like us to deal with them.

Complex medical needs will require a health plan which will be completed by the nursery manager with the parents and be agreed by the medical staff caring for the child. The plan will:

- Identify medical need.

- State the care required (both at home and at nursery) to manage the condition.

- State a protocol for emergency situations which may arise from the condition.

- State staff training required.

- Give a review date appropriate to the condition.

Emergency Protocol

An individual emergency protocol helps staff deal most effectively with a medical emergency. If your child has a known medical condition which could result in an emergency situation e.g.: severe allergy or epilepsy the nursery manager will ask the medical team involved with your child to write an emergency protocol.

The protocol will include actions to be taken and adults to be contacted and it should be clear and concise. The nursery manager will show you where the protocol will be kept at nursery so that it is very easily accessed if required, but not be on general view.

Policy for Giving Medicines

The nursery will undertake the giving of medicines to children at nursery under the following conditions and providing the child is healthy enough to be attending nursery. Medicines are given by the session leader.

Any medicine to be given at nursery must be in its original container with an unaltered prescription as written by the doctor or dispensing pharmacist, stating your child's name, medicine name, prescribed dose, method of giving the medicine, and timings the medicine should be given during the day. All medicines will be stored securely and appropriately at nursery and cannot be left on the children's peg.

Long-term Prescribed Medicine

Example: long-term antibiotics, emergency allergy treatment, asthma inhalers, eczema creams and epilepsy treatments

A letter of consent is required from the child's GP and the parents detailing the medicine or treatment to be given and the conditions under which it should be used. If at all possible the medicine should be prescribed to be given out of nursery hours.

If staff have needed to give the medicine the parents will be informed by telephone and asked to sign a medicine form when collecting their child. *Please also see: Medical Needs Policy*

Short-term Prescribed Medicine

Example: antibiotics

The PARENT must give permission to the session leader who will check that there are clear prescription details on the container, and cannot agree to give the medicine without them. The session leader will ask the parent to complete a medicine form. If the child is to be brought to nursery by another adult, the parent must send their written consent to give the medicine. Part of the medicine form will be returned to the parent at the end of the session to state exactly when the medicine was given.

Non-prescribed Medicine

Example: Calpol, paracetamol, cold and cough remedies and medicine for reducing temperature.

Non prescribed medicines cannot be given at nursery unless they are regularly prescribed for long term medical needs. If a child is still requiring this type of medication to help them over a short term illness then nursery will presume the child is not yet well enough to return to nursery.

The session leader will follow a detailed policy when giving a child any medicine and this is available for parents if required.

Policy on Outings and Walks

The children are sometimes taken on short walks beyond the nursery's garden but within the grounds immediately surrounding nursery and written parental permission for this is given when parents sign the admission form. For these walks the following procedures are followed:

Staffing ratios are maintained at the same level as in force in the nursery.

The children will be counted before setting off and at regular intervals throughout the outing. If the group is broken up into subgroups a designated person in charge will be assigned and that person will be responsible for counting the children at regular intervals.

Return times to nursery will be arranged with a member of staff remaining at nursery.

For longer walks outside the grounds immediately surrounding nursery the additional procedures are also followed:

A first aider is present and a suitable first aid box taken.

Copies of contact lists containing information regarding allergies and the child's GP will also be taken.

Nursery occasionally organises day trips out. These outings are for the whole family and not outings for staff and children alone. The outings are optional and nursery stays open for children who are unable to attend the trip. During these outings the following procedures will be followed in addition to those above:

Parents will be required to accompany their child and will have sole responsibility for their child during the outing. The staffing level may not be maintained at nursery levels as all parents will be accompanying their children.

The attraction chosen will be checked to ensure its suitability for all and a risk assessment performed.

Parents will be advised what food and drinks to bring, and additional drinks should be offered if the weather is warm or if energetic exercise is part of the day.

All children should take spare clothing.

Staff will take first aid, contact lists, additional fluids and a mobile phone.

At the conclusion of each visit the member of staff who is co-ordinating the trip will complete an evaluation of the outing.

Policy for Parent-Nursery Partnership

Little Hands works in partnership with parents in the following ways to plan for and provide their child's nursery experience.

We ask parents to provide information about their child prior to starting to making settling smoother.

To share with us their child's and family events so that we can use these to plan and deliver a child centred education plan.

We inform parents of the nursery routine, staff deployment and their child's nursery experiences so that parents can be fully involved in the education we are providing.

To achieve this we ask for your involvement in the following ways:

To make visits to nursery prior to the start date

Parents are encouraged to make preadmission visits to the nursery giving opportunity to share information about their child prior to the start date.

