



## Key Person and Settling-In Policy

### Policy Statement

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents/carers 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.

The key person role is set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must assign 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.

### PROCEDURES

#### 1. The Role of the Key Person

1.1 A Key Person is allocated to a child based on a number of factors; if the child makes a particular bond with a member of staff, which staff member is in the setting on the child's designated days and/or the number of children each member of staff have in their Key Person groups.

Please note: a child is not given a Key Person if they are known by the family outside of the Preschool setting.

1.2 The key person is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting.

- 1.3 The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- 1.4 The key person works with the parents to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 The 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.
- 1.7 The key person encourages positive relationships between children in her / his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.
- 1.8 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.

## **2. Employment**

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide stay and play sessions for the child and his / her parents to visit the setting.
- 2.3 We allocate a key person to each child and his / her family before she / he starts to attend; 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.
- 2.4 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 / settling in form.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative will stay for most of the first session, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
- 2.7 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.

- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back and when.
- 2.10 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 if necessary, or possibly longer, until their child can stay happily without them.
- 2.11 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.
- 2.12 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.
- 2.13 Within the first four to six weeks of starting, the Key Person, along with other members of staff, begin to create their child's Learning Journal or record of achievement.

### **3. The Integrated Review of Two Year Old Development**

- 3.1 Encourage parents to attend their Ages and Stages Review (ASQ Review) with Health Visitor (HV) at 27 months.
- 3.2 Best practice: complete the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) progress check between 24 and 30 months (if the child is settled and you know them well).
- 3.3 The EYFS progress check must highlight: areas in which the child is progressing well: areas in which some additional support might be needed: and focus particularly on any areas where there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay. It must describe the activities and strategies the provider intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns. (EYFS, Statutory Framework 2.4.)
- 3.4 If concerns identified with written parental consent share the EYFS progress check with HV.(N.B. NOT via Email)
- 3.5 Put activities and strategies into place to address any issues or concerns.

3.6 If the child joins after 30 months age providers might ask parents to share the Red Book where outcome of the ASQ review will be recorded. The childcare provider must complete the EYFS progress check when child has settled up to age of 36 months.

3.7 Discuss any concerns/difficulties/get advice and support from Early Years Inclusion Officer.

For more information refer to Appendix 1a – Integrated Review of Two Year Old Development and Appendix 1B - How the process works.

This policy was formulated in consultation with staff and the Management Committee of Neston Pre-school Playgroup and was formally adopted at a committee meeting held on 14 / 11 / 2016

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee .....

Print Name                      Laura Lloyd

Role of Signatory              Chair

Date to be reviewed          September 2017