



4.4 The role of the key person and settling-in

Policy Statement

High Littleton Pre-School believes 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 Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must offer a key person for each child, along with a back-up key person.

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

- Each child and family prior to their settling in sessions have a home visit with their key person and back up key person, we allocate a key person and back up key person prior to a child starting.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.

- The key person works with the parent 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.
- 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 in their key group, spending time with them as a group as much as possible.
- 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

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide their parents with information. These include written information such as parent pack, written confirmation of sessions including dates and times of home visit and settling in sessions and any information days.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and their parents to visit the setting.
- We use the first session at which a child attends to explain and complete with their parents the child's registration records.
- At the home visit, we explain the process of settling-in with their 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 the first session settling in session (1 hour).
- 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 they arrive, 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 expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay for the first settling in session, or possibly longer, 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. This is especially the case with very young children.
- After six weeks of starting the key person meet with the parents to discuss how they have settled in, completing their first review.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	High Littleton Pre-School
Held on	<u>September 2018</u> (date)
Date to be reviewed	<u>September 2019</u> (date)
Chairpersons signature	<u>Lara Turner-Rogers</u>
Name of signatory	<u>Karen Grinham</u>
Role of signatory	<u>Pre-School Leader</u>