

Circadian Nest Nursery

Early Years Recruitment Pack

Bank Staff — Early Years

Casual / ad-hoc cover — open to unqualified, Level 2 and Level 3 candidates

Job Description & Person Specification · Issued May 2026

Job title	Bank Staff — Early Years (Unqualified / L2 / L3)
Reports to	Room Leader / Deputy Manager / Manager on shift
Contract type	Casual / zero-hours bank contract — work offered as and when needed; no minimum hours guaranteed.
Hours / Pattern	Variable, between 7:30am and 6:30pm Monday–Friday. Shifts offered with as much notice as possible.
Pay	Per shift confirmation — paid at a rate appropriate to the level worked (Unqualified / L2 / L3).
Ratios	Counts in EYFS ratios only at the level held (e.g. an L2-qualified bank staff member counts as L2). Unqualified bank staff support qualified colleagues but do not count at L2/L3.
DBS	Enhanced DBS with Children’s Barred List check before first shift
References	Two satisfactory references required before first shift
Induction	Mandatory induction (safeguarding, fire, health & safety, settings tour) before first shift

Job Description

About Circadian Nest Nursery

Circadian Nest Nursery maintains a small, vetted bank of trusted staff who can step into our rooms at short notice to support continuity of care for children during sickness, holidays and busy periods. Bank staff are an important part of our extended team and are recruited to the same safeguarding standard as our permanent practitioners.

Role Purpose

Bank staff provide flexible, high-quality cover that protects EYFS staff:child ratios and maintains the calm, predictable rhythm our children rely on. The role is open to unqualified candidates with a genuine interest in early years, as well as those holding a Level 2 or Level 3 Early Years qualification. The duties carried out on shift are matched to the qualification and experience held.

How the Role Works

- Shifts are offered by phone, text or email with as much notice as we can give. There is no obligation to accept any shift, and no minimum hours are guaranteed.
- Bank staff complete a paid induction before their first shift, including safeguarding, fire safety, intimate care, food allergies and a tour of the setting.
- On arrival each shift, you will receive a brief handover from the Room Lead and be deployed in line with your level — you will only be asked to undertake duties appropriate to your qualification, training and experience.
- The level recorded against your contract (Unqualified / L2 / L3) determines whether you count in EYFS ratios on the day, and at what level.

Key Responsibilities — All Bank Staff

Care, learning and the EYFS curriculum

- Support the room's daily routine and the EYFS curriculum, working under the direction of qualified practitioners and the Room Lead.
- Engage warmly with children through play, conversation, songs and stories, following each child's lead and interests.
- Help to set up, tidy and refresh the indoor and outdoor environment so it remains safe, welcoming and well-resourced.
- Support mealtimes, snacks, sleep, nappy changing and toileting in line with the setting's policies and the child's individual care plan.
- Where qualified at L2 or L3, contribute to observations, key person interactions and the planning cycle as directed by the Room Lead.

Safeguarding and child protection

- Adhere fully to the EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements, the setting's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, and statutory guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- Recognise indicators of abuse, neglect, FGM, radicalisation (Prevent duty) and other safeguarding concerns, and report any concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Maintain confidential, accurate and timely safeguarding records using the agreed reporting system.
- Keep paediatric first aid (PFA), safeguarding, food hygiene and other mandatory training fully up to date.
- Adhere to the Staff Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Policy, modelling professional boundaries online and in person.

Health, safety and welfare

- Maintain EYFS staff:child ratios at all times and ensure children are never left unattended.
- Carry out daily and dynamic risk assessments of indoor and outdoor environments, and report hazards or near-misses promptly.
- Follow nappy-changing, intimate-care, sleep, allergy, medication and food-hygiene procedures in line with policy.
- Promote healthy eating, oral health, physical activity and rest in line with EYFS welfare requirements.

- Maintain a clean, well-resourced learning environment that is calm, accessible and fit for purpose.

Professionalism on shift

- Arrive punctually, in nursery uniform/dress code, with mobile phones stored away from children at all times.
- Build positive working relationships with the on-shift team, asking questions early if anything is unclear.
- Maintain the strict confidentiality of children, families and colleagues, on and off shift, and online.
- Provide as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend a shift you have accepted.

General

- Carry out any other reasonable duties requested by the manager on shift that fall within the scope of the role and your level of qualification.
- Attend any required updates (e.g. annual safeguarding refresher) to remain on the active bank list.
- Adhere to all setting policies and procedures, including data protection (UK GDPR), social media, dress code and sickness reporting.

EYFS Alignment

This role is delivered in line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), supporting all children to achieve the Learning and Development requirements across the seven areas of learning:

- Prime areas — Communication and Language; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Physical Development.
- Specific areas — Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the World; Expressive Arts and Design.

All staff are expected to actively promote the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning (playing and exploring; active learning; creating and thinking critically), and to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS at all times.

