

## **Child care practice**

### **4.3 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 pre-school by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the pre-school 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 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.

The key person role is set out in the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children who are in settings.

The role of the key person is particularly important when feeding back information from each session. When a child starts with us we are aware of the need to share as much information, and to be as welcoming and approachable as possible, to every member of our key children's families.

Staff will be mentored and observed. The key person relationship underpins our work at pre-school and forms part of our good practice and therefore forms part of our performance management. Any concerns that are brought to our attention will be addressed with each staff member.

We also offer as many ways to share information as possible on an individual basis as we accept that all families have preferred communication routes, especially if other family members or friends are involved in their child's care.

## **Procedures**

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- A home visit is carried out before the child starts and is done by two senior members of staff.
- On a session visit the key person is introduced to the child and parents/carers.
- The key person, together with all other members of staff, will help with the process of settling the child into pre-school.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- 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 completing relevant forms and consent forms, together with administration staff.
- Key people, and administration staff, are responsible for explaining policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
- 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 pre-school and at home.
- We will make all families aware of our bottles, cups and dummies procedure.
- Parents complete relevant forms, including all necessary consents.

## *Settling-in*

- Before a child starts to attend the pre-school, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including relevant policies), information evenings and home visits.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide an opportunity for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting to stay for a whole session.
- We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before he/she starts to attend; whenever possible 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 offer a home visit to ensure all relevant information about the child can be shared.
- 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 gather on entry information prior to the child starting from the parent's knowledge of their child, using the EYFS statements and our own expertise in child development. Children are "on track" or require "nurture" in specific areas and we plot a very simple on entry point after two weeks, subsequently measuring progress.

- We recognise that all children are individuals and some may take longer to settle than others and may need more parental support to enable them to settle.
- When parents leave, we encourage them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- Within the first four to six weeks of starting we start to create the child's Learning Journey, which is shared with parents.
- We give parents the opportunity to phone in and check on the progress of their child/children during their session. Parents may also receive text updates from us, or a phone call or photo when time allows, to up-date them in the first few weeks.
- If a child becomes distressed and their key person or other pre-school staff, are unable to distract them after a reasonable period of time, we will contact parents and agree a plan of action.
- We will share ideas for home learning with parents, we organise nurture groups and share that information with parents and we have notice and focus areas for individual children to work on. We create goals for some children and share these with parents at their parent consultation meeting.
- Our role is to support the whole family and we signpost families to universal support where needed.
- We commence a TAF (Team Around the Family) in situations where there are safeguarding concerns or SEN concerns and the key person will be able to share their view with the lead professional in advance of the meeting.

#### *The Progress Check at Age Two*

- The key person carries out the 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 developments concerns (including working with other professionals where appropriate) as agreed with the parent(s).
- We 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	Cullompton Pre-School	name of setting
Held on	11 <sup>th</sup> May 2011	(date)
Date to be reviewed	May 2012	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	Emma Jones	
Name of signatory	Emma Jones	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	Chairperson	

This policy has an annual review period and, as such, will be reviewed and signed off at a management committee meeting of Cullompton Pre-School each year, as shown below.

Previously reviewed on:-	27 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	by	Jenny Keenor
Previously reviewed on:-	26 <sup>th</sup> February 2018	by	Owen Jones
Previously reviewed on:-	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2019	By	Alex Fox
Previously reviewed on:-	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2020	By	Alex Fox

Reviewed by Staff on:	24 <sup>th</sup> January 2022 (AJ/MW)
Reviewed by Committee on:	24 <sup>th</sup> February 2022 (J Murray)
Date of next review:	January 2023
Signed on behalf of the Management Committee:	J Madge
Name of Signatory (printed):	Jack Madge
Role of Signatory (e.g. Chairperson)	Chairperson