

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, 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 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.

Procedures

Key person

We will work in partnership with parents to settle their child into the setting by:

- Allocating a key person before the child starts. If possible, dependent on the key person's working hours, they will welcome and look after the child ensuring that their care is tailored to meet their individual needs.
- 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 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.
- Any available staff member can be approached in the absence of the child's key person.
- 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.

Settling-in

- Parents and their children are able to visit our setting prior to their child being enrolled to have a look around and to meet the staff.
- We arrange a visit for the parents and if the visit is during the day, also the child, before attending the first session. On this visit we will go through the Registration Form and induction information supplied by the parents and discuss any details such as allergies, medical history and development. We give the parents a full tour of our setting and ask them to fill in a Pre-School booklet and Getting to know you form prior to their child starting. If the child is in attendance for the visit we encourage them to join in with the activities.
- 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 are happy for parents to stay with their child during the first few times until the child feels settled and the parents feel comfortable about leaving their child. Settling in visits and introductory sessions are key to a smooth transition and to ensure good communication and information sharing between staff and parents
- We will encourage parents, where appropriate, to separate themselves from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- We will reassure parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling in and develop a plan with them.
- Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home.
- 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.
- We will assign a buddy/back-up key person to each child in case the key person is not available. Parents will be made aware of this to support the settling process and attachment
- We will review the key person if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child's needs are supported.
- We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others, but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left.
- We understand that it is hard to leave your child when they are feeling sad. Please be assured that we will ring you during the session to let you know how they are. 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.

| | | |
|---|---------------------|---------------------------|
| This policy was adopted at a meeting of | Fairford Pre-School | <i>(name of provider)</i> |
| Held on | 21.5.08 | <i>(date)</i> |
| Date reviewed | 12/6/17 | <i>(date)</i> |
| Date to be reviewed | | |
| Signed on behalf of the provider | _____ | |
| Name of signatory | _____ | |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) | _____ | |