

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. 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. We request all children attend a minimum of 2 sessions per week in order to build a good/prosperous relationship with their key person.

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

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Playing and Exploring Engagement	Active Learning Motivation	Creating and Thinking Critically - Thinking
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Procedures

- We allocate a key person where ever possible before the child starts, we try to allocate the same key person to future siblings for continuity.
- When a key person is initially allocated, a letter is given to the parents explaining what the key person does which includes a photo of the key person for the benefit of the child.
- The key person is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting.
- The key person is responsible for explaining our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
- 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 acts as the key contact for the parents' and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a childminder, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- A key person is 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 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 (unless stated otherwise this will be the supervisor).
- 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. This includes a vast amount of information on our website (including all our policies), welcome pack, displays about activities available within the setting and individual meetings with parents. We also have a promotional video on the website to show families around our setting.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
- Where ever possible we allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend; the key person along with the supervisor 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-entry visits which both child and parent/carers are encouraged to attend. At this time, we explain procedures and complete the child's registration records, we also explain the process of settling-in with them and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting, with parent staying at start of session if required.
- 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 time to re-settle.
- 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.
- When parents/carers drop their child/children at the door we ask them to say goodbye and explain that they will be coming back.

The progress check at age two

- The key person carries out the progress check once the child has settled into the setting and in accordance with any local procedures that are in place.
- 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 any areas of concern and will describe the actions that will be taken by us to address these 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.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Rudgwick Pre-school

Held on 30th September 2021

Date to be reviewed 30th September 2023

Signed on behalf of the management committee *William Baldwin*

Name of signatory William Baldwin

Role of signatory Chairperson

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

Play is What I Do (2010)

Further guidance

A Know How Guide: The EYFS progress check at age two