GLC All Different: All Equal
Together, Improving Upon Our Best

# Growing Little Champions Nursery
# Baby Room Admissions Policy

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| This Policy was ratified by the Board of Directors on : | Autumn 2026 |
| This Policy will be reviewed by the GLC Board on : | Autumn 2027 |

**GLC Mission Statement**
The GLC's mission is to develop active and thriving citizens within a diverse, truly fair and equal community.
This will be achieved through:

- High quality teaching that deliberately develops competencies of curiosity, creativity, communication and critical-thinking;
- An inspiring and meaningful curriculum;
- The development of productive relationships by instilling the values of compassion, resilience, responsibility and aspiration to prepare our young people for learning and life;
- A commitment to the wellbeing of our staff;
- A culture of professional generosity, collaboration, challenge and support throughout the GLC;
- The development of effective external partnerships for the benefit and wellbeing of our community.

**Equalities Statement**
The GLC's commitment to equality is enshrined in our mission statement to develop 'active and thriving citizens within a diverse, truly fair and equal community'.
We are a vibrant, innovative and successful organisation: we work hard to be the place of choice to work and to learn. Across the 5 academies of the GLC, we pledge that everyone enjoys an equality of opportunity. We work tirelessly to ensure that individual characteristics including age, ethnicity, socio-economic background, academic ability, disability, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation are not discriminated against in any way. We create inclusive environments characterised by mutual respect where difference is celebrated.

# Baby Room Admissions Policy — Growing Little Champions Nursery

## 1. Purpose and scope

This policy explains how places are offered in the Growing Little Champions Baby Room at GLC Gateway Primary Free School (GPFS). It sets out who the Baby Room is for, how staff register interest, how places are allocated when demand is greater than the number of places, and what happens from offer to a child's first day.

It applies to all children aged from 9 months to 2 years who attend, or are waiting to attend, the Baby Room.

## 2. Legal and statutory framework

This policy has been written to meet the requirements of:

- **Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers** (effective 1 September 2026), in particular Section 3, the safeguarding and welfare requirements (staff:child ratios, qualifications, key person, space, information and records, and complaints).
- **The Childcare Act 2006 and the Childcare Act 2016**, and the Department for Education's **Early education and childcare statutory guidance for local authorities** (valid from 1 April 2026), together with the local authority's early years provider agreement for funded places.
- **The Equality Act 2010**, including the duty not to discriminate against children or parents and the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children. As part of an academy trust, the GLC is also subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- **The Children and Families Act 2014** and the **Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years**, which early years providers in receipt of government funding must have regard to.
- **UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018**, for all information collected through registration of interest, the waiting list and admission.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children** and **Keeping Children Safe in Education** (current versions), which apply to Growing Little Champions as school-based provision.

The School Admissions Code does not apply to provision for children under 2. The GLC nevertheless follows its principles: admissions criteria are published, clear, objective and applied fairly and consistently to every family.

## 3. Capacity, age range and staffing

The Baby Room cares for **up to 12 children at any one time**, aged from **9 months to 2 years**. More than 12 children may be on roll where some attend part time, but the number present in any session will never exceed 12.

Places are only offered where the EYFS welfare requirements regarding ratio- at least one member of staff for every three children under 2 (1:3) can be met.

When deciding whether a particular start date or pattern of sessions can be offered, the Nursery Manager takes account of the current numbers on each day, staff availability and the needs of children already attending.

## 4. Who the Baby Room is for

The Baby Room is a staff childcare provision. Places are open to the **children of GLC staff**. A "member of GLC staff" means a person employed by the Gateway Learning Community trust, teaching or non-teaching, on a permanent or fixed-term contract, full or part time, at any GLC academy, nursery or central team, both when the place is offered and when the child starts.

A "child of staff" means a child who lives with the member of staff, for whom the member of staff has parental responsibility or is the main carer. This includes adopted children, children in foster care or kinship care, and step-children who live in the same household.

Where places cannot be filled by children of staff, a limited number of places may be offered to non-staff families within the GLC trust who are particularly vulnerable, disadvantaged or experiencing hardship (see section 6, Priority 3).

