



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 want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the Pre-school 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 Pre-School.

We aim to make the Pre-School 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.

Every child will be allocated a key person who will work with the parents or carers to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the Child's well-being, care and learning.

The key person acts as the key contact for the parents and other carers and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the Child's development and learning with those carers.

The key person will be responsible for 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 pre-school and at home.

If a child's progress in any area gives cause for concern, the key person must discuss this with the setting manager or SENCO and the child's parents.

The key person encourages positive relationships between Children in their key group, spending time with them as a group and individually.

To help children settle into the Pre-School parents are encouraged to make short regular visits to the playgroup in the weeks once they are enrolled.

The key person will be available on those visits to welcome the Child and their parents and spend time with them. They will enable parents to share information about their Child's interests and needs and to discuss the information parents have provided in their Child's registration records.

Back-up key person

- The role of the back-up key person is to step in when the main key person is absent or unavailable to provide a stable and consistent care relationship for the child.
- The back-up key person is identified when the child starts but is not introduced to the child until an attachment is beginning to form with the key person.

- The back-up key person gradually forms a relationship with the child until the child is happy to be cared for by this person.
- The back-up key person shares information with parents in the key person's absence and makes notes in the child's records where appropriate.
- The back-up key person ensures information is shared with the key person.

The settling in process will be flexible to meet the individual needs of the Child and the parents. Parents are welcome to stay with their Child until they are happy that their Child has settled.

This will be a gradual process as Children are confident to spend more time with their key person and to need the reassurance of their parent's presence less and less.

Parents are encouraged to initially leave their Child in the setting for short periods gradually increasing the length of the Child's sessions as they grow in confidence and build bonds with their key person.

Further Guidance

- [Being a Key Person in an Early Years Setting](#) (Alliance Publication)