

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Key Person

Each child must be assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents

4.1 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.

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

- We offer a home visit before the child starts (when current Government guidelines allow) to enable them and their family to get to know more about the pre-school. We also 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 allocate a key person once the child has started to settle to help a better match. We try to use the same key person for siblings to help to develop a good relationship with the family.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- The key person works with the parents 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.
- The key person is responsible for developmental records and for sharing information electronically 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 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.
- Each key person has a "buddy" to step in if the key person is not around. The buddy will have a good working knowledge of the child and their learning journey.

Settling-in

- 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 welcome pack, policies are available on our website, displays about activities available within the setting, and individual meetings with parents.
- Parents and carers complete an "All About Me" form before the child starts to be discussed during the home visit, to enable the key worker to get to know them better.
- 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.
- We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will be available to stay for some of the sessions or be available to collect early during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
- Younger children often take longer to settle in, as do 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 the staff and other children; 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.
- 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 until their child can stay happily without them.
- 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.
- 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.
- Within the first four to six weeks of starting, a key person will be assigned and introduced. He/she will discuss and work with the child's parents to begin to create their child's record of achievement. A meeting will be offered to parents/carers to discuss the child's settling and progress so far.
- Families are encouraged to use Tapestry and Class Dojo to share photos or stories from their home life. This is shared during circle time or in a smaller group if the child finds it easier.

- If a child attends another setting, the permission is sought to contact the other setting to share information including tips on settling and progress.

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 the setting to address any developmental 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	Cobham Community Pre-School	<i>(name of provider)</i>
Held on	June 2022	<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of the provider	_____	
Name of signatory	Leah Harrington	_____
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Committee Chair	_____