

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Key Person

Each child must be assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents

4.1 The role of the key person and settling-in

Policy statement

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, our 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 our staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with our setting. We aim to make our 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 child must have a key person. These procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children.

Procedures

Our setting differs to many in that we operate from one space, being the large hall. ALL our staff work closely as a team and know ALL our children well. If your keyperson is not working on a particular day, please speak to any member of staff and be assured that any message will be relayed to your child's keyperson via our message book.

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- The key person is responsible for:
 - Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into our setting.
 - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
 - Working with the parents to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
 - Completing relevant forms with parents, including consent forms.
 - Explaining our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
 - Acting as the key contact for the parents.

- 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.
- Having links with other carers involved with the child and co-ordinating the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- Encouraging positive relationships between children in her key group, spending time with them as a group each day, when appropriate.

Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend our setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), displays about activities available within the setting, open mornings 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 to complete our registration documents.
- 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 fully appreciate that many parents will be anxious leaving their child for the first time, particularly if the child is upset. Parents will be encouraged, where appropriate, to separate from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences. **Parents and carers are always welcome to telephone us during a session to ask how their child is.**
- Younger children will 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 need their parent to be on hand to re-settle them.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person; for example, the child looks for their 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 a quick 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.
- Within the first four weeks of starting, we discuss and work with the child's parents to begin to create their child's record of achievement, by means of a short meeting.
- We ask parents and carers to communicate with us any difficulties in getting their child to the preschool – if their child is upset and anxious at home or on the way to preschool we can advise on different use of language and strategies, including advice from external agencies (like the children's centre for example).

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 guidance *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 us 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 in order to enhance their development at home.

Adopted on:	14 th November 2013	Bryony Smith, Chair	ANNUALLY IN NOV
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