To read the written information.

During the initial visit and pre admission visits you will be fully informed regarding the nursery structure, routine, staff deployment and policies. This is supplemented with written details in the information booklet which each family receives before their child starts at nursery. Full copies of the nursery policies are available in the information folder. More detailed policies are used by the staff, and parents are welcome to read these if desired.

Approximately a month after starting at nursery parents are invited for a short meeting (either at nursery or by phone) to ensure they are happy and up to date with policy and procedure and their child's progress so far.

To fully complete and update the forms

We ask parents to provide their child's family and care details on an admission form and their family and daily routines on an "All about Me" form so that we can have this information prior to the child starting at nursery.

To keep staff informed about your child

Little Hands has a high staff to child ratio so parents always have the opportunity to discuss their child at the beginnings and ends of sessions, or by telephone if preferred. Staff will add these discussions to the child's "All About Me" folder if appropriate. Also appointments can be made for parents to see a member of staff without their child present at a mutually convenient time.

Parents are given communication sheets which may be used by parents and nursery to supplement

the daily communication. This is a two way system and parents are encouraged to write in developmental milestones, exciting events, changes in routine etc. This is particularly useful for working parents who may miss the verbal feedback with staff at the end of sessions.

To share your child's development and progress with us

The staff conduct frequent observations on each child to monitor their achievements and to plan their next steps which are recorded in their child's "All About Me" folder. Parents are encouraged to contribute to this record by sharing developments and achievements from home.

To ensure the best outcomes for their child, parents are asked to share their child's achievements and next steps with the child's other carers and settings.

The "All About Me" folder can be viewed with a member of staff at any time and can be taken home to share with other family members. The folder is kept at nursery until the child leaves when they are given to the parents and a summary sent directly to the child's next setting.

Additional Information

Parent's evenings are held twice a year giving parents and other family members the opportunity to view the nursery and talk to the staff without the children present.

Little Hands has no requirement for parents to help at nursery on a "rota system basis" but parent's contributions are always welcome in whatever form they may take. We welcome parents and family members at any time to visit, help, offer their own skills, and to be involved in the nursery if they wish to do so.

Parents are kept informed of nursery activities with a half termly newsletter, which details the nursery themes/topics, term dates, special activities etc.. Ideas and activity sheets are linked to current themes/topics are also available. This enables parents to carry through activities at home if desired.

General nursery and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) information is displayed on the parent's notice board. Also general information, including meetings or lectures, which may be useful to parents is displayed in the waiting area.

The nursery sends out parent questionnaires to evaluate the care and education it is providing and to plan future nursery development.

Parents are involved, whenever possible and in a variety of ways, in new initiatives.

Information for registering queries, complaints or suggestions, is included in this policy folder and a "thoughts & reflections" box is available in the entrance hall.

Policy on Photography and Videos

The nursery regularly takes photos of the children at play for the following reasons

To use in the children's records

To support the curriculum planning.

For nursery displays

For the nursery literature e.g.: the prospectus

For the nursery website.

Videos to show at parent's evenings.

Pictures of children may be also be used as part of the publicity of the nursery. Where pictures are made available to the press or television, they will not be released with the names of the child unless the parent gives express permission for this to be done.

Where pictures are taken of the whole nursery (for example on the day of the visit of Father Christmas) the parents of children who have opted out of having the child photographed will be contacted to allow them to rescind their decision.

When signing the parent/nursery contract parents agree to the policies on photos and videos. However every parent has the option to refuse the photograph policy, in which case it should be made clear in writing when returning the admission forms. Your child will then not be photographed by any member of staff, by a parent, or by any outsider.

To prevent photographs and videos being taken without authorisation Little Hands has the following policies.

Staff are not permitted to take any personal electronic device (mobile phone, tablet, iPod etc.) into a children area.

Any devices staff bring to nursery should be stored in their bags in an area not accessible to the children.

Staff will ensure that visiting adults do not use mobile electronic devices in children areas.

Images or videos taken at nursery must not be displayed on social networking sites.

Policy for Safety

Named Staff member.....

Little Hands carries full risk and fire assessments which are reviewed and updated regularly. This information is a summary of all our safety policies and assessments. The full Health and Safety and Fire Safety folders are available to parents on request.

In order to ensure safety of both children and adults Little Hands will ensure that:

All children are supervised by adults at all times and will always be within sight of an adult.

A book is available at each session for the reporting of any accident or incident which occurs during nursery time. Staff will also record any injury noted on a child when arriving at nursery which will be kept with the child's admission form and the parent or carer delivering the child will be asked to countersign the recording.

