

Mamas & Papas sets off in search of new parent

The nursery and baby products chain Mamas & Papas is being put up for sale by its private equity backers.

Sky News understands that the wholesale and retailer, which has been owned by Bluegem Capital since 2014, is working with bankers at Rothschild on a prospective auction.

Mamas & Papas claims to be the UK's biggest own-brand baby products retailer, with over £100m of sales in its last financial year.

In the UK, it trades from 22 standalone stores as well as 14 concessions inside Next shops.

The relationship with Next, which includes plans for a further 19 concessions, has sparked industry speculation that it may be interested in acquiring Mamas & Papas outright.

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Mamas & Papas also sells in 40 countries worldwide through a network of distribution partners and franchisees.

Retail executives believe Bluegem is seeking a price in excess of £100m for the business.

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In its latest financial year, ending in March, the company recorded earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortisation of £11m, compared to a loss of £6m two years earlier.

Neither Bluegem Capital nor Rothschild returned calls for comment, while a spokesman for Mamas & Papas declined to comment.