

# Key Person and Settling In

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Burwell Early Learners CIO (BEL) believes that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents, and who can meet their individual needs. We are committed to the key person approach which benefits the child, parents 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 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 Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Procedures

- Parents will be informed of their child's key person prior to starting or at their first session and in the first instance the keyperson should become their first point of contact regarding matters concerning their child.
- The key person, along with the Manager and Room Leader, is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting, completing relevant forms with parents, including consent forms.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- 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 as necessary. This is backed up by the Room Leader when staff are unavailable.
- A key person is responsible for developmental records and for sharing information 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 is responsible for conducting a progress check at age 2 for their key children.
- The key person helps to ensure that every child's learning and caring is tailored to meet their individual needs. This is achieved through regular observation and assessment of children, using information gathered about their achievements, interests and learning styles to plan for each child's learning and development.
- If a child's progress in any area of development gives cause for concern, the key person must discuss this with the setting manager or SENCO and the child's parents.
- Keypersons support parents in their role as the child's first and most enduring educators.
- We promote the role of the key person as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.

- The keyperson has a responsibility towards their key children to report any concern about development. Welfare or child protection matter to the setting manager and to follow procedures in this respect.
- Regular staff supervisions with the setting manager provides further opportunities to discuss the progress and welfare of key children.

### *Settling-in*

- Before a child starts to attend BEL, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These can include written information (including our prospectus and policies), displays about activities available within the setting, information days and individual meetings with parents.
- We use pre-start visits (stay and play with parent) and the first session at which a child attends to explain and complete with his/her parents the child's registration records if necessary and to jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- We may do staggered start dates for children to allow sufficient 1:1 time to aid settling in.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with staff, 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 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 will work with parents to establish a settling in plan if needed, this may include a shorter session time to begin with, whilst a child builds relationships with staff and establishes a routine.
- 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 and the right to contact parents to collect their child if they are too distressed to stay.