



EYFS ROLE OF THE KEY PERSON AND SETTLING IN POLICY

Date of Policy	September 2023
Member of staff responsible	Sarah Reynolds
Role	Head of Early Years
Last Review	Significant changes

This policy applies to Sandcastles Nursery including 'early,' 'late' and 'wrap around care' and all staff members, volunteers and visitors in Sandcastles Nursery.

(Please note that the term 'parents' also relates to carers and those with legal guardianship of children)

At Sandcastles Nursery 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 within 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 Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)

Procedures:

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- 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.
- A 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 within our setting and at home.
- The key person encourages positive relationships between the child and others within the setting.
- We provide a back-up key person so that 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 Sandcastles Nursery, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies,) displays about activities available within the setting, information days and evenings and individual meetings with parents.
- During the half-term before the child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
- We allocate 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 at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child settle in to the setting.
- We recognise that younger children may 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 to be on hand to re-settle them in.
- 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 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.
- A settling in review is shared with parents during the first half term after starting at the setting.