



## PUDDLEDUCKS Nursery & Pre-School

### ROLE OF THE KEY PERSON & SETTLING-IN POLICY

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#### 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 parent, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children are supported, thrive, give parents confidence and make the setting a happy and 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 in 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 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:
  - the induction of the family and for the settling of the child into our setting
  - Completing relevant forms with parents, including consent forms.
  - Explaining our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
  - The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgmental
  - 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 child-minder, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- A key person is responsible for the development 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 his/her 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***

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), displays about activities available within the setting, information days and individual meetings with parents
- During the half term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
- We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before commencing at our setting. The key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- 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 settle into the setting. We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for most of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this 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. 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 honor the commitment to stay for at least the first week, or possibly longer, until their child can stay happily without them.
- We do believe that leaving a child to cry will not help them settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the setting. If you leave your child and they are upset you can call the setting at any time for an update. We will always be honest with you. Alternatively, arrangements made with your key worker can include ringing you once your child has settled or an agreed time for an update.
- 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.
- Within the first four to six weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parent to start 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 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.