

The Role of the Key Person and Settling-in

Policy Statement

The best interests of the child must be top priority in all actions concerning children (Article 3 U.N.C.R.C.) 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 welcome 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 [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(2017\)](#). We offer a key person for each child, which promotes effective and positive relationships for children who attend our setting.

Procedures

- 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.
- 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.
- A 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.
- We provide a back-up key person so the child and the parents have a key contact in the absence of the child's key person.
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children in her/his group, spending time with them as a group each day.

Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), website detailing the activities available within the setting and individual meetings with parents.

- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
- We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend; the key worker welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- We use pre-start visits and the first session at which a child attends to explain and complete the child's registration records with the parents.
- 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.
- We have the expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for the first settling-in session. Then if needed gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
- 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 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 leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- We reassure parents who are anxious about their child by giving them information about their child's activities and welfare during the session.
- 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.
- We will recall a parent if the child is distressed or unable to settle.

The progress check at age two

- The key person will carry out the progress check; this will be completed after the child has attended for ten weeks referring to the supporting guidance of the EYFS 'A Know How Guide: The EYFS progress check at age two', as children start our setting at the age of 2 years 9 months.
- The key person will work with the child and parents on areas of development identified within the progress check if completed at another setting before the child started Pre-school.

June 2018
This policy was adopted on: _____
June 2019
Date to be reviewed: _____
<i>Karen Richardson (Treasurer)</i>
Signed on behalf of the Committee: _____

Changes Made: Y/N