

## **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.

### ***Procedures***

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- A home visit is carried out before the child starts Pre-school, this is done by the manager and the key person.
- The key person (class teacher in reception) is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting.
- 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.
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our setting (Pre-school) and as a basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children. Teaching assistants in reception class develop positive relationships with all children support them during Child initiated play, whole group times and small group activities.

### ***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) displays about activities available within the setting, information days 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 person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- We offer a home visit in Pre-school to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.
- We use home visits and visits to the setting to explain and complete with his/her parents the child's registration records.
- 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 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. Often younger children take longer to settle.
- 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 will discuss with parents how soon they would like us to call them if their child does not settle and reduced session times may be discussed with a parent if it is in their child's best interests.
- Within the first four to six weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to start to create their child's record of achievement.

### ***The progress check at age two***

- The key person (Pre-school) will ask parents about the progress check and will plan activities to meet the child's needs within the setting.

**Review Date: September 2018**