



# **The role of the key person and settling in policy**

**This policy was adopted by the Kingswood Pre-School Group on 07/02/2019**

**Policy review date: 17/03/2021**

**Signed:----- Date:-----**

**(Hayley Roberts – Chairperson of Kingswood Pre-School Group)**

## **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Key Person**

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.

### **Policy statement**

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 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 set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children who are in settings.

### **EYFS key commitments**

Areas of learning and development – 1.10

Key person – 3.27

### **Procedures**

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- The manager is responsible for sorting out the registration paperwork for the child and have meeting with the parent during the child's first stay and play session. The Key person is responsible for the induction of the child and for settling the child into our setting.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-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 groups when spending time with them as a group.
- 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 advise the parents to have a tour of the setting, ask any important questions, raise any concerns or discuss any sensitive issues with the Manager. Parents will also be able to view and purchase uniform which is desirable for all children to wear.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting through stay and play sessions. Each child must do a minimum of two. At this time the registration forms must be returned with Date of Birth proof and the red book to verify the child's vaccinations are up to date.
- We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend; the key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents at the child's first stay & play session and during the settling-in process.
- We use the first stay & play session the parent & child attends for discussions that may arise from completing the child's registration records.
- Parents are required to read and sign a 'parent's partnership agreement' along with the child's key person, prior to the child starting. An agreed settling in plan, if required, will be devised at this stage and amended as necessary.
- 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 to settle into the setting.
- We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay during the first stay & play session (approximately 1 hour). If both parent and child are happy during the second stay and play session the parent/carer may leave the child for the 1 hour session. If the child is not comfortable with being left the parent must stay. In this circumstance the child will begin at Kingswood preschool gradually increasing the child's sessions at first with the parent in attendance then for short periods alone when the child is able to cope.

- Younger children will 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.
- 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 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 as long as necessary, until their child can stay happily without them.
- 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.
- 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. This is especially the case with very young children.
- Within the first four to six weeks of 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 two**

- The key person carries out the progress check at age two in accordance with any local procedures that are in place and referring to the guidance A Know How Guide: The EYFS progress check at age two.
- The progress check aims to review the child's development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their child's development.
- Within 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 developmental concerns (including working with other professionals where appropriate) as agreed with the parent(s).
- 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.

### **Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications**

- Play is What I Do (2010)
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012) With supporting documentation