

CHIDDINGSTONE NURSERY SCHOOL

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Transition, Settling In, Key Person and Home Visit Policy and Procedure

Written by	Jill McCoy
Ratified on behalf of Management Committee	September 2019
Date for Review	September 2020
Signed – Chair of Management Committee	
Signed – Nursery Leader	

This policy will be reviewed and ratified at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures.

This policy has been impact assessed by Jill McCoy in order to ensure that it does not have an adverse effect on race, gender or disability equality.

Policy Statement

Aim

We aim to make the nursery 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. We believe that smooth transitions support the personal, social and emotional development, learning and future success of every child.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the nursery 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 nursery.

We aim to make the transitions from home to nursery, nursery to nursery and nursery to school a smooth experience with children and parents being actively involved in the process with professional regard for the information exchanged to make the process of transition and settling in a key part in emotional development being dependent upon positive experiences and secure attachments.

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, the staff are committed and the nursery is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

The key person role is set out in the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must offer 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 our nursery.

Procedure

Transition and Settling In

Following settling into the nursery we want any transitions the children experience to be a smooth and successful experience. We value the parent is the first educator of their child.

- Parent/carers receive a welcome pack with relevant information about the nursery and explains the settling in process and what to expect during the first few weeks.
- Children are given a pictorial welcome pack to discuss with parents prior to arrival.
- A settling in leaflet is provided with various strategies to support transition into the nursery
- During the term before a child starts, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents/carers to visit the nursery and attend an induction session. Parents complete, with staff, an information sheet detailing the child's likes, dislikes, favourite toys and comforter (if the child has one) so these can be provided during their first sessions in the nursery. Wherever possible and the children's views are sought.

- We require a registration form to be completed prior to attending the Nursery. We are able to offer assistance in completing this form.
- We also collect information on other professionals who are involved with the child and family. We seek permission to work with other professionals to ensure the nursery is ready to meet the child's physical, emotional, social and learning needs.
- A settling in meeting is held between the parent/carer and key person during the first term to ensure the child is settling into the nursery environment and if required additions could be made. However, the key person is available to discuss settling in with the parent/carer at any time.
- When a child starts at the nursery, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to support the child in their transfer to the nursery.
- Photos are taken of the new children in advance of their start and are on display when they arrive to ensure that they feel welcomed, valued and included within the nursery.
- We invite parents to supply photographs of their child and family to help the child to keep home in mind and show families we value them in the nursery.
- A buddy system is in place in the nursery to support the transition and settling in of new children.
- The children start at the later time of 10am for the first week to ensure that staff can settle the children already attending the Nursery into an activity before new children arrive in order to give the new children the attention they require. Parents and carers are welcome to stay in order to support their child.
- We require children to attend two sessions to give continuity to the settling in process.
- Visual prompts and Makaton are used to support children's understanding of change.
- For children with English as an additional language a welcome pictorial booklet is made available.
- Practitioners note any stressful times for individual children and ensure that supporting strategies are in place.
- "My First Week" photographic record is shared with parent/carer.
- We encourage the parent, carer or close relative, to stay for some of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and 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 or another member of staff; for example the child looks for them 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. If someone else is collecting the child we require the name of the person collecting and a contact telephone number to be written in the Collections Book and ensure that the child is informed.
- 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, so we encourage the parent to be available to stay for a period of each session, at least the first week, or possibly longer, 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 nursery.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the Nursery without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is the case with the very young children.
- We allocate all children a coat peg and tray. This helps children feel more secure. Comforting or favourite toys are encouraged to be brought in and stored in their tray to keep their possessions safe. The parent/carers can purchase from the nursery a book bag for carrying their toys, their work and letters to and from the nursery.
- We carry out a 2yr old summary on our children 2-3 years these checks will be shared with parents and with parental permission they will be asked to share the information with their health visitor to give an all-round picture of the child.
- Within the first four to six weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to create their child's record of achievement.
- Newsletters and plans for the term explain events and activities in the coming term to ensure parents and carers are kept informed.
- A link book is provided to those children that attend more than one setting between both key people to share interests and planning, contact details are provided if more confidential discussions are required.
- The nursery uses the Tapestry forum to record each child's online observation and planning. Parent permission is required prior to an individual code being allocated and parents having access. Observations can be transferred with parental permission between settings and will be transferred onto a CD when the child leaves.

The nursery gives parents/carers their child's portfolio when they leave the nursery which includes all their child's 'All About Me' records, which can be shared with the receiving nursery or school if the parent wishes. A formal record will be forwarded to the receiving nursery or school by the nursery in accordance with the requirements of the local authority

- Prior to sending this, parents will be asked for their consent for sharing this information and will have the opportunity to look at the report and discuss it with their child's key person.
- We actively pursue links with other nurseries, inviting practitioners to visit the children at the nursery leading up to the period of transition.
- A leaflet with advice on supporting transition into primary school is available in the entrance hall for all parent/carers.

