

General Welfare Requirement: Organisation

Providers must plan and organise their systems to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs.

Child care practice

4.2 The role of the key person and settling-in

Policy statement

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 child'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.

The key person role is set out in the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children who are in settings.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.2 Inclusive practice 1.3 Keeping safe 1.4 Health and well-being	2.2 Parents as partners 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child 3.3 The learning environment	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

Procedures

- We allocate a key person to the child as soon as they start with us.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- 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 keeping those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting.
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children in their key group, spending time with them as a group each day.
- We ensure important information is shared amongst staff where appropriate. In the absence of the child's key person, the Manager or Deputy will liaise with parents and carers regarding any queries or concerns.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our setting, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.

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 and policies).
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting, where any questions or concerns can be addressed before the child starts.
- We may offer a home visit by the person who will be the child's key person, to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known (usually only done with children with SEND). Parents are welcome to request a home visit if they feel this would benefit their child.
- We use visits to give the parents the necessary paperwork, All About Me forms and any other information they need.
- When 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 in. This may include slightly shorter sessions to start with.
- 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. We also recognise the frequency with which children may at first appear settled, but then experience a set back a few days in. We reassure parents and carers that this is quite normal and no cause for alarm.

- Once the child has settled, we create an online Learning Journal and give parents access to this. Parents are encouraged to regularly review their child’s progress and to contribute their own records and comments.
- During their 3rd year (the period between their 2nd and 3rd birthday), we carry out a 2-Year-Old Check. We cover the Prime Areas of Learning in the written report. The only exception would be if the child has already had their check completed by another setting or child minder.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of _____ name of setting
 Held on _____ (date)
 Date to be reviewed _____ (date)
 Signed on behalf of the management _____
 Name of signatory _____
 Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) _____

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Play is What I Do (2010)