



The Role of the Key Person and Settling-In

Policy statement

At Home from Home Latton Bush 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 and attachments; Attachment is essential to long-term emotional health and wellbeing, which supports 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 in the setting 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 within our setting. We aim to make our 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 child must have a key person. These procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children.

Procedures

- The key person is responsible for:
 - Assisting with an induction for the family and for settling the child into our setting.
 - 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.
 - 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 allocate a key person either before the child joins the room or a decision is made during settles.
- 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 our setting, 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.
- 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 home visits for parents and carers to ask any questions and for the children to see us in their home environment, this helps the child to see that we have good relationships with parents/carers and will help the child to build and strengthen the attachment with us.
- 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 offer a stay and play session as 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.
- Younger children may 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 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 necessarily ready to be left. We expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay for at least the first hour.
- 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

- The key person carries out the progress check at age two in accordance with Essex 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 us 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.

Further information

- Early years foundation stage statutory framework- For group and school-based providers Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five (DfE 2024)
- Being a Key Person in an Early Years Setting (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2015)
- Creating a Learning Environment in the Home (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2015)

	<u>Date:</u>	<u>By Whom?</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Created	24 th February 2025	Rachel Simms	New Policy
Next Review			