

Apprentices and Learners Policy



Little Elms is passionate about providing Apprenticeships and opportunities for further education for existing employees. Little Elms works in partnership with education and training providers to ensure that our apprenticeships and learner programmes are standardised and compliant with legislation and best practice. Our apprenticeship and learner programmes combine on the job training with nationally recognised qualifications.

Scope

Apprenticeships can be utilised to train new individuals joining Little Elms and existing employees can apply to advance their qualification level.

As the EYFS specifies that individuals aged 16 cannot be included in staff to children ratios, Little Elms will only consider apprenticeship applications from individuals aged 17 or over.

There is no upper age limit.

The Apprentice/Learner must work a minimum of 30 hours per week at Little Elms.

Childcare Qualifications

There are three mandatory components of all childcare qualifications:

- Childcare
- Maths
- English

Other Qualifications

Little Elms provides support for other professional qualifications outside the childcare sector, for example Finance and Accounting. Requests for funding and support should be made to an individual's Manager, who will discuss the request with HR and the Company Owners on a case by case basis.

Application Process for Childcare Qualifications

Before an apprenticeship or learning programme can commence, the following application process will be followed:

- For Apprentices new to Little Elms, all safer recruitment checks must be completed by the Nursery Manager before the Apprenticeship application process can start.
- For Apprentices new to Little Elms, a settling in period of 1 month to 3 months will be required before the start of programme, to induct the individual into Little Elms and ensure the required level of commitment and dedication is present.
- A Little Elms Expression of Interest Form will be completed by the learner and approved by the Manager and the HR Manager. The Expression of Interest Form will be shared with the Training Provider.
- An application form (provided by the Training Provider) must be completed and submitted to the Training Provider for approval
- An initial assessment of the apprentice/learner's functional skills (Maths and English) will be carried out by the Training Provider to ensure they meet the required level for the programme to start.
- An Enrolment Meeting will be held between the Apprentice/Learner, the Training Provider and the Nursery Manager. The Enrolment Meeting will ensure expectations of all parties are communicated and agreed, sharing of the programme matrix which shows the different units that will be focused on during the programme, expectations regarding 20% On The Job Learning and practical details of how to access systems and support from tutors will be provided.
- Once all steps above have been successfully complete, the apprentice/learner will be allocated a tutor.
- The Learner will receive an Induction, in which the programme will be planned, specific dates will be set for when units will be achieved and exams will be scheduled. Reviews with the Nursery Manager to discuss progress and commitment to the programme will also be agreed.

Functional Skills for Childcare Qualifications

An Apprentice/Leaver requires a qualification in Maths and English, equivalent to GCSE level, in order to complete a Level 2 or above Childcare Qualification. Apprentices/Learners will have access to specific functional skills tutors, who specialise in Maths and English.

If upon assessment the Apprentice/Leaver has minimum GCSE level Maths and English, they will be exempt from the Maths & English functional skills examinations.

If upon assessment the Apprentice/Leaver does not have minimum GCSE level Maths and English, they will be required to achieve this as part of their programme and as part of the enrolment process, the Training Provider will assess their functional skills. The learner must achieve a minimum of a Level 1 in this assessment, in both Maths and English, to be enrolled to the training programme.

Additional Learning Needs

If an individual has a statement to support an additional learning need or they have an Educational Healthcare Plan (EHP), an additional functional skills tutor may be provided by the Training Provider, at their discretion.

If an individual has no evidenced additional learning need and their functional skills assessment suggests a significant gap in knowledge, the Training Provider at their discretion, may request for the functional skills to be upskilled and a level of commitment from the Apprentice/Leaver may be required, before the commencement of programme.

Expectations of Apprentices/Learners

- Apprentices/Learners will demonstrate commitment to successfully completing their qualification within the timeline specified. Apprentices/Learners must be self-driven, dedicated and take accountability for their training.
- Apprentices/Learners will treat all individuals at Little Elms and the Training Provider with respect and meet expected standards of behaviour at all times.
- Apprentices/Learners will listen and respond positively to feedback received from their Tutor and Little Elms colleagues.
- Apprentices/Learners will understand that the work required cannot always be achieved during working hours. Commitment is required from the Apprentice/Leaver to spend some of their own time completing units and following the teaching received during tutor sessions.
- Apprentices/Learners will understand that time out from rooms will be provided for tutor sessions, but that time out will not be provided to complete coursework/units.
- Apprentices/Learners will commit to evidencing 20% On The Job Learning across the programme length. Failure to do so will result in the qualification not being achieved.
- Apprentices/Learners must commit to regularly use Etrack Portfolio, to upload work, check progress, check dates and times of sessions with their tutor, goals and deadlines.
- Apprentices/Learners must commit to regularly use Moodle, to find their units which gives them the detail of the work that is required and what workshops/teaching is available to support each unit.
- Apprentices/Learners will not cancel sessions without good reason. Apprentices/Learners will take accountability to inform their tutor of their availability, holiday and any unplanned absence that may impact tutor sessions and/or their training targets. Apprentices/Learners agree to contact their tutor if they are going to be absent on the day of a planned visit and this will be done via email to both the tutor and the Nursery Manager.
- Apprentices/Learners agree to approach their training in an organised manner, plan learning in advance and book workshops / any additional tutoring needed in advance.

