

SETTLING IN PROCEDURE

We aim for children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the Nursery School and to feel secure and comfortable with all staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their child's well-being and their role as active partners, with the child being able to benefit from what the Nursery has to offer.

We aim to support parents and other carers to help their children settle quickly and easily by giving consideration to the individual needs and circumstances of each child and their families.

The Nursery staff will work in partnership with parents to settle their child into the Nursery School environment by:

- Arranging to visit the child and parents at home prior to the admission date, to discuss settling in and provide parents with relevant information regarding the policies and procedures of the Nursery School
- Encouraging parents to visit the Nursery School with their child during the weeks prior to admission
- Planning settling in visits and introductory sessions (lasting approximately 1-2 hours). These will be provided free of charge over a two-week period dependent on individual needs, age and stage of development
- Welcoming parents to stay with their child during the first few visits until the child feels settled and the parents feel comfortable about leaving their child. Settling in visits and introductory sessions are key to a smooth transition and to ensure good communication and information sharing between staff and parents
- Encouraging parents, where appropriate, to separate themselves from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences
- Allocating a key person to each child and his/her family, before he/she starts to attend. The key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents during the settling in period, and throughout his/her time at the Nursery School to ensure the family has a familiar contact person to assist with the settling in process. We have established a 'Buddy' system whereby each child has a designated member of staff to be the child's key person in the absence of their actual key person. This is to ensure staff work together in order to maintain consistency for the children regardless of the presence of a child's key person.
- Respecting the circumstances of all families, including those who are unable to stay for long periods of time in the Nursery, and reassure them of their child's progress towards settling in
- A child will not be taken on an outing from the Nursery until he/she is completely settled

General Advice for Parents

Helping Your Child

It is important during visits for settling in that you are ready to take a step back and allow the staff to build a relationship with your child. Constantly playing alongside your child may mislead them into believing that you will always be there to play in this new space. Instead, your child needs to learn that this new place is one where she enjoys playing with other children and being with our staff. While it is important that you should stay during the first few visits, aim bit by bit to distance yourself from your child by, for example, wandering to the edge of the room and picking up a book or talking to another parent.

Taking the Cue

Children are very sensitive to adults' reactions. If children notice that we smile and are relaxed in the company of the staff they will take this as a cue that it is fine to stay. They will also notice and react if we appear anxious, and may respond by becoming more tearful and clingy. While most parents are naturally a little anxious about how their children will get on, try hard to remain calm and positive, as this too will rub off on your child.

Sneaking Off!

This might seem like a good idea, especially if your child is happily playing, but in the long term it can cause quite a few problems. When children stop playing and notice that their parent is no longer there they can react by becoming increasingly clingy. It also means that in any future situations, instead of settling down to play, children keep a watchful eye on their parents. Aim instead to build a 'goodbye' routine so your child knows that you are going, but is confident that you will always come back.

Reviewed on: February 2020

Signed on behalf of the Nursery School:


Next review date: February 2021