

Settling In

Aims

To work closely with parents and support both parent and child in the move from home, family and familiar people, into the new community of the nursery. To encourage children to make strong attachments with their key person so that they feel secure and confident in nursery and to work with parents to help their child with any difficulties that may arise. We, as a setting, understand how difficult it is for parents to leave their child with people who are unfamiliar to both parent and child, therefore, 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. We believe that children settle best when they are gradually introduced to the setting and have a key person to relate to bond with and relate to and who can meet their individual needs.

Procedures

- We allocate a key person when the child starts.
- 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.
- The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
- The key person is responsible for developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parent to keep these records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.
- 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 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) and individual meetings with parents.
- Parents are provided with a Home Routine sheet to fill in before their child attends 'The Nest' so that the key person is well informed regarding the babies/toddlers sleep patterns, feeding times etc.
- We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family when she/he starts; 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.
- The child will start their settling in week at the beginning of term or the week after half term. The child will attend for an hour each day between 9.00 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. for the first week. Attending every day for short periods of time allows the child to familiarise themselves with new

Settling In

faces and the environment without becoming too stressed. Stress releases cortisol which has a negative effect on the child's well-being. The settling-in week has been established to ensure transitions are smooth and as stress free as possible.

- Some children take longer than others to settle and some settle more quickly and then become distressed a few weeks later. The setting will work with the child's parents to support their child through this transition period. It is important that parents and child are relaxed and happy in the setting. More details on settling in are provided in the parent's handbook.
- Home visits are available at the parents request but not obligatory.
- 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 a child starts they are welcome to bring a transitional item i.e. toy, blanket with them for as long as they need the comfort gained from this item.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person, the child is 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.
- On the child's first session without their parent the setting will telephone the parent to inform them how the child has settled, however, parents are welcome to ring at any time during the child's session to see how their child is.
- Within the first four to six weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to start to create their child's Learning Journey.