

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 each child a key person.
- The key person is responsible for:
 - Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into our setting.
 - Explaining our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
 - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgmental.
 - Working with parents to plan and deliver a personalised 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 children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.
 - Children have the opportunity to play and build relationships with all members of staff.
- 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.
- If a child is related to staff, we will not allocate that member of staff to the child they are related to.
- Key persons are responsible for the welfare of the children in their care and monitoring patterns of absence, injury and development, referring them on where necessary, taking observations and tracking the child's progress regularly.
- The key person will play an integral role in transition, aiding them to become familiar with their new environment.

Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information, including our welcome pack and policies, as well as displays about the setting.
- The key person welcomes and looks after the child at his/her first session and during the settling-in process. We will keep parents updated during this time with photos and messages via our Family platform. Parents are able to call the setting at any time.
- 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.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back.
- We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others, and offer shorter sessions until the child is able to successfully complete their regular booked hours.
- 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 if the child finds it very distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
- Within the first four to six weeks of starting, the key person will discuss and work with the child's parents to begin to create next steps in their child's learning journey.
- We ensure that families are supported for as long as it takes to settle their child into our setting.
- We reassure parents whose children seem to be taking a longer time to settle 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 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 progress check will describe the actions that will be taken by us 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

Dragonflies

On

January 2026

Date to be reviewed

January 2027

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Role of signatory

Trustee