

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 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, our 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 our staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with our setting. We aim to make our 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 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.

Procedures

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- The key person is responsible for:
 - Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into our setting.
 - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
 - Working with the parents to deliver a plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
 - Acting as the key contact for the parents.
 - 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.
 - 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 their key child and other children in the setting.
- 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 adults and children.

Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend our setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty), notice board (with key information such as planning, menus and newsletters), website and individual meetings with parents.
- Before a child is enrolled at pre-school, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting and fill out necessary registration and consent forms.
- If possible 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.
- We may offer a home visit by two members of staff one of which is the child's key person to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.
- We use pre-start visits or induction mornings to explain and complete the child's registration records.
- 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 into the setting.
- We judge each child's settling in period individually and inform parents that they may need to stay for some/all of the session, or leave them for a shorter session to start with.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with the staff/ key person. 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 setting.
- 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 month of starting, we speak with the child's parents to share and record their child's starting points.

- *The progress check at age two*
- The key person carries out the two year progress check within the first half term of starting pre-school for any child under three. We have the guidance *A Know How Guide: The EYFS progress check at age two* to refer to.
- 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 information gained from the progress check will be used 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.

This policy was adopted by St Nicholas and St Faith Pre- *(name of provider)*
school

On _____ *(date)*
Date to be reviewed _____ *(date)*
Signed on behalf of the provider _____
Name of signatory _____
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) _____

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Play is What I Do (2010)
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage: With non-statutory supporting documentation (2014)