



Private Babysitting & Out-of-Hours Childcare Policy

Our Position

SPLAT permits members of our team to privately babysit for SPLAT families outside of their contracted working hours.

We are incredibly proud of our practitioners and completely understand why families who know and trust them may choose to ask them to provide occasional babysitting outside nursery.

However, it is vital that both parents and practitioners clearly understand the difference between working for SPLAT and entering into a private babysitting arrangement.

Any babysitting undertaken outside contracted SPLAT hours is a private arrangement between the parent and practitioner. It is not arranged, provided, managed or supervised by SPLAT.

Parent & Practitioner Notification

For safeguarding, transparency and professional-boundary purposes, we require private babysitting arrangements involving a current SPLAT family and member of staff to be declared to the nursery.

We ask the **parent to email nursery@splat.ltd** confirming the arrangement.

The practitioner should also ensure their manager is aware that the arrangement is taking place.

This notification does not mean SPLAT is arranging, approving, supervising or accepting responsibility for the babysitting. It simply ensures that there is transparency around relationships between our practitioners and families outside the nursery.

What You Will Not Have During Private Babysitting

Parents and practitioners must recognise that a private babysitting arrangement is very different from a child's attendance at SPLAT.

When privately babysitting, the practitioner is not working as a SPLAT employee and will not automatically have the protections, systems and support available to them within the nursery.

This includes SPLAT's:

- management and leadership oversight;
- nursery staffing and ratio arrangements;
- safeguarding supervision and on-site DSL support;
- nursery premises and environmental risk assessments;
- lone-working arrangements;

- nursery accident and incident procedures;
- first-aid equipment and nursery emergency systems;
- nursery insurance arrangements;
- medication records and nursery documentation;
- nursery equipment and resources;
- staff communication and support systems; and
- immediate support from another practitioner or manager should an incident occur.

Parents and practitioners must therefore consider carefully whether they are comfortable entering into the private arrangement.

Practitioner Personal Safety

We particularly ask our practitioners to think about **their own safety and wellbeing** when accepting private babysitting.

You are entitled to say **no** to any babysitting request. There is no expectation from SPLAT that you provide private childcare simply because a family has asked you.

Before accepting an arrangement, consider:

- where you will be babysitting;
- who will be present in the property;
- how you will travel to and from the property safely;
- how late you will be expected to stay;
- whether somebody knows where you are;
- how you will leave if you become uncomfortable;
- whether alcohol or other substances may be present;
- whether you have been asked to undertake anything outside what you originally agreed;
- whether you are comfortable caring for all children who will be present;
- whether there are pets, medical needs or environmental risks you need to know about; and
- whether the arrangement could place you in a difficult or compromising situation.

Never put yourself in a situation where you feel unsafe, vulnerable, pressured or professionally compromised.

If something does not feel appropriate, you are entitled to decline the arrangement or leave.

We strongly encourage practitioners to ensure somebody they trust knows where they are, who they are babysitting for and approximately when they expect to finish, particularly when babysitting during the evening or overnight.

Practitioners should make their own safe transport arrangements and should never feel pressured to accept transport, remain at a property or enter into a situation that makes them uncomfortable.

Professional Boundaries

The professional standards expected of SPLAT practitioners do not simply disappear when they leave the nursery.

Staff must maintain sensible professional boundaries with SPLAT families.

In particular:

- do not become involved in family disputes or disagreements;
- do not discuss confidential nursery matters;
- do not discuss other children, parents or members of staff;
- do not access Family or nursery records for information needed for private babysitting;
- do not share nursery photographs, records or confidential information;
- do not present yourself as babysitting on behalf of SPLAT;
- do not allow a private disagreement with a parent to affect your professional relationship with the family or child at nursery;
- do not place yourself in circumstances that could reasonably compromise your professional position; and
- maintain appropriate boundaries regarding social media, photographs and private messaging.

Practitioners should be particularly mindful of situations where alcohol is being consumed by adults within the home or where they are asked to remain after their babysitting responsibilities have ended.

