



#### 4. 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, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person's approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children can thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with the staff. We also want parents to have confidence in 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's role is set out in the safe guarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must assign a key person for each child.

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

##### Procedures

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- The key person is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into the setting. The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is none judgemental.
- The key person works with the parents 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 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.
- The key person is responsible for 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.
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.

- We provide a back up key person so the child and the parents have a key contact in the absence of the child's key person.
- 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 the parents with information these include written information (including our prospectus and policies), displays about activities available in the setting and individual meetings with parents.
- During the half term before the child is enrolled we provide opportunities for the child and their parents to visit the setting.
- We allocate a key person to each child and their family before the child starts to attend. The key person welcomes and looks after the child and their parents at the child's first session and during the settling in process.
- We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for most of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person and seems to be pleased 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 good bye 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 expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay for at least the first week until their child can stay happily without them.
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them settle quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the setting.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left.
- Within the first 4-6 weeks to starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to begin to create their child's record of achievement.

### The Progress Check at Age 2

- The key person carries out the progress check at age 2 in accordance with any local procedures that are in place.
- The progress check aims to review the child's development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their child's development.
- With the progress check, the key person will note areas where the child is progressing well and identify areas where progress is less than expected.
- The progress check will describe the actions that will be taken by the setting to address any development concerns as agreed with the parents.
- 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.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Egerton Preschool (name of provider)  
Held on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)  
Date to be reviewed \_\_\_\_\_ (date)  
Signed on behalf of the provider \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of signatory \_\_\_\_\_  
Role of signatory (e.g. Chairman) \_\_\_\_\_