4.1 Role of the Key Person and Settling-In

DUXFORD PRESCHOOL

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. We are committed to the key person approach which benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting. It encourages secure relationships which support children to thrive, give parents confidence and make the setting a happy 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 our staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with our setting. We aim to make our 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 child must have a key person. These procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children.

Procedures

- We allocate a key person before the child starts, taking into account the child's pattern of attendance, in order to best match their needs and to maximise contact between the child and their key person across the week. When the child starts at preschool we assess if their bond has naturally developed better with another staff member and then we discuss the change with parents.
- The key person is responsible for:
    - Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into our setting.
    - Explaining our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
    - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
    - Working with the parents to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
    - Acting as the key contact for the parents.
    - 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.
    - Having links with other carers involved with the child and co-ordinating the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
    - Encouraging positive relationships between children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.
- 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 adults and children.
- We continually assess the key person and child relationship and may decide to change the assigned key person if the child has formed a particular bond with another member of staff, or if we feel that it would benefit to child to be assigned to a different person.

Settling In

- Before a child starts to attend our setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), our website and Facebook page, the Duxford Preschool setting book (which includes photos of staff and the setting), displays about activities available within the setting, information days and evenings and individual meetings with parents.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
- We offer all families a home visit which is carried out before the child starts. As far as possible, this is done by the child's key person.
- 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.
- 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 will review the settling-in process individually for each child, depending on their needs.
- 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 aim to have the child's learning journal on Tapestry before they start in the setting. We then aim to have a record of the child's first day in the setting on Tapestry.
- The key person is responsible for completing all statutory assessments on each of their key children.

Children's Assessments

- 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.
    - The key person will try to gather all information available from other parties such as Social Worker or Health Visitor for example, to add to the progress check.
    - 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, particularly in the Prime areas of development.

    - The progress check will describe the actions that will be taken by us 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.
- The key person is responsible for writing Summative Assessments on their key children, in line with setting policy and procedures.
- The key person is responsible for ensuring the Tapestry Journal is up to date and complete before the child leaves the setting. The Business Manager is responsible for ensuring the records are transferred to the child's next setting and deleted, in line with policy.

Version	Changes Made	Author	Date	Review Date
1.0	Baseline version	P Eccleston	26th April 2018	April 2019
1.1	Minor formatting changes and adjustments in line with the Early Years Alliance model policy	N Hanlon	17th April 2019	October 2019
1.2	Minor adjustment to reflect the review of the key person/child relationship and to make changes if appropriate	N Hanlon	31st October 2019	October 2020
1.2	Reviewed – no changes	N Hanlon	31st October 2020	October 2022
1.2	Minor changes to spelling	N Hanlon	25th October 2022	October 2024
	Minor changes to process regarding base line on home visit.	K Draper	18th September 2024	September 2025