Regular safety monitoring will include checking of the accident and incident record.

The nursery environment is checked with safety in mind before every session.

All low level glass is safety glass.

During outdoor play the area is supervised with the required level of staff.

Should the children leave the premises for a walk beyond the immediate nursery area or local outing they will be supervised with a high level of staff who will take with them first aid equipment and children's admission information. Permission from parents for these outings is sought in writing.

Equipment is checked regularly and any dangerous items repaired or discarded.

The layout and space ratios allow children and adults to move freely between activities.

Fire doors should never be obstructed.

Electrical points, wires and leads are adequately guarded.

All dangerous materials, including medicines and cleaning materials are stored out of reach of the children.

Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.

Adults do not have hot drinks in nursery.

Fire drills are held regularly

A register of both adults and children is completed as people arrive so that a complete record of all those present is available in any emergency.

There is no smoking anywhere on Little Hands premises.

A correctly stocked first aid box is available at all times.

Fire extinguishers are checked regularly

Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults are present.

Activities such as cooking, woodwork and energetic play receive close and constant supervision.

If a small group leaves nursery there will be sufficient adults to maintain appropriate ratios for staff and children remaining on the premises.

The nursery is secured when children are on the premises. Visitors must ring a bell to gain access and staff will check their identity before allowing them entry into nursery. All visitors sign in the visitor's book when arriving and departing nursery.

Children who fall asleep at nursery are made comfortable in a quiet area and not left unsupervised.

Equipment offered to children is developmentally appropriate, recognising that materials suitable for an older child may pose a risk to younger or less mature children.

Internal safety gates and guards are used as necessary.

The premises are checked before locking up at the end of the day.

Policy on Self Esteem

The nursery recognises that staff in the nursery can have a major part to play in the raising of self-esteem in the children that we see.

It is our continuing aim to:

Make all the children and their families feel valued.

Ensure that all the children feel included all the time.

Enable the children to share their experiences with each other and with staff.

Display a range of positive images and objects which reveal people in non-stereotypical roles.

Celebrate diversity within the school and to use resources that reflect diversity - including books, dolls and role-play.

Help children to appreciate and value each other.

In order to implement this policy it is important that our staff themselves have a high self-esteem and also believe completely in what the nursery is doing, in the way that it is providing nursery education for children in our area.

To achieve this staff:

Work together at all times and help each other out as much as possible.

Never talk derogatorily about a member of staff to anyone behind that person's back.

Sort out problems promptly so that they are not allowed to fester.

Treat other staff in the manner in which they themselves would like to be treated.

Show all children equal care and attention.

Ensure that all children in their care receive sensitivity and support.

Ensure that no child is singled out for special attention or lack of it.

Ensure that they do not discuss a child's appearance, development, behaviour or the feelings of the staff in a negative manner in front of that child or other children.

If any member of staff reveals through actions or attitude a lack of positive feeling for herself or for our work then the nursery manager will invite the member of staff to discuss the situation, and seek to resolve this issue through discussion.

While the nursery is very aware that its members of staff will themselves be encountering issues in daily life which may cause problems and discomfort, the nursery must insist that the undertaking of the role of working in this nursery requires a positive attitude and approach on all occasions.

We ask that parents respect and work with this policy during their time at nursery.

Settling New Children

Our initial aim for children at Little Hands is that in the absence of their parents and carers, they become happy and confident at nursery, as quickly as possible. Because at "Little Hands" we believe that whilst children are unhappy or anxious, they will not benefit from the learning opportunities on offer at nursery. To achieve this aim we offer the following:

Information Package

You will receive an information package approximately seven weeks before your child is due to start nursery. It contains the information booklet; two examples of full nursery policy, an admission form an "All About Me" form and confirmation of booking form. Please read the information contained carefully as there are lots of useful pointers ready for starting nursery and short summaries of the main nursery policies. Once you have read the information please sign and return the confirmation and admission forms. These form the contract between nursery and yourselves, and give the nursery staff important information about your child.

Pre admission visits

We recommend that you make at least two "Pre admission" visits to nursery with your child. These should be made in the weeks close to your child starting at Little Hands and you will be expected to stay with your child during the visits. These visits allow your child to become familiar with the nursery environment and routine whilst you are with them. It also allows time for you to ask questions and explore the nursery with your child, so that you can talk to your child about their time at nursery before and after they start. Please bring the completed "All About Me" form to the first visit.

Keyworker

On your last visit we aim to introduce you to your child's keyworker, this is a member of staff who will be your child's special friend whilst they settle in. You will be given a communication book to be used as a supplement to the verbal feedback. Also on your last pre-admission visit staff will discuss with you an individual plan for your child's first day. We do not have a set policy as all children are different.

