

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. We are committed to the key person approach which benefits the child, the parents, the staff 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 all our staff, especially their key person. 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.
 - Completing relevant forms with parents, including consent/contract forms (this is overseen by Managers and Admin).
 - Introducing our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as Safeguarding.
 - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
 - Working with the 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 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 which are available on our website), displays about activities available within the setting, information days/open days 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 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 use pre-start visits and the first session at which a child attends to explain and complete, with his/her parents, the child's registration records and all other relevant paperwork.
- 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 offer a flexible settling in process that allows for a child's individual needs ie reduced session time, early start, early finish and 'stay and play' working closely with parents.
- 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 consider a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person and the child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents leave, we recommend 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.
- Once a child is settled, the key person begins to embark on the child's Learning Journey. However we do make a 'baseline' decision on areas of learning within the first 4 weeks.

The progress check at age two

- The key person carries out an integrated 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.

Pandemic Outbreak

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO RETURN TO THE SETTING

Children need to feel safe and secure in order to learn and develop and therefore it is so important that practitioners focus on children's well-being, confidence and friendships through nurturing relationships with both children and parents. Some families may have experienced bereavement during this time, so it is important that staff talk to all parents to assess their family situation and ensure you understand what the child has been told and provide reassurance to parents/carers.

- Key persons to make contact (via Tapestry video or email) with parents and children informing them of changes to daily routines, support staff. During any pandemic outbreak (such as COVID-19) it is likely that some children will not have their usual key person. Where this is the case, the principles of the key person role are followed as closely as possible.
- Staff will be prepared to deal with difficult conversations about bereavement and loss by having a joined-up approach not only with parents but across the full staff team.
- Parents to be informed that the rules around self-isolation for individuals and households still apply should a child or any member of their household be symptomatic. In both cases the child should not attend pre-school as per Government guidance.
- Parents will be informed about places for children being prioritised according to need as identified in the Setting's Risk Assessment.

Supporting children with SEND

- Arrange virtual or socially distanced meetings with parents to update current one page profile, discuss new targets, strategies or diagnosis. This may include professionals who have been working with the family. Parent's permission to contact professionals or ask for recent reports will be sought.
- Review current health care plans including updating the risk assessment ie: mouthing, hygiene practice must be discussed with Parents.

- Through discussion with individual parents it may be agreed that their child needs a personalised phased return.

ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND PERSONAL CARE

- A full Risk Assessment on the setting will be carried out and limits set on the children.
- If unable to initially welcome our full cohort of children back, we will have clear criteria for prioritising places. See Admissions Policy
- Government advice to group children with the same members of staff to minimise exposure will be followed where possible. Friendships groups will be considered and our aim will be to manage sessions so that the same children attend at the same times across the week.
- Risk assessments for individual children or families will be carried out if there is a chance that the child or someone who lives in their household is a shielded individual having received a letter from the NHS advising they stay at home.

Additional considerations to support children with SEND

- We will provide enhanced ratios and consider how any previously awarded funding can be used to support children with SEND.
- Staff to be aware of and responsive to children's anxieties and/or sensory needs.



St. Mary's Pre-School

This policy was adopted by

On

Date to be reviewed

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

The St Mary's Pre-school

(name of provider)

(date)

(date)
