



Key Person and Settling In Policy

	Date	Date	Date	Date
Revision History	09/2019	04/21	06/22	07/23

Policy Statement:

At Old Basing Village Nursery School, each child is assigned a key person. We believe the key worker, child and parent relationship is fundamental in ensuring a child has a smooth transition into nursery school from a previous setting or home. As an inclusive setting, the whole team takes responsibility for all children in their care. However, the key worker policy ensures that there is at least one person in the setting who is committed to emotional and developmental needs of each child.

Key Person:

At Old Basing Village Nursery School, each child is allocated a key worker team made up of two of our practitioners. This means that each child always has two adults that they know particularly well and as point of contact for parents should they wish to discuss any aspect of a child's development, health or well-being.

During their settling in period, each child is allocated a main key person (this is usually the senior practitioner in the room). The settling in period is an ideal opportunity for practitioners and children to build a relationship. When a child appears to have settled in, a second key worker is chosen so that they each have two key workers.

The key worker is responsible for ensuring that a child's learning and development journey is up to date, gathering information from parents and previous settings to ease transitions as well as liaising with external agencies where support is required. A key worker will also be responsible for handing over information to a new setting or school as part of transition.

The staff team as a whole are responsible for all of the children's education and well-being, during focus weeks all of the practitioners will spend time working with focus children. However, it is the responsibility of the child's key worker team to produce the end of week reports and to refer the child to the SENCO should there be a concern regarding their learning and development.

Settling in:

When it comes to settling children into nursery school, we adopt a flexible and common-sense approach. We understand that settling in takes time and that for a child to learn, they need to feel happy, safe and secure in their surroundings. Our team will liaise with parents regarding how they'd like to proceed in settling in and will take the lead from the family. In addition to the initial show around visit, where parents are welcome to bring children with them, we welcome families to join us for 'stay and play' sessions where parents / carers bring the child to the setting for an hour and join in with them. If stay and play sessions appear to go well, we will suggest that children come for an unaccompanied visit (usually an hour at a time).

If it appears that a child is having difficulty settling in, the key worker team will liaise directly with parents - offering a range of different strategies such as:

- Offering for the child to attend for additional sessions with or without being accompanied.
- Suggesting a later drop off when the setting is quieter
- Suggesting an earlier pick up - so that the child doesn't have to wait
- Adopting a gradual approach to increasing the duration of the stay
- Allowing a parent to stay on site
- Bringing a comforter to nursery school
- Suggesting a parent leaves the child if the staff deem this to be appropriate.

We envisage the settling in period to last anytime from 6 to 10 weeks but understand that, in some cases, this can take longer. During the settling in period, the team focus on assisting children in the prime areas; communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and physical development. During this time the team will liaise with the SENCO to establish whether there are any concerns regarding a child's development and the team may discuss a referral to the Area Inclusion Coordinator (Area INCO) for further support. Please see our Special Educational Needs Policy for further information.

The Home Visit - home visits have been suspended due to Covid-19 and are still pending review.

The pandemic meant that all home visits were suspended and we adapted how we settle in procedures as a result. Prior to a child starting at Old Basing Village Nursery School, our team may be able to offer families a home visit. The home visit is designed to give practitioners the opportunity to meet children, and their families, in the comfort of their own home where children will inevitably feel more at ease. The home visit is usually carried out the half-term before the child begins with us and, where possible, as close to them starting. On occasion a family may require care to start sooner, in which case the child may start to attend the setting before they have had a home visit. In this scenario, a home visit will take place during the half-term that they have started.

The home visit is undertaken by two practitioners at a mutually convenient time. The visit is intended to last no longer than 30 minutes and comprises of a brief discussion surrounding any aspects of the registration form the practitioner or parent may wish to discuss, some time for practitioners and children to play together and a question / answer session. The team will bring nursery t-shirts for parents to purchase and a parent handbook, if required.

Where possible at least one of the child's key workers will attend the home visit. If for any reason this is not possible, the deputy manager or managers will attend the home visit with an additional practitioner.

EYFS Requirements:

Key person 3.27. 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 (in accordance with paragraph 1.10), to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents.