



## **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 Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. *3.27. 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 (in accordance with paragraph 1.10), to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents.*

### **Procedures**

- We allocate a key person before the child starts based on information gathered during First Visit meeting and sessions child is due to attend.
- The key person is responsible for settling the child into our setting along with the Manager.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- 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 along with the Manager 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.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our setting. The key person encourages positive relationships between children in the setting, enabling their key child to develop relationships with their peers and other adults in the setting.

### **Settling-in**

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide their parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies via the website), First visit meetings, tapestry and individual meetings with parents.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and their parents to visit the setting for a stay and play session where parents are asked to complete an all about me if not already done so and record this information for future reference.
- We allocate a key person to each child and their family before they start attending the preschool; the key person welcomes and looks after the child at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with their parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- Younger children may take longer to settle in, as may children who have not previously spent time away from home and their parents/carers. Children who have had a period of absence may also need a slower transition back into preschool.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have confidently separated from their carer and formed a relationship with their key person; for example the child looks for the key person when they arrive, 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 do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress may prevent them from learning and gaining the best from being in the setting.
- We work with our families to settle a child that is taking longer to settle. We put procedures in place such as reducing their timetable or amending their timetable.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of (name of setting) ...The Hullbridge Preschool.....

Held on ..... (date)

Date to be reviewed ..... date

Signed by .....

Name of Signatory .....

Role of Signatory (ie manager) ...Manager.....