

Settling In and the Role of the Key Person

All children are unique and the amount of time that a child takes to settle into Little Pippins will vary enormously. Children will be allowed to settle in at their own pace, in order to make them feel welcome, safe and confident in their new environment, and comfortable with our staff.

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. We are committed to the key person approach which benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting. It encourages secure relationships which support children to thrive, give parents confidence and make the setting a happy place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy and to feel secure and comfortable with our staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with us. We aim to make Little Pippins 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 child must have a key person.

Role of the Key Person

We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our setting and we allocate a key person before the child starts. The key person is responsible for:

- Providing an induction for the family and settling the child into our setting.
- Completing relevant forms with parents, including consent forms.
- Explaining our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
- 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.
- Maintaining 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 other carers involved with the child and co-ordinating the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- Encouraging positive relationships between children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.

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 adults and children.

Settling In

Before a child starts to attend Little Pippins, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), displays about activities available within the setting, information days and evenings and individual meetings with parents.

Little Pippins will provide opportunities for the child and their parents/carers to visit the premises during the weeks before their planned admission. We will provide his/her parents with information about the way we operate and in particular our policies. The parents/carers will be given a copy of our parent handbook and be invited to the first available *Meet the Staff and Committee* evening. All the information is also available on our website.

We may offer a home visit, usually by the Manager and Deputy or the person who will be the child's key person, to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.

The key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.

We use pre-start visits and the first session at which a child attends to explain and complete, with his/her parents, the child's registration records.

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 recognise that some children will settle more readily than others, and for those children who do struggle to settle, we will jointly decide with the parent the best way to help the child settle in. We expect the parent/carer to commit to the settling in process and, if required, stay with their child as long as is deemed necessary and the child is able to stay without 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.

On some occasions, it may be appropriate for the child to go home a little earlier to begin with.

We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker.

We reserve the right not to accept any child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it too distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.

Children will be supported by their key person as they gradually learn about our routines and behavioural expectations. They will also learn about our fire procedures and what to do in an emergency.

Key persons will work with parents to start to create an online Learning Journal reflecting the child's record of achievement including their interests and abilities.

Progress check at age two.

When a new child starts, we ask parents to bring in their child's development check at age 2 report card from their Health Visitor, and also any progress check or leavers reports from a previous setting.

Shortly after a child starts at Little Pippins, their key person will carry out a Progress Check at age two in accordance with any local procedures that are in place and referring to the guidance <https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/A-Know-How-Guide.pdf>

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 us to address any developmental concerns (including working with other professionals where appropriate) as agreed with the parent(s).

We 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.

Staff will always be available to discuss any concerns or other issues with parents/carers regarding their child and their attendance at Little Pippins. If parents/carers wish to meet with the Manager, they should make an appointment.

Staff will ensure that flexible admission and settling in procedures are introduced if appropriate to meet the needs of the individual families and children.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Pippins Pre-school

Held on: 17th May 2021

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee: *K Dee*

Role of signatory: Chair

Review date: 2022