

ROLE OF THE KEYPERSON & SETTLING-IN POLICY

Statement of intent

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the setting.

Aim

- We aim to make the setting a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.
- The key person role is set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must assign a key person for each child.
- The procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children who are in settings.

Methods

Role of the Key Person

- We allocate a key person before the child starts
- The key person is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting, alongside the manager and deputy manager
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental
- The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning
- The key person acts as the key contact for the parents and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a childminder, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers, along with the manager and deputy manager
- The key person is responsible for developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents to keep those records up to date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home through our Tapestry system

Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we provide written information (in Tapestry for our induction pack and on our website for our policies), and opportunities for the child and their parents to visit the setting. These sessions are completed after hours
- We allocate a key person to each child and their family before they start to attend; the key person welcomes and looks after the child at the child's first session and during the settling-in process
- Before a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with their parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting
- We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, understand that we offer a unique and flexible settling in process, whereby the first session is planned, but can be lengthened or shortened to suit, with subsequent sessions planned after review of the initial session
- Some children may take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also require sessions of re-settling. Each child and their family are treated uniquely, and we reserve the right to adapt this process at any time to suit the needs of the setting and the child/family
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person and other staff; for example, the child looks for the adults when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities
- When parents drop off, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when
- We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not always ready to stay for their fully planned sessions. We expect that the parent will honour the commitment to be flexible in hours if needed, to allow their child time to settle fully
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the setting
- Within the first term (depending on hours attending per week) of starting, we will create a settling in report and alongside the parents, complete a progress checker to see how we all feel their child is coming on

The progress check at age two

- The key person carries out the progress check at age two in accordance with any local procedures that are in place and referring to the supporting guidance to the EYFS *A Know How Guide: The EYFS progress check at age two*
- The progress check aims to review the child's development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their child's development
- Within the progress check, the key person will note areas where the child is progressing well and identify areas where progress is less than expected
- The progress check will describe the actions that will be taken by the setting to address any developmental concerns (including working with other professionals where appropriate) as agreed with the parent(s)
- The key person will plan activities to meet the child's needs within the setting and will support parents to understand the child's needs to enhance their development at home