

Aclet Close Nursery School

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 the parents.

The role of the key person and settling-in

Policy statement

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who know them and their parents/carers well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the Nursery by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the Nursery is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the Nursery and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents/carers to have confidence in both their children's well being and their role as active partners with the Nursery.

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.

The key person role is set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each Nursery must assign a key person for each child.

Procedures

- We allocate a key person before the child starts, though this is flexible according to the child's needs.
- The key person is responsible for settling the child into our Nursery.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgmental.
- The key person works with the parents/carers to plan and deliver the child's well-being, care and learning.
- The key person acts as the key contact for the parents/carers 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/carers to keep those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our nursery and at home.
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children in his/her 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 nursery, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.

Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend the Nursery, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents/carers with information. These include written information (including our handbook and access to policies), displays about activities available within the nursery, information sessions and individual meetings with parents/carers.
- Prior to a child being enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents/carers to visit the nursery.
- We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before he/she starts to attend; the key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents/carers at the child's first session and during the settling in process.
- We use 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/carers and jointly decide on the best way to help the child settle into the nursery.
- We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for the child on their first visit.
- Some 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/carers 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 work closely with parents/carers until their child can stay happily without them.
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the Nursery.

The progress check at age two

- The key person works alongside the child's Health Visitor to carry out the progress check at age two in accordance with any 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 nursery and will support parents/carers to understand the child's needs in order to enhance their development at home.

Policy adopted: **November 2019**

Date reviewed: **November 2020/October 2021/September 2022/December 2023**

Date of next review: **December 2024**