



Child Care Practice EYFS

The role of the key person and settling-in

Ratifying Committee	Link Governor and Curriculum & Standards Committee
Date	July 2024
Review	Annually

Child Care Practice - EYFS

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Policy Statement

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents/carers well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents/carers, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents/carers 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/carers to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners within 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. Due to the complex needs of our children; the indepth knowledge required to assess and plan for the needs of each individual child and the sensitivity required to support parents/carers, the class teacher has been designated as the key person for each child.

We have clear transition guidelines to support children throughout their time in the Bridge Early Years Foundation Stage Department.

Procedures

- Prior to the child starting at The Bridge the key person (class teacher) and senior managers contact the pre-school settings.
- When a child starts or moves to a Bridge School Reception class a 'Starting School Meeting' is arranged in school/on teams/phone, to enable parent/carers to engage with their child's class teacher (key person).
- EYFS SLT arrange a home visit to meet the children and their parents/carers.

- A key person is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- The key person works with the parent/carer 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/carers and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a childminder/other setting, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those parents/carers.
- A key person is responsible for developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents/carers 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 her/his class, spending time with them as a group each day.
- We provide a back-up key person (STA) so the child and the parents/carers have a key contact in the absence of the child's key person.
- We promote the role of a 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 to specialist nursery/school – refer to EYFS transition guidelines.

- Before a child starts at the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents/carers with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and parent/ individual meetings/calls with parents/carers / home visits).
- During the half-term before a child starts, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents/carers to visit the setting.
- We use pre-start visits and the first session at which a child attends to explain and complete with his/her parents/carers the child's registration records.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents/carers and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- While the teacher will be the family and professionals' key person, we allow the child to choose their preferred adult (key person) with whom to bond within the learning environment, when they first start attending the setting. Over time we sensitively encourage the child to work with all adults in the class.
- Due to the special educational needs of our children, it is not possible to predict when a child will be settled into specialist nursery/school. Each child is sensitively supported to settle in for as long as is required.
- We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others but that some children who appear to settle rapidly may not be ready to be left.

- 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 contact parents/carers regularly by telephone and/or through the home/school diary to keep them informed of how their child is settling.
- Parents are encouraged to use the diary or call to discuss any concerns.
- Further meetings are held on a regular basis to discuss the child's progress:
 - initial communication and outcomes meeting (or Annual Review in first term).
 - Annual Review meeting in line with EHCP review process.
 - Progress review of short term outcomes linked to long term outcomes in EHCP.

This policy is reviewed annually by the Head of EYFS in consultation with EYFS staff.