



Settling-in Policy

Policy Statement

We recognise that starting nursery or moving to a new room in the nursery can be an anxious time for both children and their parents. Our Settling-In Policy aims to ensure that we provide appropriate support for the children in our care during these times.

Settling-in sessions – for children

We recognise that parents are the most important people in their child's life which is why parents are encouraged to stay with their child in the room for the first settling-in session. This allows children to explore the environment around them, meet new friends and the room staff whilst still feeling secure and supported by a familiar adult.

When the parent leaves the baby/ child initially they are likely to need a lot of reassurance from their key person. Young children have no concept of time and may not be able to comprehend the concept that 'a parent/carer is coming back soon'. Children may cry initially when they are left and will need a sensitive, caring key person attending to their needs, giving them a cuddle or holding a familiar comforter and helping them to get to know their new environment, other adults and children.

Depending on the age of the child explaining what will happen next will help the child to understand the usual routines of the nursery.

Children may not be used to having access to all the resources that are available in nursery and will need help to give them the confidence to access materials, resources and equipment. They need the key person to play with them, show them around the room and introduce them to children and adults.

Settling-in sessions – for parents

We aim to develop strong relationships with parents and encourage them to share with us anything which may impact on their child's wellbeing or sense of security.

When settling young children, we encourage parents to engage with their child as they would at home within the nursery environment. This could be playing, reading stories, changing their nappy, giving them a feed or putting them down for a sleep.

Settling-in sessions – for the Key Person

The Key Person will get to know about the child's usual routine for example how a baby likes to be held for his/her bottle, what comforters she/he likes when going to sleep so that they can follow it as closely as possible in order to provide continuity of care.

The Key Person needs to be available during settling-in sessions so it is important to make sure that the Key Person is not on holiday. Lunch breaks should be planned to avoid settling-in periods.

In the event that the Key Person is unable to attend work then the Co-Key Person should settle the child. This should be communicated to the parent on arrival.



Where possible only one child should be settling-into each room at any one time. Staff should be prepared for the session – make sure they know the child’s and the parent’s names and what time they are expected – if the child is joining an older group, tell the other children about the expected visitors.

Procedure

Once a child has registered for a place at Little Elms, we will issue all families via email with a **‘Welcome Pack’ 3 months prior to the child’s start date** (in the event the child is due to start before 3 months, they are issued this at the time of registering).

The welcome pack is designed to give families all of the information they need about the settling in process, as well as a reminder of the company terms and conditions.

Settling new starters into nursery

Parents and children will usually have visited the nursery for a personal tour before booking a place. Once a place has been booked for the child to start at the nursery settling-in visits are arranged. The parent will be contacted approximately 8 weeks before their child is due to start nursery to arrange the first visit ‘to the Nursery. The playroom and management team must be involved in the booking process of any settling in sessions to ensure appropriate staffing arrangements can be planned for in advance.

Settling-in sessions

The first visit

The first settling-in visit is an opportunity to get to know the parents and child and for them to get to know the staff; especially their Key Person, and the room in which they will be based.

The Manager, Deputy or Key Person take the opportunity to confirm the start date and booking pattern, make sure that the parent is aware of the terms and conditions and that they have set up a direct debit.

The **Key Person** will introduce themselves and spend time with the parent and child in the room. They will complete the Settling-in pack alongside and any other relevant documentation to the individual child/family (for example, there may be need to involve the nursery management team if there is a dietary/medical need).

Staff will ensure that the organisation and planning of settling-in is effective and meets the needs of both the individual child and parent. It will always be planned for the Key Person to be present at all settling-in sessions to ensure a continuity of care and consistency in communication during this time. We always aim to be as flexible as possible with Settling-in sessions to meet the child and his /her parents’ individual needs.

Associated Documents:

- ***Welcome Pack***
- ***Settling In Pack***