

# The Role of the Key person & Settling in Policy



## Policy

Tiny Oaks Day Nursery recognises 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.

We aim to make our 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. We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with our staff.

## Procedure

- Each child will be allocated a key person on entry during the settling period, this may change due to bonds which are created.
- The key person is responsible for:
  - Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into our setting.
  - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
  - Working with the parents to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
  - Acting as the key contact for the parents.
  - Providing an effective handover daily to parents where possible.
  - 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.
  - Having links with all carers involved with the child and co-ordinating the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those professionals.
  - Encouraging positive relationships between children and staff.
  - Where possible attending to personal care routines which may include feeding, changing nappies and clothes, supporting children at sleep time.
  - Comfort the child in times of upset or distress.
  - Develop trust to enable children's independence.
  - Plan for all shared communication and transfer of documents when transitioning to a new key person, room or setting.
- We encourage the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our settings, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other adults and children. However, this does not mean the key person has to be with the child at all the

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times. One of the main roles of the key person is to support the child's social and emotional development to enable them to socialise with other adults and peers.

## Settling-in

The first few weeks when a child is settling into a nursery setting is a time of crucial importance to their later happiness in the setting. Both parents and early years practitioners can take steps to ensure that the transition goes as smoothly as possible:

- Open communication between parents and the nursery team is crucial, and our settling in procedure has been developed with this in mind. It allows time for the important sharing of information. Parents can give the key person information about the child and in turn the key person can talk to the parents about the child's experiences in the setting.
- Before a child starts to attend, our setting variety of ways to provide parents with information. These include written information (including our website and policies), displays about activities available within the setting, information days, visits and individual meetings with parents.
- When a child starts, we explain the process of settling-in with parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- The key person welcomes and looks after the child during the settling-in process.
- Before the first visit, the Parents/ Carers are sent the child's routine and all about me form which must be completed before their child attends their settles.
- Younger children may take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home.
- A child is deemed to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person and/or another adult for example, the child looks for the key person when they arrive, 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.
- 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 do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker and believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the setting.

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- 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 record a baseline.
- If a child has EAL (English as an additional language) we request the Parents / Carers complete a Home language sheet.

## Key person buddy system

Ideally, the key person will be available for the majority of the time that the child attends but when this is not possible, we operate a buddy system, whereby each child has a nominated buddy key person who also has a strong bond and sound knowledge of the child and their family. The buddy system is implemented in the absence of the child's key person.

In the unlikely event that both the key person and buddy are absent, the line manager will nominate another member of the nursery team who knows the child well to stand in for the key person, informing the parents and child as and when the changes occur.

With regards to bank / agency staff, where deemed suitable and on long term placement within the nursery these practitioners may be utilised as key persons or buddy by the nursery management team.

<i>This policy was adopted on</i>	<i>Signed on behalf of the nursery</i>	<i>Date for review</i>
<i>16/1/2023</i>	<i>m khaira</i>	<i>16/01/2024</i>