

# Settling<sup>1</sup> in Policy



## Statement of Intent

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 within the setting.

## Aim

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 also recognise that many parents will find this a difficult and sometimes upsetting process. We hope that we can use our experience to support you and your child in whatever way suits you.

## Methods

- 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 individual meetings with parents.
- Before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
- 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.
- 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 have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for most of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
- **Your child spending time in the Nursery room with you.** During this time, you are available to support your child, to ease the transition for your child from home to Nursery, and to help staff get to know your child. At this stage it might be best to be available to your child but not too interesting! In other words, it might be best to avoid getting deeply involved in your child's play at this time. This allows members of staff to make a judgement about engaging your child in experiences. However, you are the parent and we will support you in judging how to handle this for the best. We are aware that both you and your child may be feeling stress at some points, and your child may not appear to be on "best behaviour". Please do not worry about this – it is all part of the process. As adults, if we try to relax as much as possible and remain confident this will help the children.
- **Your child spending time in the Nursery room whilst you are in another part of the building.** It will be up to you and the key person to discuss when your child is ready for this step. This means that your child can explore the nursery room and have her or his needs met by the key person and the rest of the staff. This might be for quite a short period of time at first, and then for

longer stretches of time. It is very important that you say clearly to your child that you will be leaving the nursery room. It is tempting to nip out when your child is busy, but if your child turns round a few minutes later to find you have unexpectedly gone, she or he may become distressed. It is essential that you do not leave the building without talking with your key person first.

- **Finally, it is for you to judge – with the support of the key person – when your child is ready to be left in the Nursery with the staff.** Your child might be very sad when parting with you, but if the settling in process has gone well, she or he will be able to manage this with the support of the key person and other members of staff. If your child continues to be upset after you have gone, please be reassured that we would contact you and would not put your child through an ordeal. It is still important for you to say goodbye to your child clearly, so that your child knows what is going on and can express how he or she feels about it. Some parents find it easiest to set a limit on how long they will stay at dropping-off time, for example “I’ll read two books with you and then it will be time for me to go.” It is up to you how you manage this, but please do ask for support or advice if it will be helpful. It is not uncommon for a child to settle very well into the nursery, and then unexpectedly a few weeks later to find it difficult to come in. This might be for any one of a variety of reasons, and again we will offer our support or help if you would like it.
- **At any stage of the process** – if you would like to talk to someone, or need ideas, or support, or help, then please talk to your key person, or the Manager. It is best to arrange to do this in a private space – not in front of a child. When you leave the child for any length of time you are also free to call the nursery and check how your child is.
- 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.
- Different children need different amounts of time to settle in. We recommend that you plan for two weeks to support your child.
- On- going stability. The allocated key person is responsible for overseeing your child’s needs and development, including observing and designing suitable learning experiences and opportunities for them. Please discuss this regularly with them to support their work and in your child’s best interests. Please share areas of interest and developments. Please also read the ‘Parent partnership’ policy.

### **Transition into the next room**

A report is written by the key person when the child approaches the age necessary to move into the next room. This is shared with the parent and the next key person. Once the forms are completed and parents are happy and sign, transition sessions and times are set up. Over a series of visits the child will spend some time in the room alongside their new key person forming a relationship to ensure secure attachments are made. Initially the child’s existing key person or a member of staff from the existing room will help the child to settle by visiting with them during their visits. Parents will receive daily feedback on their progress. Once the child has settled into the room they officially move over.

- All policies are reviewed at least annually. This policy was reviewed in November 2022 by Kayleigh Wadsworth
- This policy meets the EYFS Statutory Framework 1.11 and 3.26.

### Guidance for parents: What will happen<sup>3</sup> in the settling-in period?

All children are different. We have given a rough guide below to the stages most children go through when settling-in.

Stage 1	First step will occur on the first visit. Initially we will make the first contact with you and acknowledge the child but the emphasis will be on establishing the bond with the parent. The reason for this is to demonstrate to the child that the staff are perfectly safe to talk to and connect with so that the child does not feel anxious.	Date:
Stage 2	At this stage we will make the initial contact with the child. We will be making eye contact with them and talking to them as well as playing with them. You should be present at this time and possibly even maintaining physical contact with your child.	Date:
Stage 3	We are still making the initial contact with the child but will have removed the need of physical contact. You should remain in the room and next to the child but not actually physically touching the child.	Date:
Stage 4	At this stage we will require you to break eye contact with the child. The best way to do this is to sit with the child but to be looking at a book or magazine and ignoring the child while a member of staff plays with the child. The reason for this is to encourage the child to look to the member of staff for support and guidance rather than their parent.	Date:
Stage 5	A member of staff will encourage the child to play a short distance away from their parent while they are occupied with their book. The distance away should be very small to begin with but should be built up gradually.	Date:
Stage 6	At this stage we need you to move over to the main room door and then back to where you were. This should be done several times. At this point though you should not go out of the room. The reason for this is to indicate to the child that the parent may be going to go.	Date:
Stage 7	You should actually move to the door and go out of it but come in again straight away. The reason for this is to show the child that you will be going out and coming back again. This will then build up their trust and confidence.	Date:
Stage 8	We want you to leave the room for 5 minutes. You should give the child an excuse for your leaving such as going to the toilet or making a phone call and when the child is happily playing then leave the room returning just 5 minutes later. The activity should be one that the child enjoys or is really interested in.	Date:
Stage 9	This stage is exactly the same as stage eight except this time the length of time that you leave the room for should gradually be increased as the child and parent feel comfortable.	Date:
Stage 10	By now the child should be happy with the parent leaving the room for extended periods of time so for this stage the child should be left for the full length of the session. This should only occur if both parent and child are happy with this.	Date: