



DEAN CLOSE
LITTLE TREES
NURSERIES

DEAN CLOSE NURSERIES LIMITED

Independent Day Nursery

**Nursery Contingency Plan
(NL035)**

Little Trees, Dean Close Nurseries Ltd is wholly owned by The Dean Close Foundation, registered Charity No: 1086829

LITTLE TREES DAY NURSERY

NURSERY CONTINGENCY PLAN

Little Trees is committed to safeguarding children and to providing high quality settings which are welcoming, safe and stimulating, where children are able to enjoy learning and are able to grow in confidence.

Aim

We meet the Safeguarding and Welfare requirements within Childcare Regulations, ensuring that adult to child ratios are met by employees that have been safely recruited, including an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check. This is to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality.

To meet this aim we follow:

- Adult to child ratios of:
 1. 1:3 for children aged 2 years and under
 2. 1:4 for children aged 2-3 years in Wales* (in English based nurseries only, a 1;5 ratio can be used)
 3. 1:8 for children aged 3-4 years* (*In English based nurseries only, where a qualified teacher, level 6, Early Childhood studies degree is present 1:13)
- There will aim to have a member of the management team on site acting supernumerary, however on occasions, management may also be included in ratios as an emergency.
- There will always be a Designated Safeguarding Lead contactable at all times.
- Each nursery operates with one Nursery Manager and a Deputy Manager, with our larger nurseries including a Third in Charge role.
- A minimum of two staff are on duty at any one time, working directly with the children
- There will always be at least one qualified member of staff, to level 3 or higher, within each room/ department.
- Each room/ department is overseen by a suitably qualified and experienced Room Leader or Supervisor/ Senior
- In England, at least 50% of the team will be qualified, allowing 50% to be unqualified.
- In Wales, at least 60% of the team will be qualified, with 20% working towards their qualification, allowing a further 20% to be unqualified.
- In Welsh based nurseries, all pre-school staff will be qualified to level 3 or higher in order to comply with the EAS Service Level Agreement as an Approved Education Provider.
- We use a key worker approach to ensure that each child has a named member of staff with whom to form a relationship and who plans with parents for the child's well-being and development within the nursery.
- We are committed to ensuring the majority of staff (1;10 ratio) are qualified within Paediatric First aid, and is refreshed on a 3 year cycle. The long term aim is to have nearly all qualified.
- All staff will have Safeguarding Training relevant to their roles, that is renewed on a 3 year cycle, with DSL's renewed every 2 years.

Date of Issue: September 2023

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Area Manager

- All employees (and volunteers) are recruited following the Safer Recruitment procedure, including enhanced DBS and identity checks, obtaining references and qualifications checked.
- All staff have up-to-date relevant job descriptions which sets out their roles and responsibilities within the nursery
- All staff partake in regular supervisions, 1-2-1's and appraisals
- The nurseries have a suitably recruited and qualified team of bank members in order to support and cover duties for staff on leave, whether that be holidays, illness or training courses.
- Staff adhere to an agreed holiday policy, to ensure that the nurseries have a plentiful supply of support to cover as well as any last minute shortages where these can-not be planned for in advance
- Each nursery is routinely maintained and serviced according to the relevant legislations for Health & Safety
- Where agency staff are used, the Nursery Manager must seek written confirmation from the recruitment agency, that all safer recruitment checks, including an enhanced DBS check has been performed on the candidate. The Nursery Manager must have a copy of the DBS number, and take a photocopy of the candidate's photographic identification on arrival to the nursery, in order to verify that the candidate is who they say they are.

Whilst we endeavour to ensure that the nurseries operates its full service to our families, we recognise that there may be times that are out of our control that may require us to follow our contingency procedures, such as:

- Staff absences at short notice in accordance with employment contracts
- Extreme weather conditions. The nursery will take action as recommended by the MET Office as appropriate, if there are severe warnings in place for flooding, storms, snow etc
- Issues isolated to the setting such as a fire/ flood that would make the nursery inhabitable for use
- Structural issues with the building, which can-not be addressed whilst the nursery is operational and requires emergency repairs
- Services have been disconnected, i.e. there is no water or electricity or failure of heating – including if the temperature is below acceptable level for children in accordance with childcare regulations and Health & Safety regulations for working temperature for staff
- Acts of war/ terrorism
- Pandemic/ epidemic

Contingency Procedure

This procedure is to be followed in order or adapted to suit the requirements of the nursery, dependent on the need at the time, and to ensure as little as disruption to our families as possible.

In the event of staff shortages

1. Staff and children will be asked to move around the nursery to adhere to ratios at all times, ensuring that there are sufficient staff available to look after the children's well-being

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2. Deputy Manager's will be used
3. Bank staff will be used
4. We will call upon our sister nurseries for support
5. Staff that are part time or are on planned annual leave will be asked for support
6. We will call upon trusted and suitably recruited volunteers for support
7. We will call upon trusted childcare agencies for support
8. Nursery Managers will be used
9. We will ask parents to wait and support the nursery if we are awaiting extra help arriving from one of the above, to ensure ratios are adhered to
10. If all above points have been exhausted:
 - a) Cancel children's sessions that have been booked as extras, outside of their contracted sessions
 - b) Ask parents who may be able to volunteer by taking their child home for the day, to bring ratios in line with the readily available staff on site, offering them an alternative session at a later date to compensate
 - c) Only accept the number of children that is compliant according to the number of staff readily available and working. This will be done on a first come first served basis.

In the event of other issues

- If there is a requirement to close a room/ department in the nursery suddenly due to any of the other above listed reasons, management will notify parents at the earliest convenience through the Family app. If this is during the nursery day, parents will be requested to collect their child as soon as possible.
- In the event that we have to close a room or an area of the nursery due to emergency maintenance, we will endeavour to accommodate children within other areas of the nursery which is suitable until such time their usual area can be re-opened. The Nursery Manager or Nursery Deputy Manager will take responsibility to ensure that parents are informed of these changes at the earliest convenience.
- If extreme weather conditions are anticipated and we expect that we may need to close the nursery, we will notify all families in advance or as soon as practicable. The reason for this closure will be to ensure the safety of the children and our staff team. The Nursery Manager and Deputy Manager will call or email all families to ensure they have advanced warning of possible closures
- In the event that we have to close the nursery, it is a requirement that our local inspectorate has to be notified
- We aim to give as much for warning of an unexpected closure as we can whilst following the procedures in this policy.
- We will aim to keep parents regularly updated on the closure and the measures we are taking to re-open as quickly as possible.
- During any room closures, children of essential workers, as identified through the Covid pandemic, will be given priority care if it is possible to do so.