

## 4.2 Settling In

EYFS: The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements  
1.16, 3.27, 3.73, 3.74

### Policy Statement

At Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nursery, our aim is to work in partnership with parents and/or carers to help them become familiar with the setting and offer a settled relationship for the child. We know children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, we build positive relationships with parents to ensure we can meet children's individual needs and help them settle quickly in to nursery life.

All our staff know about the importance of building strong attachments with children. They are trained to recognise the different stages of attachment and use this knowledge to support children and families settling into the nursery.

### Procedures

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

#### Key Person

- Allocating a key person to each child and their family, before they start to attend. The key person welcomes and looks after the child and their parents during the settling in period, and throughout their time at the nursery to ensure the family has a familiar contact person to assist with the settling in process.
- During the settling in process, the key person will try to ensure that they are available for the child at the key-points of the day e.g. morning and afternoon handovers with parents, mealtimes, nappy changes, putting to sleep, first outing etc.
- 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.
- Please see policy **4.1 The Role of the Key Person**

#### Prior to Start Date

We provide an intense two week settling in process for all children regardless of whether they attend part time or full time for the child and their parents to get used to spending time apart. These two weeks are key to a smooth transition and ensure good communication and information sharing between staff and parents. These two weeks consist of:

- Home Visit
  - Two weeks prior to the child's start date, the allocated key person and one of the Management Team will attend the family home/carry out online video meeting.
  - During this home visit, the Manager will sit with the parents to complete the relevant office administration and permissions paperwork, whilst the key person spends time getting to know the child.
  - The key person will then complete the 'Getting to Know your Child' form with the parents to gather as much information as possible about their likes, dislikes, interests, and favourite things as well as any dietary/health requirements.
  
- Parent Visits
 

After the home visit, we welcome the parents into the nursery to visit and stay with their child where possible for a couple of short sessions so they can meet the team, see the room in action and ask any questions they may still have, following on from the home visit.
  
- Introductory Sessions
  - These sessions are when the parent leaves their child at the nursery with the key-person and the rest of the team. These are very brief at first, with the first couple of sessions just being for 1 hour, then gradually building up to longer sessions over the week prior to the start date.
  - 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. Therefore, whilst these sessions are planned in advance, tailored in a way that we have found to be successful, we will of course review the times as the two weeks go by and can amend as necessary. This will be based on communication between the parents and the key person.
  - All children are different, so staff are to reassure parents of this if their child is taking a bit longer.

### **Start Date**

We understand that each family's circumstances are different and for some, they might need to start full long days on their first day, whilst others might have more flexibility and opt to give their child slightly shorter days to begin with. We accommodate and support the child and family in however they choose to proceed with their start date.

If parents do choose to have shorter days to begin with, we recommend bring the child in quite early and at the same time each day and collect early for consistency as the child is getting used to our routine.

If a part time child is unsettled, we can offer some additional settling in sessions on their non-attending days. There may be a cost for this, dependant on how many are needed.

### **General**

Parents are provided with a 'Welcome Book' prior to starting so that they can see the staff and the routine and share this with their child, dependant on the stage of the child.

We ask that parents provide us with some family photos to display and share with the child to support the settling in.  
We provide regular updates and photos of the child settling on the child's My Montessori Child online journal.

Reviewed: April 2022	Next review date: April 2023
Signed on behalf of the nursery: <i>L. Thorpe Zurewska</i>	