If a member of staff leaves GLC employment, their child's place will continue unless a parent/ carer gives a term's notice in writing that they wish to withdraw their child. A place will not be ended part-way through a term, and any decision will take account of the child's welfare and any safeguarding or additional needs.

## 5. Registering early interest and the waiting list

Because demand for Baby Room places is high, **staff are encouraged to register their interest as early as possible**, including during pregnancy or an adoption or fostering process.

- Interest is registered by completing the **Baby Room Registration of Interest form online via the website**. The form asks whether they are a member of GLC staff, the child's name (or expected date of birth), the preferred start date, the sessions required. In the notes section, staff should state whether a sibling already attends Growing Little Champions or the GPFS school nursery.
- The date the form is received is recorded on the waiting list. Registering interest **does not guarantee a place** and does not commit the family to taking one.
- **No registration fee, deposit or retainer is charged** to join the waiting list.
- Staff should tell the Nursery Manager of any change to their start date, sessions, address or employment as soon as possible, so the waiting list stays accurate.
- The waiting list is reviewed each half term.

### How and when places are offered

As spaces become available, staff on the waiting list will be contacted to tell them which **dates and transition points** are available. Places usually become available:

- at the start of each term (September, January and April), which also matches the dates from which funded hours can begin; and
- when a child moves up from the Baby Room to the Two-Year-Old Room.

- Offers are made in writing via the EY Parent app and set out the start date, the sessions offered, the settling-in arrangements and the fees and funded hours that apply.
- Families are asked to accept or decline the offer within **10 working days and complete the required registration form**. If there is no reply in that time, the place may be offered to the next child on the list.
- If the exact sessions requested are not available, the nearest available pattern may be offered. A family may accept this and stay on the list for the pattern they prefer.

- A family that declines an offer, stays on the waiting list unless they ask to be removed.

## 6. How places are allocated: order of priority

Where there are more requests than places for a particular start date or pattern of sessions, places will be offered in the following order of priority.

| Priority | Who | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Children of GLC staff who have a **brother or sister already attending** Growing Little Champions Nursery (Baby Room or Two-Year-Old Room) or the **GPFS school nursery**, and who will still be attending on the requested start date. | A brother or sister means a full, half, step, adopted or long-term foster sibling living in the same household. |
| 2 | Children of GLC staff who have children already attending one of the GLC academies. | A brother or sister means a full, half, step, adopted or long-term foster sibling living in the same household. |
| 3 | Distance from the setting. | Ranked by the **distance from the family's home to Growing Little Champions**, with those living closest given priority. Distance is measured in a straight line from the front door of the home to the nursery's main entrance using the school's digital mapping system. |
| 4 | Only if places remain after every staff request has been met: **non-staff families within the GLC trust** who are particularly **vulnerable, disadvantaged or experiencing a time of hardship**. | Considered case by case through the referral and panel process described below. |

**Within each priority group**

- In Priority 1, where there are more applications than places, children are ranked by distance as in Priority 2.
- If two children have the same priority and live the same distance away, the child whose **registration of interest was received first** is offered the place. If they cannot be separated, a random draw will be carried out by a member of GLC staff who is not involved in the nursery.
- **Twins and children from multiple births:** where the last available place is offered to one twin or multiple-birth child, the other(s) will also be offered a place if staff:child ratios and space allow. If they do not, the other child(ren) will be placed at the top of the waiting list.

**Priority 3: places for vulnerable or disadvantaged families**

A "family within the GLC trust" means a family that has a child on roll at a GLC academy or nursery. Families may be considered where, for example:

- the child is looked after, previously looked after, or is subject to a child protection plan, child in need plan or Early Help plan;
- the family is eligible for early years pupil premium, or the child is in receipt of the Disability Access Fund;

- the family is facing a significant period of hardship, such as bereavement, serious illness, domestic abuse, homelessness or housing insecurity, or financial crisis.

Requests are made by referral from a GLC Designated Safeguarding Lead, headteacher or family support/pastoral lead, or from an outside professional working with the family. Each referral is considered by a panel of the Head of School, the Nursery Manager and the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will look at the child's needs, how the place would help the family, and whether the Baby Room can meet the child's needs.

