

Key Person Policy and Staff Ratios (Nursery)

September 21



The role of the key person and settling in

Policy

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 school is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in. The Statutory Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements (EYFS, 2017) state that *'each child must be assigned a key person. Their role is to ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help children become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents'*.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the nursery 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 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.

Procedures

- **The key person is responsible for:**
 - Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child in when staff shifts and the sessions the child attends allows. Where this is not possible, a senior practitioner will act as a secondary key person to assist in this.
 - Completing relevant forms with parents, including consent forms.
 - Explaining our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities.
 - Offer unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
 - Working with the parent 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.

- We provide a back-up key person, so the child and the parents have a key contact in the absence of the child's key person.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in the nursery, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.

Transitions from Home to Nursery – Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend the nursery, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), information days and evenings and individual meetings with parents.
- We ask parents to complete the 'All about me' information on their child's electronic learning journal which asks for information regarding family background, current interests, social, emotional development, communication and language development and physical development.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the pre-school.
- 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 when staff shifts and child's sessions allow.
- We use pre-start visits, 'stay and play', to explain and complete, with parents, the child's admission forms. At this visit we also offer parent's the opportunity for a home visit from their child's key person.
- We provide parents with information about the settling in process and the various strategies that we can use and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the nursery.
- Parents/carers are welcome to stay with their child when they start to aid the transition from home to setting. When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back. We encourage parents to start with a short period of separation when the child shows anxiety, gradually increasing the period of time as and when the child is able to cope.
- We provide new parents with a welcome pack when the children come for their 'stay and play' visit before their child starts. In the pack we include:
 - Information leaflet about the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - A settling in information sheet
 - Information sheet about their child's key person and staff
 - A guide for our online learning journals – Tapestry
 - A small teddy. We explain how this can be used when the child starts nursery as a transition tool/comfort object.
 - A journal to collect objects and pictures and bring to nursery.
- 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 have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for most of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child; increasing this time as and when the child is able to cope.
- 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 when he/she arrives, 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 will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the pre-school.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the pre-school 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 four to six weeks of starting, we discuss and work with the child's parents to begin to create their child's record of achievement.

The progress check at age two.

- The key person carries out the progress check at age two in accordance and referring to the guidance, A Know How Guide: the EYFS progress check at two.
- The progress check aims to review the child's development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their children'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 the pre-school to address any development 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 pre-school and will support parents to understand the child's needs in order to enhance their development at home.

Staffing, ratios and role of the key person

Providers must ensure that all staff receive induction training to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. Staffing arrangements must meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety.

Staffing Ratios Policy

We provide a staffing ratio in line with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality. Our staff are appropriately qualified and we carry out checks for enhanced criminal records and barred list checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service in accordance with statutory requirements.

Procedures

To meet this aim we use the following ratios of adult to children:

- Children aged two years: 1 adult : 4 children:
 - at least one member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification; and
 - at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.
- Children aged three years and over: 1 adult : 8 children:
 - at least one member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification; and
 - at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.
- A minimum of two staff/adults are on duty at any one time
- Our head teacher deploys staff, students and volunteers to give adequate supervision of indoor and outdoor areas, ensuring that children are always within sight or hearing of staff at all times.
- The number of children for each key person takes into account the individual needs of the children and the capacity of the individual key person to manage their cohort.
- All staff are deployed according to the needs of the setting and the children attending.
- Our staff, students and volunteers inform their colleagues if they have to leave their area and tell colleagues where they are going.
- Our staff, students and volunteers focus their attention on children at all times and do not spend time in social conversation with colleagues while they are working with children.
- We assign each child a key person to help the child become familiar with the setting from the outset and to ensure that each child has a named member of staff with whom to form a relationship.
- We hold regular staff meetings to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss children's progress, their achievements and any difficulties that may arise from time to time.

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