



20, Key Person Policy

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.

Procedures

We allocate a key person before the child starts.

- Where a home visit is carried out before the child starts, this is done by the key person and another adult.
- The manager or keyperson is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting.
- The key person is non-judgmental towards the child in anyway.
- The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalized plan for the child's well-being, care and leaning.
- The key person acts as the key contact for the parents and has links with other careers involved with the child, such as a child minder, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those careers.
- 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.
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children within the setting by modeling this behavior.
- 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 (see Policy 4)

- 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), displays about activities available within the setting and a policy folder in the parents area and on our site.
- 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.
- We may offer a home visit by the person who will be the child's key person, to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.
- 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.
- Parents, carer or close relative are welcome to 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.
- 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.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- 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 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.

We welcome parents to speak to their key person regularly, but if you have something more pressing you would like to discuss that may need a little more time or you would like to speak to the manager. Please contact the setting via email or phone to make an appointment that way we can make sure we still maintain staffing ratios to ensure the safety of all the children.

Policies which link to this policy may include:

- Staffing
- Transitions
- Home visiting

This Policy has been approved by the members of Shipdham Pre-school committee:

Signed on behalf of the committee:.....

Name of signatory.....Date.....

Role of signatory.....

Manager/Supervisor.....Date.....