

9.1 The role of the key person



Policy statement

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents/carers well, and who can meet their individual needs. We are committed to the key person approach which benefits the child, the parents/carers, the staff and the setting. The key person is especially important in early weeks so that a child does not feel overwhelmed with the new environment and people. The key person approach encourages secure relationships which support children to thrive, give parents/carers 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/carers to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with our setting. We pride ourselves in providing warm, nurturing and welcoming environment, where children feel that they are at home away from home. A 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

Young children need to be able to recognise the face of the person who changes them, feeds them or who they first see on waking from a nap. The key person can respond sensitively to individual children, knows their preferences and develop personal rituals of songs and smiles.

We allocate a key person before the child starts. The key person is responsible for:

- Providing 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/carers to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
 - Acting as the key contact for the parents/carers.
 - Observing children's learning and development and using this information to plan challenging and fun activities in all areas of their development.
 - Keeping children's developmental records up to date and sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents/carers, 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.

Due to shifts systems, holiday and illness a secondary key person will be allocated. It is important that parents/carers are not faced with a number of less familiar faces. In the early weeks, it is far more comfortable as a parent/carer to know that it will be one of two people to whom the parents/carers entrust their child with at the beginning of the day.

The progress check at age two

- The key person carries out the progress check at age two in accordance with any local 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/carers 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 parents/carers.
- The key person will plan activities to meet the child's needs within the setting and will support parents/carers to understand the child's needs in order to enhance their development at home.

Management of key persons

All staff working with children in the rooms (practitioners, room leaders, possible apprentices) are required to assume key carer responsibilities. The room leaders, supported by the deputy managers and manager, will oversee the key person responsibilities of the staff in the rooms. The nursery manager will monitor the children's records of development online on our app "EyLog" under the EYFS to ensure they are regularly updated and to an appropriate standard. The nursery is fully committed to continually evaluating its key person practice, managing changes and transitions as sensitively as possible.