



Child care practice

4.2 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, but the child's key person will be the staff member that they naturally gravitate towards as it will be who the child feels most comfortable with. 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 setting is a happy and dedicated 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 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 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.

The key person role is set out in the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must offer a key person for each child.

The procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children who are in settings.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.2 Inclusive practice 1.3 Keeping safe 1.4 Health and well-being	2.2 Parents as partners 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child 3.3 The learning environment	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

Procedures

- The key person is chosen by the child.
- The key person is responsible for settling the child into our setting.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgmental.
- The key person works with the Supervisor to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning in conjunction with the parents.
- The key person encourages 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 our setting, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.
- A separate key person is selected by the setting who is responsible for liaising with all staff involved with the child and the Supervisor to ensure the developmental records are up to date reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.

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), displays about activities available within the setting, information days and evenings and individual meetings with parents.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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, 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 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. Therefore if we are unable to settle the child during the session we will contact the parent/carer to seek their preference for the care of their child.
- We encourage parents/carers to telephone the nursery as often as they wish to check on their child's well being particularly if they are upset when they leave.
- 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 start to create their child's record of achievement.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of
 Held on
 Date to be reviewed
 Signed on behalf of the management
 committee

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)

Willows Educare

November 24, 2010

November 2011

name of setting

(date)

(date)

Kirsty Morris

Chair