

2. Settling-In and Starting Point Policy & Procedure



Statement of intent

We believe that children learn best when they feel safe, secure and comfortable in their surroundings and when the adults supporting them have a good knowledge of the 'Unique Child'. We want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with us.

Aim

We aim to make our pre-school a welcoming place where children settle easily and quickly become ready to learn because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

Methods

- Before a child starts to attend pre-school, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents/carers with information about pre-school. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), displays about activities available within pre-school, information days and individual meetings with parents.
- We allocate a key person to every child and their family. The key person welcomes and looks after the child and parents / carers during the settling-in process.
- Parents are required to complete a child's personal details form on entry.
- Parents are asked to complete a 'My Unique Child' form. The information on this is used to inform the key person and help them to get to know the child.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in to the parents / carers and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into pre-school.
- We make parents, carers or close relatives, aware that they are more than welcome to stay during the first sessions that the child attends.
- Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. We will encourage parents where appropriate to separate from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to a longer absence.
- 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 will also be familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents/carers leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back in a short while.
- Through the settling-in period we work with the child's parent/carers and the child, to create a sound understanding of the child and to give us a starting point for the child's learning and development.