



3 School Lane, Osmotherley, DL6 3BW Tel 01609 883138

Registered Charity Number 1035485

# **The role of the keyperson and settling-in Policy**

## 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. We are committed to the key person approach which benefits the child, the parents, and the setting. It encourages secure relationships which support children to thrive, give parents confidence and make the setting a happy 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:
  - Settling the child into our setting.
  - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
  - Working with the parents
  - Developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents, and other staff members, 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 sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
  - Encouraging positive relationships between all children who attend the setting.

## *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 handbook and policies), displays about activities available within the setting, home visits, information days and evenings and individual meetings with parents.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
- The manager welcomes the family and introduces the designated key person. Registration forms are completed, and the child's needs are discussed; a settling-in process is agreed.
- 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.
- Younger children will 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 when he/she arrives and goes to them for comfort. 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 expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay for at least the first week, or possibly longer, until their child can stay happily without them.
- 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 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 after the child's second birthday but before the child reaches the age of three, in accordance with local authority procedures and reference 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 help plan activities to meet the child's needs within the setting and will support parents to understand the child's needs to enhance their development at home.

This policy was adopted by

**Osmotherley Pre-school**

On

**16<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

Date to be reviewed

**16<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

Signed on behalf of the provider



Name of signatory

**Anthea Howlett**

Role of signatory

**Chairperson**