You are there under a private arrangement to care for the child or children, and you should maintain appropriate boundaries throughout.

Safeguarding Remains Paramount

The private nature of the arrangement does not mean safeguarding concerns can be ignored.

If a practitioner witnesses, is told about or becomes concerned about something that may affect the welfare or safety of a child, they must act appropriately and report safeguarding concerns in accordance with their professional responsibilities and SPLAT's safeguarding procedures.

Likewise, if SPLAT becomes aware of an incident occurring during private babysitting which raises concerns about an employee's suitability to work with children, safeguarding practice or professional conduct, SPLAT may need to consider the matter under its safeguarding and/or employment procedures.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents are responsible for ensuring the practitioner has all information necessary to safely care for their child privately, including:

- emergency contact numbers;
- allergies and medical conditions;
- medication requirements;
- dietary requirements;
- bedtime and care routines;
- emergency arrangements;
- relevant information about the home;
- information regarding pets;
- who is authorised to enter or collect the child; and
- any other information reasonably necessary to safely care for the child.

Any payment, hours, cancellation arrangements, transport or additional expectations should be agreed directly between the parent and practitioner.

Insurance, DBS, Qualifications & First Aid

Our practitioners may hold DBS checks, childcare qualifications, safeguarding training and paediatric first-aid qualifications as part of their employment with SPLAT.

However, parents must understand that these are held or assessed in connection with the practitioner's employment at SPLAT.

SPLAT's insurance, management arrangements, policies and regulatory framework should not be assumed to extend to private babysitting.

Parents and practitioners are responsible for satisfying themselves that they are comfortable with the arrangements and any private insurance or other protection they consider appropriate.

Working Hours & Fitness for Work

Private babysitting must not interfere with a practitioner's responsibilities to SPLAT.

Practitioners must ensure that additional work does not leave them excessively tired or otherwise unable to safely and effectively undertake their nursery duties.

Babysitting must not take place during contracted SPLAT working hours, including where an employee is expected to be working, attending training or undertaking another SPLAT responsibility.

If Something Goes Wrong

If an accident, disagreement, allegation or other incident occurs during private babysitting, the practitioner should deal with the immediate situation appropriately, including contacting emergency services where necessary.

Where an incident has potential safeguarding, professional-conduct or employment implications, the practitioner must inform SPLAT management as soon as reasonably practicable.

This does **not** mean SPLAT assumes responsibility for the private arrangement. It allows us to fulfil any safeguarding or employment responsibilities that may arise from the information received.

A Positive Opportunity — With Clear Boundaries

We genuinely believe we have a fantastic team, and we understand why our families may wish to entrust our practitioners with their children outside nursery.

We are therefore happy to permit private babysitting arrangements.

We simply ask parents and practitioners to protect themselves, protect the child and protect the professional relationship they have built through SPLAT.

Babysitting privately means stepping outside many of the formal systems and protections available within the nursery. Both parties should enter into the arrangement with this clearly understood and with appropriate boundaries in place.

Parent Email Confirmation

Please email **nursery@splat.ltd** before the arrangement begins:

"I confirm that I have privately arranged for [practitioner's name] to babysit/care for my child/children outside their contracted SPLAT working hours.

I understand that this is a private arrangement between myself and the practitioner and is not childcare arranged, provided, supervised or managed by SPLAT.

I understand that SPLAT's normal nursery management, staffing, premises, risk assessments, documentation, insurance and operational arrangements should not be assumed to apply to this private arrangement.

I confirm that I have read and understood SPLAT's Private Babysitting & Out-of-Hours Childcare Policy."

Practitioner Responsibility

The practitioner must also confirm to their manager that they are undertaking private babysitting for a current SPLAT family and that they have read and understood this policy.

Practitioners are reminded that accepting private babysitting is entirely voluntary and **you should never put yourself in a situation in which your personal safety, safeguarding responsibilities or professional position could be compromised.**

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