First Sessions

On your child's admission day you will be welcome to stay with your child for the first and as many subsequent sessions as you wish until you feel confident about leaving. The nursery staff will be constantly available to give you advice.

When you decide to leave your child, we do ask that you say goodbye and not try to slip away unnoticed. This may cause your child to cry initially but is much kinder than your child suddenly realising you have gone and feeling abandoned. If your child were to cry and could not be distracted we would contact you to come back to nursery. Remember that you are welcome to

telephone nursery as often as you wish during the session to check your child's progress. Once your child is settled at nursery they will rely less on their keyworker and move around all the staff finding their own "favourite". Some children may have an unsettled spell at nursery weeks after starting and this is not unusual. If this happens we start the settling process all over again until your child feels confident with us once more.

Review Meeting

You will be offered a review meeting with a senior staff member approximately one month after starting nursery to ensure you are up to date with the nursery policy and procedure which will underpin your child's time at nursery. There will also be opportunity to discuss your child's first sessions at nursery although staff will always be available at the beginning and end of each session to chat with you.

If you feel your child is not settling at nursery.

This is not unusual some children just take longer to settle than others but it can be distressing so here are some points which may help. Remember that your child will have the "one to one" attention of a staff member whilst they are settling and this person will update you at the end of each session.

The staff, who have many years experience, have numerous different methods to draw upon to help a shy or sad child to settle. There are special photo albums we can give your child to take home to help bridge the gap, we may suggest you arrive slightly late to avoid busy time or one of many other ideas to help your child feel more confident with us.

We may advise a different plan for leaving your child at nursery; we would develop this with you and review it weekly.

We may advise "settling sessions" maybe an extra session in the week or attending 2 hours a day every morning, just until your child settles as the sooner they gain confidence at nursery the quicker they will feel happy. These extra settling sessions are free of charge and we return to your booked pattern of sessions as soon as your child is settled.

Also remember that for your child's sake you too will need to be strong! As if a child feels that a parent is sad or anxious they may think they have something real to fear. It is not unusual for a child to feel anxious about coming to nursery whilst settling in, they may even cry at home before leaving the house, but once at nursery, with support, they will be enjoying the activities, we would contact you if they were not.

If you wish to discuss your child's unsettled start or make a new "settling plan" with the staff it is better to do this on the telephone, rather than with your child listening as they may feel that their sadness is a real problem.

Policy on Special Educational Needs

Named Staff member.....

Little Hands nursery school aims to provide all children with a broad and balanced learning environment that is committed to the inclusion of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Our philosophy is that of inclusion, allowing all children the opportunity to develop to their full potential together.

This policy is designed to be used alongside the SEN Code of Practice on identification and assessment of special needs (November 2001).

The nursery has a named Special Educational Needs co-ordinator (SENCo)

Identification of SEN in existing children

Any staff's concerns regarding a child's development would be discussed with the SENCo and recorded with the child's assessments. A short period of close monitoring would then be carried out. Concerns would also be discussed privately with the child's parents. If concerns existed following the initial monitoring then the "Graduated Response" approach as outlined in the Code of Practice would be initiated.

Graduated Response

Early Years Action

The SEN Co-ordinator takes the lead responsibility for gathering information and for co-ordinating the child's Special Educational Provision. The action will be planned to offer intervention which is additional to or different from those usually planned for the child at nursery. The strategies employed and the child's progress will be recorded in an Individual Child Plan (ICP) which will normally focus on three or four key strategies. This plan will be discussed with and copied to the parents and reviewed at least termly. If progress is not made Early Years Action Plus will be considered.

Early Years Action Plus

In consultation with the parents support will be sought from specialists from outside the nursery. This may result in further assessment of the child's needs, and advice for ICP targets with strategies to achieve those targets. For a very small number of children Early Action Plus will not be sufficient for the child to progress and Statutory Assessment will be considered.

Statutory Assessment

A multidisciplinary assessment made by the Local Education Authority (LEA) can be requested for a child if progress is not achieved and there is significant cause for concern or if the child has known severe and complex needs. This assessment will lead to a Statement of the child's needs which will be used to plan monitor and review their education.

The above is a brief outline of the procedure. Details can be found in the SEN Code of Practice (November 2001) available at nursery.

Admission for children having known special needs

Little Hands will admit children having special needs using the usual nursery admission criteria.

This criteria works with families as individuals, therefore adequate time will always be available for discussion, planning, visits and sharing information with the parents to ensure their child's needs will be met.