All information about a family's circumstances is treated as confidential, shared only with those who need to know, and recorded on CPOMS in line with GLC safeguarding procedures. The panel's decision and reasons are recorded and shared with the referrer and the family.

**Once a place has been offered and accepted, it will not be withdrawn to make room for a later application from a member of staff.**

## 7. Inclusion, equality and SEND

Growing Little Champions welcomes every eligible child. No child will be refused a place, or have a place delayed or withdrawn, because of a disability or special educational need, or because of any protected characteristic of the child or their family, including race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, or pregnancy and maternity.

- We will make **reasonable adjustments** so that disabled children and children with special educational needs can take up their place, working with parents, the setting SENCo and outside professionals.
- Where a child has medical or additional needs, we will agree an individual care or support plan with parents before the child starts. If training, equipment or extra staffing is needed, the start date may be adjusted by agreement with the family, but only for as long as is needed to put that support in place safely.
- We will use the local authority's **SEN Inclusion Fund**, the **Disability Access Fund** and **early years pupil premium**, where the child is eligible, to support their inclusion.
- Allergies and dietary needs are recorded before the child starts. GPFS is a nut-free site.

## 8. From offer to first day

**Information we must have before a child starts**

Before a child is admitted, parents/carers must complete and sign the Growing Little Champions registration form and parent contract. In line with the EYFS, this includes:

- the child's full legal name, preferred name, date of birth and home address (we will see the child's birth certificate or other proof of date of birth);
- the name and address of every parent and/or carer known to us, who has **parental responsibility**, who has legal contact with the child, and which parent(s) or carer(s) the child **normally lives with**;
- contact details for parents/carers and **at least two further emergency contacts** who can be reached if parents cannot;
- the names of people authorised to collect the child, and a collection password;
- the child's health needs, medical conditions, allergies, dietary requirements and preferences, immunisation status, and GP and health visitor details;

- **written permission** to seek emergency medical advice or treatment;
- any involvement from other professionals (for example a social worker, speech and language therapist or portage worker), and any court orders that affect the child;
- the child's 30 hours eligibility code, where funded hours are being claimed;
- consents for photographs and for the use of EYLog.

Parents/carers must tell us straight away about any change to this information, especially emergency contacts and who has parental responsibility.

**Key person and settling in**

- Every child is given a **key person** before they start. We tell parents the name of their child's key person and explain their role. Each key person has a buddy who cares for the child when they are absent.
- Settling-in is planned with each family and usually includes a welcome meeting, stay-and-play visits and a gradual build-up of time in the room over the first one to two weeks, adjusted to the child's needs.
- Day-to-day communication, observations and learning updates are shared with parents through **EYLog**.

## 9. Sessions

Growing Little Champions is open Monday to Friday, 7:30am to 5:30pm, term time only. Baby Room sessions are:

| Session | Times |
|---|---|
| School Day Session | 7:30am – 3:30pm |
| Full Day Session | 7:30am – 5:30pm |
| Hourly Top-Up | 3:30pm – 4:30pm (to extend a School Day Session) |

Requests to change sessions after a child has started are made in writing to the Nursery Manager and are agreed where ratios and room numbers allow. Where there is a waiting list for additional sessions, requests are considered using the same order of priority as in section 6.

## 10. Government-funded hours (working parent entitlement)

Growing Little Champions offers the government-funded **working parent entitlement** for children aged 9 months and over. Funded places are offered using the same admissions criteria as all other places: receiving funding does not change a child's priority.

**Who is eligible**

Eligible working families can receive up to **1,140 funded hours a year**. Because Growing Little Champions is open term time only, this is taken as **up to 30 hours a week over 38 weeks**. Families are usually eligible where each parent (and their partner, if they have one) expects to earn at least the equivalent of 16 hours a week at the National Minimum or Living Wage over the next three months, and neither has an adjusted net income of more than £100,000 a year. Different rules apply to foster carers, who apply through their local authority. Full eligibility rules are on the government's Childcare Choices website.

