



4.0 KEY PERSON

4.1 THE ROLE OF THE KEY PERSON AND SETTLING-IN POLICY

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Policy statement

At St Saviour's Pre-school and Nursery 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.

Our aim is for children in our care to feel safe, happy and stimulated 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. 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

- Before entry, each child is allocated a key-person, and is part of a named group. The key-person is made available to the new children to help and support their settling-in period, and forms a close relationship with each child in his/her group, and they get to know each other.
- The key-person meets the children and parents at induction day, and reads the home information sheets. He/she notes down health/ interests/ means of comfort/ stories, etc. in the Learning Journals, and takes account of this information when planning small group activities. Each child's Learning Journal can be read and contributed to, by his parent/carer, making it a useful tool of communication, along with a verbal chat at the beginning or end of the session.
- The Key-person records observations in individual Learning Journals, of what the child says, how he/she solves problems, his achievements, ideas, interests, social skills, and difficulties. This information is used to inform planning of activities, small group activities, and to set individual targets. It is also used for filling in assessment profiles.
- The key-person forms links with other carers involved with the child and coordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.

- He/she encourages 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

- We try to provide a safe and happy environment at St Saviour's, where children feel confident, relaxed and are able to develop their full potential. Our first priority is to ensure each child settles as quickly as possible.
- Parents/carers are invited to visit with their child before registering so they can see the setting and ask questions.
- Prospective parents receive a brochure and application form.
- Prior to starting, parents/carers are invited to an induction morning at Pre-school, so they can talk to their child's key-person, and prepare the child at home.
- Each child is allocated a key-person who will primarily help to settle that child.
- Parents are consulted about settling in procedures and we agree on the plans for their child.
- Parents/carers are welcome to stay, cut short the morning or to bring the child later, according to the child's need.

The 2 year progress check

- Children who are still two after their first term at Pre-school, will have a 2 year old check carried out by their key-person, after the first half term of attendance.
- The progress check is a review of the child's progress and 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 report is shared with parents and actions to address any concerns will be agreed with parents/carers.
- 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.
- If necessary, we may seek advice from outside agencies such as the Health Visitor or Speech Therapist.