

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Key Person

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

Hollytree Community Pre-school – Policies and Procedures

4.1 The role of the key person and settling-in

Policy statement

At Hollytree Pre-school 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 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. 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

- 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. This will include completing an All About Me booklet with parents during the first few days of the child starting at our setting.
 - Where necessary completing relevant forms with parents, including consent forms.
 - Making parents/carers aware of our policies and procedures 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/carers with information. These include written information (including our welcome booklet and policies), displays about activities available within the setting and individual meetings with parents.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we invite the child and his/her parents/carers to visit the setting.
- The key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents/carers at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- We use pre-start visits and the first session at which a child attends to explain and provide parents/carers with 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.
- Every child settles differently but we welcome the parent, carer or close relative, to stay for most of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child; increasing this time as and when the child is able to cope.
- 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 ready to be left. We expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay for at least the first week if necessary, or possibly longer, until their child can stay happily 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 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 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 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.

This policy was adopted by

Hollytree Community Pre-school

Last review

August 2023

Date of next review

August 2024

Signed on behalf of the provider

J Goldspink

Name of signatory

Jo Goldspink

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Joint Manager

Annex A – additional guidance with regards to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

New families

From July 2020 preschool settings are expected to open fully to all children and from September 2020 we will begin to welcome new children to our setting once again. Our settling in procedures will need to be adjusted as we will be unable to invite family members/carers into the setting as we normally would.

- New parents/carers will be made aware before their child's place is confirmed that visits to the preschool will not be possible or may be limited.
- The child will be allocated a key person before they start and contact will be made with the family by the key person to introduce themselves and ask any questions about the child, their likes and dislikes and any concerns parents/carers may have about them starting preschool.
- The child will be closely monitored during their first few sessions at preschool to ensure they are settling well, communication with parents/carers will be maintained by emails or phone conversations.
- Settings are not expected to carry out the progress checks at age 2 during the outbreak. These will be completed as soon as possible once government guidance allows us to.
- We will not be able to carry out our usual 'All About Me' meetings with new parents/carers. Instead the 'All About Me' booklet will be sent home to be completed and the child's key person will follow up any queries or concerns by email or phone calls with the parents/carers.

Key person responsibilities during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

- Whilst children are absent from preschool due to the outbreak, their key person will maintain regular contact with the families. Each key person will send weekly emails to parents/carers during term time with activities and advice where relevant.
- Once children return to preschool, a 'More About Me' questionnaire will be sent home so that the setting can be made aware of the child's activities, thoughts and reactions during the outbreak.
- We will not be able to invite parents/carers into the setting to discuss their children's progress, share their RDS or be involved in 'Stay and Play' sessions. The individual children's key person will send RDS via email and will be available to discuss them either by telephone or by arranging a socially distanced meeting when children are not on the premises if needed.
- Each child's key person will maintain regular contact with families even when they have returned to the setting by weekly emails giving updates about activities the child has enjoyed and progress made. Parents/carers will be made aware that we will not be able to welcome them into the setting to discuss their child as we normally would. All communication must be made by phone call or email. Parents may also put a note in their child's book bag if they would like to discuss anything with their child's key person and the key person will contact them as soon as they can.