Differentiation by Level

Unqualified Bank Staff

- Works alongside qualified colleagues, supporting routines, play and care.
- Does not count in EYFS L2/L3 ratios; does not act as a key person; does not lead observations or planning.
- Encouraged (but not required) to work towards a Level 2 Early Years qualification while on the bank.

Level 2 Bank Staff

- Counts in EYFS ratios at Level 2.
- Contributes to observations, learning journals and the planning cycle under direction.
- May be asked to act as a temporary key person where continuity is needed and the Manager judges it appropriate.

Level 3 Bank Staff

- Counts in EYFS ratios at Level 3.
- Can be deployed to lead a key person group on shift, lead the observation/assessment/planning cycle for the day, and support less experienced colleagues.
- May be asked to support specific events (e.g. parent meetings, settling visits) where their experience adds value.

Safer Recruitment & Pre-Employment Requirements

Circadian Nest Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All appointments are made in line with the Department for Education guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education and the EYFS Statutory Framework safeguarding and welfare requirements.

All offers of employment are conditional on the satisfactory completion of the following pre-employment checks:

- An Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check, including a check of the Children's Barred List, returned at a level the Manager deems acceptable.
- Two satisfactory professional references, at least one of which must be from the most recent employer (or place of study, if recently qualified). References involving work with children must come from a senior contact and confirm there are no safeguarding concerns.
- Verification of identity, address and right to work in the UK.
- Verification of relevant qualifications and any required certificates.
- Self-declaration of any cautions, convictions, reprimands or warnings (subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975).
- Self-declaration confirming the post-holder is not disqualified from working with children, and confirmation of medical fitness to undertake the role.
- Satisfactory completion of a probationary period (typically six months).

The post-holder is required to inform the Manager immediately of any change in circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children, including any cautions, convictions or referrals during employment. Failure to disclose relevant information may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Bank staff are subject to the same safer-recruitment standard as permanent staff. Failure to maintain mandatory training, DBS, or to disclose changes in suitability will result in removal from the active bank list.

Person Specification

Candidates will be shortlisted and selected against the criteria below. Evidence may be drawn from the application form (A), interview (I), references (R), pre-employment checks (C) and any practical observation/trial session (T) where used.

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<p>Open to unqualified candidates, and those holding a full and relevant Level 2 or Level 3 Early Years qualification.</p> <p>Where Level 2 or Level 3 is held, the qualification must appear on the DfE Early Years Qualifications List in order to count in EYFS ratios.</p> <p>Willing to undertake the setting's mandatory induction and refresher training.</p>	<p>Current paediatric first aid certificate (12-hour PFA).</p> <p>Safeguarding Level 1 / Level 2 certification within the last two years.</p> <p>Food Hygiene Level 2.</p> <p>GCSE English and Maths at grade 4/C or above, or equivalent.</p>
Knowledge	<p>Awareness of the EYFS Statutory Framework, in particular the safeguarding and welfare requirements.</p> <p>Awareness of safeguarding signs of harm and how to report a concern (including to the Designated Safeguarding Lead).</p> <p>Understanding that ratios, deployment and tasks are matched to the level held.</p>	<p>Working knowledge of child development from birth to five.</p> <p>Familiarity with Birth to 5 Matters / Development Matters non-statutory guidance.</p>
Experience	<p>Some recent experience of working or volunteering with children aged 0–5 (paid, voluntary, placement or own family caregiving may be considered for unqualified candidates).</p>	<p>Experience in a registered early years setting.</p> <p>Experience of working across more than one age room (baby, toddler, pre-school).</p>
Skills	<p>Warm, age-appropriate communication with young children.</p> <p>Good verbal communication with colleagues and parents.</p> <p>Ability to follow routines and instructions accurately.</p> <p>Reliable timekeeping and good written communication for handovers, accident</p>	<p>Confident with digital learning journals (e.g. Family, Tapestry).</p> <p>Additional language used by our families.</p>

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
	records, etc.	
Personal qualities	<p>Genuinely enjoys spending time with young children. Calm, patient, kind and emotionally consistent. Flexible and adaptable — happy to work in different rooms and with short notice. Reliable: only accepts shifts they can confidently attend, and gives early notice when not available. Open to feedback and committed to working within their level of competence. Strong commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice. Genuine commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.</p>	—
Other requirements	<p>Eligible to work in the UK. Willing to undergo and maintain an Enhanced DBS check (with Children's Barred List) before first shift. Able to provide two satisfactory professional references prior to first shift, at least one from the most recent employer or place of study. Not disqualified from working with children, and able to confirm this in writing (self-declaration). Physically able to undertake the duties of the role, including floor-based play, lifting and outdoor activity. Understands and accepts that this is a casual zero-hours arrangement with no guaranteed hours.</p>	—

Reasonable adjustments will be considered at every stage of recruitment and within the role. Please contact the Manager in confidence if you would like to discuss any adjustments.