



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.
- The key person is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
- The key person acts as the key contact for the parents and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a childminder, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- The key person is responsible for 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.
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.
- We provide a back-up key person, so the child and the parents have a key contact in the absence of the child's key person.
- 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.

Settling-in

Over the Rainbow strongly encourages parents/carers to visit the Setting with their children in the days/weeks before they are due to start. During this time, we require the parents/carers to fully complete and return the registration form, either electronically or a hard copy.

During the initial show round, parents/carers and their child(ren) will be greeted in a warm and friendly manner. They will be asked to sign in in the visitor's book before being shown around the premises. Parents/carers will be informed of the types of activities we provide, be shown around the premises, and be introduced to the staff team. They will be informed of mealtime arrangements, booking sessions and invoicing, and the procedures around dropping off and collecting their child. Parents/carers will be given the opportunity to ask any questions they may have regarding their child's time with us.



After the initial show round, parents/carers will be given the opportunity to book settling in sessions for their child. We usually offer three settling in sessions per child free of charge. Some children, depending on their levels of confidence and experience at other Settings, may not need all three settling in sessions. This will be decided with a discussion with the parents/carers and can be reviewed after their initial settling in session. The first session is about an hour long and parents/carers can choose whether they would like to stay with their child for all or some of the session. The Key Person will complete an All About Me form with the parents to get to know the child in more detail and understand how best to support them during their time with us. The second settling in session is usually a couple of hours, but they do not stay for lunch. In this session, parents/carers are encouraged to leave their child for some, if not all, of the session. For the child's third settling in session, we invite the child to stay for lunch with us to experience the routines around meal times. Parents would not usually stay for any of this session. At the end of the Settling in period, the Manager would discuss with the parents/carers about how they have settled and book the child in for their regular sessions.

On their first day, children will be introduced to the other children at the Setting. Preschool children will be allocated a Key Person who will introduce themselves to the child and their parents/carer. The Key Person will get to know the child and guide them through the new environment and routines. They will explain the rules and routines in an age-appropriate manner, as well as being shown the activities on offer. Depending on the age and levels of communication of the child, they will be encouraged to ask questions and raise any concerns.

All staff will supervise children new to the Setting to ensure that they are happy in their new surroundings. The appropriate level of such supervision will be judged according to the child's age, maturity, and previous experiences.

Staff will ask on a regular basis how a child is feeling, what activities they enjoy and if they are unhappy about anything. At the end of the first, second and third weeks, the Manager will find time to talk to the child about how they are settling in.

If it seems that a child is taking a long time to settle in, this will be discussed with their parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. Likewise, if a parent/carer feels that there is a problem during the settling in period, they should raise this with a member of staff.

Staff will always be available to discuss any concerns or other issues with parents/carers regarding their child and their attendance at the Setting. If parents/carers wish to meet with the Manager, they should make an appointment to come in for a discussion. Parents/carers can contact their child's Key Person directly through Tapestry if they have any specific questions around their child's learning, development, and care at Over the Rainbow.

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 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	Over the Rainbow
Held in:	Nov 23
To be reviewed in:	Nov 24
Signed on behalf of the setting:	kprice
Name of Signatory:	Kelly Price
Role of Signatory:	Manager