



4.1 The role of the key person and settling-in

Policy statement

The Willow On The Farm Nursery believes 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 which support 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 with 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](#):

3.41 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 their parents and/or carers. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

These procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children.

Procedures

- 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.
 - Explaining our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.

- 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 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 welcome letters and policies), information days and evenings and individual meetings with parents.
- Before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
- The key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents at the visit.
- 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.
- We have an expectation that the child will only be left with us for a short time (usually 2 hours) for their first two days; increasing this time 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.
- 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.
- If the child is still mildly unsettled when the parent leaves, we will contact the parent within the first 30 minutes to let them know how the child is settling in without them.
- 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 if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.

- Within the first four to six weeks of starting, we discuss and work with the child's parents to begin to create their child's record of achievement.

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*. This will be done via the My Montessori Child profile of the child.
- The progress check aims to review the child’s development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their child’s development.
 - On-going observational assessment informs the progress check and must be referred to.
 - Children’s contributions are included in the report. Staff must be ‘tuned in’ to the ways in which very young children, or those with speech or other developmental delay or disability, communicate/
- 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).
 - Where any concerns about a child’s learning and development are raised these are discussed with the parents/carers, the SENCo and the setting manager.
- 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.
- The setting must seek to engage both parents/carers and make allowance for parents/carers who do not live with their child to be involved.

This policy was adopted by	The Willow On The Farm Nursery
On	15 th July 2019
Review Frequency	Annually or sooner if required
Drawn up on behalf of the provider by	Dawn Wilson-Fry
	Deputy Manager
Reviewed Date and By Whom:	25/08/2021 DWF
	27/06/2022 DWF
	06/08/2023 NJR
	06/08/2024 NJR
	10/08/2025 NJR