

The Role of the Key Carer and Settling in

EYFS: 1.16, 3.27, 3.73, 3.74

At **Little Fingers Pre-school**, our aim is to work in partnership with parents and/or carers to help them become familiar with the setting and offer a settled relationship for the child. We know children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, we build positive relationships with parents to ensure we can meet children's individual needs and help them settle quickly in to pre-school life.

All our staff know about the importance of building strong attachments with children. They are trained to recognise the different stages of attachment and use this knowledge to support children and families settling in to the pre-school.

Our settling in procedure includes:

- Allocating a key carer to each child and his/her family, before he/she starts to attend. The key carer welcomes and looks after the child, ensuring that their care is tailored to meet their individual needs. He/she offers a settled relationship for the child and builds a relationship with his/her parents during the settling in period and throughout his/her time at the pre-school, to ensure the family has a familiar contact person to assist with the settling in process
- Reviewing the nominated key carer if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child's needs are supported
- Providing parents with relevant information about the policies and procedures of the pre-school
- Working with parents to gather information before the child starts on the child's interests, likes and dislikes and their favourite things available at settling sessions, e.g. their favourite story or resource: as well as completing a baseline of the child's current development to plan, and meet, the individual needs of the child from the first day
- Encouraging parents and children to visit the pre-school before an admission is planned and arranging home visits and/or online video meetings where applicable
- Planning tailored settling in visits and introductory sessions, following any necessary government advice
- Welcoming parents to stay with their child, where possible and applicable during the first few weeks until the child feels settled and the parents feel comfortable about leaving their child. Settling in visits and introductory sessions are key to a smooth transition and to ensure good communication and information sharing between staff and parents
- Encouraging parents/carers to send in family photos to display to help settle the child
- Creating photo books of the setting including photos of staff for the child to take home and share with their parent/carers and become familiar with the staff and new environment
- Reassuring parents whose children seem to be take a little longer to settle in and developing a plan with them, for example shorter days, where possible
- Providing regular updates and photos of the children settling
- Encouraging parents, where appropriate, to separate themselves from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences
- Assigning a buddy/back-up key carer to each child in case the key carer is not available. Parents are made aware of this to support the settling process and attachment
- Respecting the circumstances of all families, including those who are unable to stay for long periods of time in the pre-school and reassure them of their child's progress towards settling in
- Not taking a child on an outing from the pre-school until he/she is completely settled.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the pre-school	Date for review
May 2022		May 2023