



The Role of the Keyworker and Settling In Policy



1	Summary	The Role of the Keyworker and Settling In Policy			
2	Responsible person	Margaret Dennis			
3	Accountable SLT member	Caroline Knight			
4	Applies to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All staff <input type="checkbox"/> Support staff <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching staff			
5	Who has overseen development of this policy	Caroline Knight, Margaret Dennis and Governors			
6	Who has been consulted and recommended policy for approval	Senior Leaders			
7	Approved by and date	September 2024			
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10	Related documents (if applicable)				
11	Disseminated to	<input type="checkbox"/> Trustees/governors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All staff <input type="checkbox"/> Support staff <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching staff			
12	Date of implementation (when shared)	September 2024			
13	Consulted with recognised trade unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N			



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. We believe that children settle best when they have a familiar member of staff to relate to, who knows them and their parents/carers well, and who can meet their individual needs. We feel that this benefits the child, the parents/carers, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children can thrive. We have a settling in procedure that we encourage parents to adhere to.
- 1.2. We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the nursery 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 our setting.
- 1.3. We aim to make the nursery a welcoming place where a child can settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to their individual needs and their families.

2. Aim of the policy

- 2.1. To set out how the nursery and practitioners work with parents/carers to enable the children to settle. To provide a working routine for getting the children into nursery and how we work with parents/carers to provide a good transition from home to nursery.
- 2.2. To explain the importance of why the children will have a keyworker whilst they are in the nursery.

3. Implementation of the policy

Keyworker Role

- 3.1. All children will be allocated a keyworker as they settle at nursery. We understand some children respond differently to different practitioners, so during the first few weeks practitioners will observe children to see who they respond to or go to for comfort and reassurance. The child will then be allocated to that practitioner if they have space in their key group.
- 3.2. The keyworker is responsible for making a relationship with the child's family and for providing comfort and reassurance on entering the nursery.
- 3.3. The keyworker will work closely with the parent/carer to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care, development and learning needs.
- 3.4. The keyworker will act as the key contact for the parent/carers.



- 3.5. The keyworker is responsible for observations which record the development of the child and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parent/carers, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.
- 3.6. The keyworker will develop positive relationships between children in their key group, spending time with them each day.
- 3.7. We provide a back-up keyworker so the child and the parents have a key contact in the absence of the child's keyworker
- 3.8. We promote the role of the keyworker as the child's primary carer in our setting, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.
- 3.9. The keyworker will complete the Two Year Progress Check once children are settled and they have a good knowledge of the child's development through observations.

Settling In

- 3.10. Before a child starts to attend the nursery, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents/carers with information. These include written information (including our parent/carer booklet and policies), information days, home visits and talking with parents on visits to the nursery. They are sent a welcome booklet which has all practitioners in so the children can get to be familiar with who they will see at nursery. We also try to aim to provide a stay and play before the child starts nursery so they can familiarize themselves with the nursery and staff again.
- 3.11. We provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting on numerous occasions.
- 3.12. We explain the keyworker system so parents/carers know they will have a practitioner to speak with about any issues regarding their child.
- 3.13. During the home visit and visits to the nursery we explain the process of settling-in with the parent/carers and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting. (Comfort blanket, toys, soothers, how parents will react)
- 3.14. We explain that young children may take some time to settle at nursery – this can be up to 6 weeks. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent/carer to be on hand to re-settle them.
- 3.15. We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their keyworker; for example, the child looks for the keyworker 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.
- 3.16. When the child leaves their parent/carer, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back.
- 3.17. During the first session practitioners will phone parents/carers with an update on how their child is at nursery.
- 3.18. If a child is in distress the practitioners will try to comfort or distract the child to an activity. This is different for every child and practitioners will try different strategies to settle the child.
- 3.19. If a child is too distressed the parent/carer will be phoned to collect their child earlier. If the child does not settle and becomes too distressed each time they come to nursery a plan will be put into place in discussion with parents/carers. This may be gradually increasing the time the child spends at



nursery, the manager/keyworker will work with parents/carers to agree actions and strategies.

- 3.20. 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.

SEND children

- 3.21. The nursery understands children with additional needs may need a different approach to transitioning and settling into nursery. The nursery may need to liaise with the Early Years SEND team before a child can come to nursery. Meetings with parents/carers and any other agencies involved may need to be held to discuss the needs of the child and ensure the nursery has the correct provision for the child or staff in place if the child needs support whilst at nursery.
- 3.22. Transition visits may need to be held with outside agencies working with the child or more visits held to ensure the child has a smooth transition.