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4.1 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 Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must assign a key person for each child.

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

Procedures

Key Person

We allocate a key person before the child starts, you will be notified of the key person at the New Parents Meeting

The Managers ensure that:

All relevant forms are completed by parents, including consent forms and also within this document we include links to essential policies such as;

Safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty, Sickness, Payment of Fees and GDPR.

The Parents have to sign to say that they have read and agreed to these.

All other policies that are not included in this document but a link is included and all are located on our website and within a policy file in the Hallway if they choose to read these.



- The Key Person is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting. The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- They work with the parents to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
- 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.
- 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 children are assessed within two weeks of entry (Baseline Assessment), to ensure 'Next Steps' are put in place to encourage the child's learning and development.

As staff do not work every day we provide a back-up key person (Buddy) so the child and the parents have a key contact in the absence of the child's key person although the Managers are present full time.

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:
 - a. written information (Full contact information forms including 'all about me' form),
 - b. What is needed for their first day
 - c. Promote our 'Open Door' policy
- During the term before a child is due to start, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
- At the Open Afternoon/Visit parents are issued with their 'Welcome Pack' this includes a photo of their Child's Key Person so the child can recognise a familiar face on their first day and also a full 'Contact Information Form' Parents are asked to complete this form and return it to Pre-School before their child starts, this is so that all information is in place for the beginning of term.
- 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.
- Younger children may 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 or familiar adult when he/she arrives or 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 choose their own resources.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back later.
- 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, to resolve this we use the All About Me form which the Parent has filled out to give us information about the Child's interests to enable us to calm and reassure them.