

THE ROLE OF THE KEY PERSON AND SETTLING IN

Introduction

At Wingate Childcare we aim to support parents and other carers to help their children settle quickly and easily by considering the individual needs and circumstances of every child and their families. Our aim is for children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in childcare and to feel secure and comfortable with all staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's continued well-being and their role as active partners, with the child being able to benefit from what the childcare has to offer.

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. The procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children who are in settings.

All our staff know about the importance of building strong attachments with children. They are trained to recognise the different stages of attachment and use this knowledge to support children and families settling in.

The setting work in partnership with parents to settle their child into the environment by:

- Parents/carers are given the option to look around the setting with a senior member of staff before registering their child. This gives parents/carers an opportunity to ask any questions.
- Allocating a key person to each child before they start. The key person offers a settled relationship for the child and builds a relationship with parents, to ensure the family has a familiar contact person. The key person is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into childcare
- A home visit is carried out before the child starts, by a senior member of staff and the key person. This gives the child and parents a chance to meet in their home, where they feel more comfortable and secure. This gives the key person a chance to get to know the child, gain information about their interests and routine. The key person will complete care plans if necessary.
- Children attend settling in sessions (usually 3), gradually increasing their time in the setting. These sessions are free of charge and are dependent on individual needs, age and stage of development. Parents are expected to stay with their child for the first session, where the child's key person will share relevant information, such as policy's and procedures of the setting.
- Reviewing the key person if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child's needs are supported
- The key person acts as the key contact for the parents and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a child minder, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers

- 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 childcare.
- Children who have had a period of absence may need to attend settling in sessions before returning. This will be discussed between parents and key person to decide on the best option for the child.

Reviewed by Hannah Hedley	Review date 15 th September 2022
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