



## **Key person policy**

*'Each child must be assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents.'* (EYFS 2021)

### **Policy statement**

We know 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 Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must assign a key person for each child.

The procedures below 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 once the child starts. We feel it is important for the children to have a key person who they feel comfortable with and have a strong attachment to.
- All staff have a responsibility to settle children into the setting with the key person ensuring the settling in process is smooth and happy for the child.

- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and are non-judgemental.
- We make parents aware that any staff member is available to talk to.
- 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.
- If there is a change to the child's key person then parents will be told as soon as possible. We will make the transition of staff as easy as possible for all involved.

## **The role of the key person**

- The key person will help to ensure their key children feel safe, secure and confident, if they are to develop to their full potential. Their parents/carers need a trusted person who they can talk to about their child's individual needs.
- When a child is settled the assigned key person will perform a baseline assessment of that child, which will be shared with parents and carers.
- The key person is responsible for a group of children, but the Manager and deputy are also responsible for all the children in their care.
- 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 ensuring the developmental records are up to date and all information is shared with the parents/ carers.
- Where a child is attending other childcare settings at the same time as coming to Little Learners, the key person will share information with those settings.
- To complete a '2 Year Old Check' before the child turns 3.
- To ensure that parents/carers are kept informed of the child's day to day experiences.
- To change and check key children's nappies as required and to assist with potty training and other toileting or intimate care needs
- The key person will assist the parent/carer and child with the settling process, taking time to listen to questions, and provide answers.
- When the child is due to leave nursery, the key person must ensure that their learning journey profile is fully up to date and that it is handed to the child's parent.

## **Settling-in**

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information.
- Parents and their children are able to visit our setting prior to their child being enrolled to have a look around and to meet the staff.

- We, where possible, book in-home visits for staff to see the child in their own environment, discuss allergies and medical history as well as finding out more about the child.
- We allow the child time on their first settle session to spend time with staff allowing for us to select the right key person for them. The manager and deputy will be there to greet the child and begin the settling in process.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with their parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- We recognise that all children settle differently so we will work at the pace of the child and family to ensure transition into the setting is as easy as possible.
- 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 understand that it is hard to leave your child when they are feeling sad. Please be assured that 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.

The preschool is fully committed to continually evaluating its key person practice, managing changes and transitions as sensitively as possible and ensuring each child feels special and has the opportunity to develop an attachment.

The preschool managers are ultimately responsible for managing and maintaining the key person policy and procedures.

This policy was reviewed in October 2024.

This policy is to be reviewed annually unless legislation requires before.