Expectations of Training Provider

- Tutors will arrange 2 hour visits, to take place every 4-6 weeks.
- Tutors will ensure a balance of teaching, group sessions and observations at the workplace are provided in order to support successful completion of the programme.
- Tutors will provide a mix of face to face and on-line support.
- Support and guidance will be provided individually to each Apprentice/Learner and will be reasonably adjusted as appropriate to meet individual needs.
- Tutors will offer feedback to the Apprentice/Learner, both positive and constructive, to aid the successful completion of the programme.
- Tutors will be available to answer questions and support the Apprentice/Learner to complete the work required. Wherever possible and at reasonable times of the day, tutors may be available outside of normal working hours, to support Apprentices/Learners who are working full time.

Expectations of Little Elms

- Little Elms will provide 20% off the job training, which may include but it not limited to, shadowing, mentoring, writing assessments, working in a different room/nursery, in-house training, webinars, external training, team meetings, on-line training.
- Little Elms will assign each Apprentice/Learner with a Buddy, who will be qualified in childcare to Level 2 or above and will provide support and guidance to the Apprentice/Learner
- Little Elms will provide adequate time out of ratio to accommodate tutor sessions. This will normally be 2 hours every 4-6 weeks.
- Little Elms Nursery Management will notify the Apprentice/Learner and the Tutor, if visits/appointments need to be re-arranged due to business needs and they will do so in advance, giving them as much notice as possible. In the event of unplanned absences on the day of an appointment, Nursery Management will notify the Tutor immediately and will not allow a Tutor to arrive at the nursery to find that an appointment cannot take place.
- Little Elms will provide a suitable room for an appointment to take place.
- Little Elms Nursery Management will ensure the correct rate of pay is awarded to the Apprentice, as detailed below.

Funding for Qualifications

Little Elms pays into the Apprenticeship Levy and will use the Levy to pay for nationally recognised and approved qualifications. An Apprentice/Learner will not be asked to fund any part of their training.

Pay for Apprentices

During the period of induction and settling in, before the training has started, the Apprentice will receive:

- Minimum Wage for their age (as set by Government)

Once the application process has been completed with the Training Provider and the training has started, the Apprentice will receive:

- During the first 12 months of training: £5.29 per hour. This is the rate of pay that Little Elms chooses to pay Apprentices, which is higher than the minimum rate of pay set by the Government.
- After the first 12 months of training and for the remainder of the training: Minimum Wage for their age (as set by Government).

Nursery Managers are responsible for ensuring correct rates of pay are processed through payroll. Minimum rates of pay can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

Successful Completion of Apprenticeship

There is no guarantee of employment with Little Elms once an Apprenticeship has been successfully completed. The Apprentice is encouraged to apply for vacant positions at the nursery or other nurseries within the Little Elms group, as they are nearing completion of their Apprenticeship.

Pay for Existing Employees

If it is agreed that Little Elms will use the Apprenticeship Levy to pay for existing employees to further their qualification level whilst employed by Little Elms, the employee's pay will not change.

Upon successful completion of their qualification, Little Elms may choose to review an existing employee's salary in line with their qualification level, at their discretion. A salary increase upon successful completion of the qualification is not guaranteed and will be dependent upon business and staffing needs of the nursery.

Early Termination of Apprenticeship/Learning Agreements

There is no guarantee that an Apprenticeship or Learning Agreement will continue for the duration of the programme. The programme can be terminated by any party at any time.

Little Elms or the Training Provider may terminate the agreement if the Apprenticeship/Learner:

- Demonstrates a lack of commitment to their training. For example, failure to complete the work required, failure to dedicate own time to progress their learning, failure to meet tutor expectation and/or failure to attend workshops or appointments with tutors.
- Displays an attitude that is not conducive to successful completion of the programme
- Displays behaviour that is unacceptable towards Tutors or Little Elms employees
- An Apprenticeship or Learning Agreement may be terminated if formal disciplinary action is taken by Little Elms