

### **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 Role of the key person and settling-in (January 2023)**

### **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. We are committed to the key person approach which benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting. It encourages secure relationships which support children to thrive, give parents confidence and make the pre-school a happy 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 us. We aim to make our pre-school 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, which states that each child must have a key person. These procedures also set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children.

### **Procedures**

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- The key person will:
  - provide an induction for the family and be responsible for settling the child into our pre-school
  - offer unconditional regard for the child and be non-judgemental
  - work with the parents to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning
  - act as the key contact for the parents
  - share 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 our setting and at home

- Have links with other carers involved with the child and co-ordinate the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers
- Encourage 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 pre-school and as the basis for establishing relationships with other adults and children.

### Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend our setting, we use a variety of ways to provide parents with information - these include written information such as our Prospectus, the latest newsletter and details of any organised events with other new parents.
- During the half-term before a child starts, we provide opportunities for the child and the parents to visit the pre-school in a 'taster' session.
- The key person welcomes and looks after the child at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- We use the 'taster' session to explain and complete the child's registration records.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle.
- We have an expectation that the parent will stay for most of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child; increasing this time as and when the child is able to cope.
- 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 the key person on arrival or goes to them for comfort. 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.
- 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 pre-school
- 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.
- At the end of the first six weeks of starting, we will have a one-to-one meeting with the parent to discuss their starting points form and how they have settled in.

### 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 check aims to review the child's development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their child's progress.
- Within the progress check, the key person will note areas where the child is developing 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 – this includes working with other professionals where appropriate and always in agreement with the parents.
- The key person will plan activities to meet the child's needs within the pre-school and will support parents to understand the child's needs in order to enhance their development at home.