**When funding starts**

Funding starts from the term after the child turns 9 months old **and** the parent has a valid eligibility code. Parents apply for a code through their online childcare account on GOV.UK and must have the code by the deadlines below.

| Child turns 9 months between | Code needed by | Funding can start from |
|---|---|---|
| 1 April – 31 August | 31 August | Autumn term (1 September) |
| 1 September – 31 December | 31 December | Spring term (1 January) |
| 1 January – 31 March | 31 March | Summer term (1 April) |

- Parents must give us their code, National Insurance number and child's date of birth so that we can check the code is valid **before** funded hours begin.
- Parents must **reconfirm their eligibility every three months** through their childcare account. If a family is no longer eligible, funding continues for a grace period set by the government, after which the hours become chargeable. We will explain this to the family in advance.
- We recommend that staff apply for their code in the term before their child's planned start date.
- If a code is not provided, parents are liable for the full cost of funded hours.

**Charges**

- **Funded hours are free.** There are no mandatory charges, top-up fees, registration fees, deposits or retainers for funded hours.
- We may offer optional extras, such as meals, snacks, nappies and other consumables. These are optional: parents can choose to provide their own instead, and choosing not to pay for extras will not affect a child's funded place.
- Hours taken in addition to the funded entitlement are charged at the rates set out in the Fees and Funded Entitlement Policy.
- Invoices show funded hours, paid hours, food, consumables and activities as separate items.

## 11. Attendance and absence

Regular attendance helps babies settle and build a secure relationship with their key person. Parents should tell the nursery on the first morning of any absence, by phone or through EYLog.

- In line with the EYFS, staff follow up any **unexplained absence promptly**, on the first day, using the child's emergency contacts where parents cannot be reached.
- Prolonged or repeated absence is followed up in line with The GLC's Attendance Policy. Attendance is monitored by the attendance lead, and the nursery will hold a joint conversation with the family if attendance becomes a concern.

## 12. Moving to the Two-Year-Old Room

Children normally move to the Two-Year-Old Room at the start of the term after their second birthday, at one of the planned transition points. The move is planned with parents and takes account of the child's readiness, development and wellbeing, and of space in the Two-Year-Old Room. Each child has a supported

transition, including visits with their key person and a handover meeting with their new key person. Moves are planned in advance so that the Baby Room place can be offered to the next family on the waiting list. If a parent intends to withdraw their child to seek alternative 2-year-old nursery, a term's notice must be given prior to their last day.

## 13. Leaving the nursery and withdrawal of places

- Parents/carers must give **one full term's notice** in writing, clearly dated, if they wish to withdraw their child. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged for any paid (non-funded) hours for the notice period. No charge is made for funded hours; however, parent's funding codes will not be able to be used elsewhere.
- In exceptional circumstances the GLC may withdraw a place, for example because of persistent unexplained absence, sustained non-payment of fees for paid hours, or a serious breach of the parent contract. This will only happen after discussion with the family, with written notice, and with the child's welfare and any safeguarding concerns fully considered. A place will **never** be withdrawn because of a child's special educational needs or disability.

## 14. Data protection

Information collected through registration of interest, the waiting list, referrals and admission is held securely and used only to manage admissions and care for the child, in line with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GLC Privacy Notice. Waiting list information is deleted when a family asks to be removed, when the child is no longer within the Baby Room age range, or when it is no longer needed. Children's records are kept for the periods set out in the GLC records retention schedule.

## 15. Concerns, reviews and complaints

There is no statutory right of appeal for nursery places. If a family is unhappy with an admissions decision, they may ask the Head of School to review it, in writing, within 10 working days of the decision. If they remain unhappy, they may use the GLC Complaints Policy. In line with the EYFS, written complaints about how we meet the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the complainant told the outcome within 28 days. Parents may also contact Ofsted, whose contact details are displayed in the nursery.

## 16. Monitoring and review

The Nursery Manager will keep a record of all registrations of interest, offers, acceptances and the reasons for each allocation decision, so that the criteria can be shown to have been applied fairly. This policy will be reviewed annually by the GLC Board, or sooner if the EYFS statutory framework, funding guidance or the local authority provider agreement changes.