If the child will require a one to one staff ratio this will be organised using Little Hands staff to ensure this is not a barrier to admission. Funding for the staff member may be applied for retrospectively to enable the child to start on the parents preferred date.

For children who require medical support at nursery, suitable staff training will be given (see Medical Needs Policy) For certain procedures training may have to be given before the child can attend nursery without a parent or carer.

The SENCo will liaise with any therapists involved with the child prior to admission whenever possible.

The SENCo will begin planning and monitoring as described above.

Staff training

Staff training to broaden knowledge of Special Educational Needs is actively encouraged at workshops, courses and in service. Access is available to an area Early Years SEN co-ordinator via the Cambridgeshire Care and Education Team.

Help for parents

Information for various support groups and services is available at the nursery.

Confidentiality

Information regarding the child and family will only be shared on a need to know basis and the parent's permission will be requested.

Procedures for Ensuring Supervision of adults at nursery who are not vetted (including Criminal Records Clearance - DBS)

The proprietor as registered person is responsible for ensuring all adults working at the nursery are suitable to look after or be in contact with children. All adults (pupils and students verified by their college exempted) working in the nursery for more than two full weeks undertake nursery vetting including an Enhanced Criminal Records (DBS) check for suitability to work with young children. The proprietor, Jane Marshall, is the single named person responsible for DBS document checks.

Any person not fully vetted by the nursery including a clear DBS check, is supervised at all times. This includes volunteers, work experience pupils, students, trades people and new staff for whom clearance has been requested.

The nursery vetting and DBS checks are initiated and monitored by the proprietor. Staff are responsible for updating the information linked to their DBS status and random repeat checks are carried out by the proprietor to ensure DBS status remains accurate and current.

Appropriate cover will be obtained to ensure these conditions are adhered to at all times

Supervision for DBS cleared staff still in the induction period

During the induction period new staff are not considered to be fully competent in all areas of their job description until each area has been observed by the line manager and "signed off" by the nursery manager. When the nursery vetting is complete this will result in new staff being fully supervised in some areas whilst practising independently in others.

Policy for Managing nursery during Unforeseen Circumstances

This policy is followed when the staff member in charge of a session believes the children cannot be cared for to Little Hands usual standard because of unforeseen circumstances which may affect the health and safety of children and staff.

These are circumstances which occur rarely but may require the nursery day to be reconsidered or even cancelled. They could include severe weather, building services failure, illness affecting large numbers of staff or difficulties with transport. It is possible that we cannot predict what these circumstances could be.

Little Hands will endeavour to provide an uninterrupted service for families whenever possible.

To be prepared for unforeseen circumstances

The manager and deputy have all staff's contact details kept in a secure place in their home so that staff can be contacted to arrange staff cover or to close the nursery.

The manager and deputy have all nursery children's family contact details kept in a secure place in their home so that families can be contacted should the nursery need to be closed and staff cannot get into or to the setting.

The manager endeavours to ensure staff and family contact details are kept up to date by issuing regular reminders.

Should unforeseen circumstances arise

The staff member in charge of the session is aware, whenever possible, of increasing events, for example staff sickness escalating, leaving not enough staff in the nursery group to cover the session, or deteriorating weather conditions.

The staff member in charge will discuss the difficulties with the proprietor (or in the proprietor's absence a nominated manager). The discussions should be made as soon as concerns arise to give the maximum time to plan for and manage the situation.

The proprietor or nominated deputy will make an action plan to deal with the situation and this will vary according to the circumstances. Should the nursery need to close the staff member in charge will contact families as soon as possible. Should children need to be collected before closing the nursery; two staff will stay with any uncollected children.

The action plan will be reviewed regularly until the situation returns to normal.

Visitor Admission and Security

A visitor is any adult who is not a staff member or parent\carer of a child currently registered. To ensure the safety of all children and staff the following procedures are adhered to:

Answering the door

The person who answers the door must always identifies the caller. If the caller is not known identification is be sought, i.e. name, reason for call, name of the person whom the caller is here to see, employment card. Before granting access junior staff always check with the nursery manager or deputy. Access is never granted to anyone who is not known.

Visitors

Any visitors, such as sales people, college assessors, gardener, handyman, and inspectors must fill in the visitor's book on arrival and sign out when leaving.

Supervision

Visitors are supervised at all times, and are never left alone with a child. All visitors including parents are instructed not to use mobile recording devices (laptops, phones, cameras, tablets) in the children's areas.

Security

The locks used for securing access to the main entrance of the building are active whenever children are on the premises unless a staff member is stationed at the door.