



## **SETTLING IN & KEY PERSON POLICY**

The 'Settling-In' period is intended to bridge the gap between home and nursery.

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.

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 procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children who are in settings.

### **Settling In**

The settling in period is to help the child settle into the nursery and build a relationship with their key person. The length of the settling in period will vary depending on the individual child and family. The child's Parent/Carer is welcome to spend as much time at the nursery as is needed to settle the child in. When and how often the settling in sessions occur will be agreed between the parents and the nursery manager.

Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide parents with information. These include written information, displays about activities available within the setting, 'show round information'.

Once all paperwork has been completed and sent back to the nursery, we require 2 working days to add your child to the system we will then allocate the settling sessions for your child/ren.

Settling in sessions can only commence once all the relevant paperwork has been completed for the child, such as the Enrolment form, Child consent form, Allergy form, the terms and conditions signed and New Starter Forms

We allocate a key person to each child before the child starts to attend; the key person welcomes and looks after the child *and* parents at the child's first session and then during the settling-in process.

When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.

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Younger children may take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. If during a settling in session, the child becomes distressed, the parents will be contacted to return to the nursery to collect their child. Extra settle sessions may be granted.

We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person; for example, the child looks for the key person when they arrive, 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 leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.

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.

- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.

### **Key Person**

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.

- We allocate a key person before the child starts. However, if a child bonds particularly with another member of staff in the room, we will change key person if it benefits the child.
- The Room Leader will contact the parents ahead of the settling session to introduce themselves and answer any questions you may have.
- 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.
- The key person is responsible for the child's learning journey & 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.
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children in her/his key base room.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our setting, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.