

Settling-in policy and Role of Key Person

Statement of intent

We want to provide a setting whereby children feel happy, safe and secure and develop a sense of belonging within the group. We want to support children in making good relationships with other children and the staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well being and their role as active partners with the setting.

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.

Aim

We aim to make the setting a welcoming and friendly place whereby children can settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

Objectives and Procedures

1. We make close links with the family and child before starting the setting:

- We show parents our prospectus and policies, explaining our policies and procedures with a particular focus on policies such as safeguarding. We also direct parents to our website and Facebook page for further information.
- We show parents and children around the setting, showing activities that take part within the preschool.
- We encourage and welcome children and parents to a pre-visit before attending the setting. Children are given the opportunity to play within the pre-school setting and meet other children, their key person and other staff. Parents are able to support their child within their new environment and to talk with staff.
- Where required, we hold individual meetings with the parents in order to gain information about the child and family and to look at the child's registration records. Parents are required to fill out a "Child Profile" form, which gives us more information about the individual child.
- Before 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 discuss use of comforters if needed and points of interest so that we know which activities a child may be interested in.
- 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.
- The key person is responsible for:
 - Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into the setting.
 - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental
 - Acting as a key contact for parents

- Sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents, to keep developmental records up to date, reflecting the full picture of the child in preschool 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/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.

2. We work together with the parents to help settle their child into pre-school.

- On a child's first day, we recommend that they start the session at a later time of 9.30 am to enable a smooth settling process. The key worker welcomes the child and family into the setting.
- The role of the key-worker is to support the child in settling in by involving them in activities as they come into pre-school and comforting them if upset.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- We work together with children to develop friendships and good relationships within the pre-school in order to ease the settling in process.
- 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 recognise that some children will settle more readily than others. If a child is not settling than we will use a range of techniques to support the child which could include:
 - Bringing in a comfort object eg teddy; blanket
 - Leaving photographs of family or articles of clothing that smell of the main carer
 - Engaging the child in favourite activities or with favourite books/ toys
 - Asking another member of the family to drop off
 - Asking the parent to stay during sessions and to gradually build up the time that the child is left on their own.
- 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 to six weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to create their child's record of achievement.

3. We develop links with other settings that the child attends

- With parental consent, we actively contact any other setting that a child attends.
- We work alongside the other settings to share information about the child in order to support the child in their new setting
- We invite practitioners from other settings to work with the children in our setting.

- We aim to continue sharing information about the child in order to develop the interests of the child, their next steps and to follow their learning journeys together.

4. We have good links with the South Milford Primary School and work hard to prepare children for the transition into school.

- We make regular visits to South Milford Primary School, enabling children to develop an understanding of a school environment.
- We visit the school for story times, assemblies and at special times in the year (e.g. Christmas performance).
- We invite staff from South Milford School and other schools and settings, to come into our pre-school and work with the children within their learning environment.
- We share information and records on each child with the school in which they will attend. We provide summative records of progress (NYEY assessments).
- We talk about starting school and link this to activities, stories and role-play. We show pictures of their new schools.

5. 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 refers 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.

M Riches - July 2023

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