

4.1 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 knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

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

We aim to make the 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.

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

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

Procedures

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- After the child has registered, we offer a free settling-in session of 2 hours before the child is due to start.
- The key person is responsible for
 - where possible, providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into our setting
 - offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
 - acting as the key contact for the parents
 - 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, such as a childminder, 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 each day, when both key person and child are in the setting.



- 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 staff and children.
- Crick Pre-School also provides assistance to parents who need help to read or understand our policies and documentation and can assist parents to complete any forms as necessary. We will provide information in any language as the need arises.

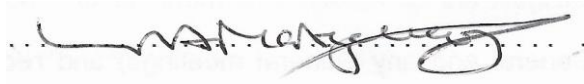
Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our handbook and policies), and individual meetings with parents.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
- We offer an (optional) home visit by the child's key worker and Manager/ deputy Manager to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.
- We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend; 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, where possible.
- 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.
- The parent, carer or close relative is welcome to stay for most of the free 2 hour settling-in session, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
- Younger 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 separate from their parent/carer well and will go to any grown up for support, 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.
- 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 the setting.
- 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.

The progress check at age two and a half

- The key person carries out the progress check at age two and a half in accordance with any local procedures that are in place and referring to the supporting guidance to the EYFS *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 setting 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 setting and will support parents to understand the child’s needs in order to enhance their development at home.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Crick Pre-School
Held on	19 th January 2022
Date to be reviewed	January 2023
Signed on behalf of the management committee	
Name of signatory	Laura Montgomery
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	Chair

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage: With non-statutory supporting documentation (2014)
- Being a Key Person in an Early Years Setting (2015)
- Creating a Learning Environment in the Home (2015)