- Links are established with the local primary school and the nursery visits regularly which provides the children with the experience of a larger school environment.
- The nursery welcomes visits from the local school and undertakes nursery visits which introduce children to changes in their normal routine.
- Nursery practitioners support parents and children following induction sessions to primary schools, offering strategies and advice to support transitions.

Key Person Role

The Early Years Foundation Stage (2014-2017) requires that each child is allocated a Key Person.

- We allocate a key person before the child starts to aid transition into nursery.
- If a home visit is required, it may be carried out before the child starts or to breach contact between home and nursery **in the settling in process**.
- The key person has overall responsibility for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our nursery to help the child become familiar with the nursery, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the nursery
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning to meet their individual needs.
- If a child displays a stronger attachment to another member of staff then we will transfer him/her to a new key person.
- 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 nursery will enable a regular two- way flow of information with parent/carers and between providers.
- The child's key person is available on request to visit with the child the new school to support the transition process.
- 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 nursery and at home.
- In the absence of the key person staff buddy or the nursery leader or deputy provide this care.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our nursery, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children, however all staff are very approachable.

Home Visits

The Nursery aims to ensure good working practice by providing guidelines to reduce the risks to staff when undertaking home visits.

The purpose of a home visit is to supplement the induction and settling -in procedures and therefore optional. It is to help the child, family and key person get to know more about each

other in the home environment where the child and family usually feel more relaxed. It may offer the opportunity to meet other family members who may usually work with the people and pets who are important to the child.

Methods

- The designated key person and the nursery leader will normally undertake the visit, or key person buddy if child requires support from different members attending different sessions although the Nursery does not insist that individual staff have to perform home visits in the event that they feel uncomfortable doing so.
- The home visit is optional, not all families may want to take up the offer so the home visit is offered in addition to our normal settling in procedure.
- Prior arrangements are made between the family and key person to convene a mutually convenient date and requirements for environment ensuring safety of visit in terms of pets and that there will be no other visitors at that time.
- Details of the visit are documented in the office diary and/or in the child's portfolio.
- The key person ensures background information and travelling arrangements are checked prior to visit
- A working mobile with pre-programmed emergency contact numbers must be taken on the visit.
- Visits are only carried out in daylight hours.
- A colleague is informed of the visit and a confirmation telephone call is made to the designated person before entry to the property if individual visit.
- A period of one hour will be designated for the visit, after which time, if the visit appears to be taking longer the key person will check back by telephone to the designated colleague to inform them of the overrun.
- Once the visit is concluded the key person will make a final call to the designated person to confirm completion of the visit.
- There will be an agreement of an emergency password in the event of the key person feeling unsafe.
- If the key person is ever in doubt of own safety then the visit is to be abandoned immediately.
- Staff identity is obvious for the visit.
- During the visit a non-judgemental approach is to be adopted, showing sensitivity and respect for family's culture and circumstances. Professional boundaries are maintained at all times. Under no circumstances should the key person be left alone with the child in the house.
- Any incidences of abuse towards the key person should be recorded and discussed with the line manager. A debrief should take place on the event of a difficult home visit and written up and signed and dated.

The Progress check at Two

The key person carries out the progress check at 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 nursery 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.

Transfer of development records for a child moving to another setting or school.

Using the Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation stage guidance and our assessment of children's development and learning. The key person will prepare a summary of achievement in the seven areas of learning and development.

The record refers to:-

- Any additional language spoken by the child and his or her progress in both languages if possible.
- Any additional needs that have been identified or address at the nursery.
- Any special needs or disability, whether there is a statement of Special Educational Needs, and the name of the professional

The record contains a summary by the key person and a summary of the parents view of the child.

The document may be accompanied by other evidence, such as assessment summary format or transition record, which will follow as applicable.

If there have been any welfare or protection concerns, a star is placed on the front of the assessment record.

Transfer of confidential information.

The receiving school or nursery will need to have a record of any safeguarding or child protection concerns that were raised in the nursery and what was done about them.

A summary of the concerns will be made to send to the receiving nursery or school, along with the date of the last professional meeting or case conference. Some Local safeguarding Children Boards will stipulate the forms to be used and provide these.

Where any welfare concerns have been raised, the name and contact details of the lead professional will be passed on to the receiving nursery or school.

Where there has been an investigation regarding a child protection concerns, the name and contact details of the child's social worker will be passed on to the receiving nursery or school- regardless of the outcome of the investigation.

This information is posted or taken to the nursery or school, addressed to the nursery or schools designated person of child protection and marked 'confidential'.

Meeting the Needs of Each Unique Child

Practitioners need to know their children, families and communities well, by taking steps to build positive relationships. This is paramount for our most vulnerable children, who may be at risk of discrimination and exclusion. Building trust, sensitivity and a reflective approach, all practitioners need to develop specific skills to recognise that a major change is taking place for the child and parent/carer.

This policy works in conjunction with, Parental Involvement Policy, Allegations Against Staff Policy and Health and Safety Policy.

Legal Framework

Data Protection Act (1998) updated (2018)

Freedom of Information Act (2000)

Human Rights Act (1998)

Children's Act (1989)