



This policy relates to all the EYFS key themes and commitments and the general welfare requirements

8. Partnership

8.1 The role of the key person and settling-in

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. Research shows that a key person 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 person role is set out in the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must offer a key person for each child.

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

Procedures

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- The key person is responsible 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 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, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those 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 key group.
- We ensure that all staff are kept up to date with issues that may affect certain key children so that if a key person is absent any other member of staff can take over the care of that child and can speak to parents/carers confidently about current issues.

- 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 staff and children.

Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents/carers with information. These include written information such as our prospectus and policies and individual meetings with parents.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we aim to provide an opportunity for the child and his/her parents/carers to visit the setting if possible. This visit provides us with the opportunity to discuss the child's registration information before they start with us.
- We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend; the key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents/carers at the child's first session and during the settling-in process
- There will be occasions where visits to the setting are not possible and on these occasions we will organise an open morning in order for parents/carers and children to meet each other and all the staff within safety guidelines.
- 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.
- Although we appreciate that dummies may be used at home, we request that dummies are not brought into the setting. Research has shown that dummies can lead to speech delays and can affect the normal development of children's teeth. We ask that other comforters are brought into the setting instead such as a cuddly toy which can be safely stored in the child's bag. If parents/carers need help and support with reducing the use of dummies we will offer this.
- We understand that the parent, carer or close relative, may want to stay during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child. We usually aim for this to be limited to 30 minutes, gradually reducing this time over the first few sessions. Visitors to the setting will be asked to comply with any current safety procedures such as face coverings and hand washing.
- 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/carer 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 do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker and children who are upset will always be closely looked after either by their key person or another member of staff who the child feels comfortable with alongside their parent/carer in order to build secure relationships.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it too distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
- We do understand that some children may appear upset when they arrive for several months after starting the setting but in cases where practitioners have seen evidence of the child being settled once the parent/carer has left the premises, the key person will welcome the child each morning where possible, help the child to say goodbye to their parent/carer and ensure that they feel settled as quickly as possible. This will always be discussed with the parent/carer to ensure they feel happy with this arrangement.
- We always call or text parents/carers to confirm once their child has settled comfortably to prevent them feeling anxious.
- Within the first term of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents/carers to start to create their child's record of achievement.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Rascals Pre-school Playgroup	name of setting
Held on	20 th January 2023	(date)
Date to be reviewed	January 2024 or before	(date)
Signed on behalf of Rascals	Tracey Hubbard	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	Manager	