



Key teacher

4.1 The role of the key teacher and settling-in

Policy statement

We believe that children settle best when they have a key teacher to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key teacher 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 teacher role is set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must assign a key teacher for each child.

The procedures set out a model for developing a key teacher approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children who are in settings.

Procedures

We allocate a key teacher before the child starts.

The key teacher is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting. The key teacher offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.

The key teacher works with the parents to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.

The key teacher acts as the key contact for the parents and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a nanny, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.

The key teacher 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 teacher encourages positive relationships between children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.

If necessary we provide a back-up key teacher so the child and the parents have a key contact in the absence of the child's key teacher.

We promote the role of the key teacher 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 his/her parents with information. These include e.g. All about me form to be completed by parents and displays about activities available within the setting.

We allocate a key teacher to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend; the key teacher 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 some time in the first sessions during the first week and then 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 after approximately 2 weeks when they have formed a relationship with their key teacher; for example, the child looks for the key teacher 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 expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay on nursery premises for at least the first week until their child can stay happily without them.

Our standard settling in process takes 2 weeks.

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.

The progress check at age two

The key teacher 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 and ensure that, a full picture of each child's development have been captured.

Within the progress check, the key teacher 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).



The key teacher 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 will be reviewed annually

This policy was adopted by Soraia Almeida on March 2024

Next review on March 2025