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The Role of the Key Person and Settling-in Policy

Windmill Under 5s, Lacey Green and Loosely Row Sports Club, Main Road,
Lacey Green, Princes Risborough HP27 0PL
Registered charity no: 1026976

Reviews and Approvals

Policy adopted:	21 November 2012 by Windmill Under 5s Management Committee	
It was last reviewed:	19 March 2021	
It will be reviewed:	Spring Term (February) 2022	
Signed & dated:	 11/6/21	Natasha Kann – Chairperson on behalf of the Management Committee

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/carers.

Key Person

4.1. The Role of the Key Person and Settling-in

Policy Statement

We believe that children settle best when they have a Key Person or Key Persons to relate to, who knows them and their parents/carers well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a Key Person approach benefits the child, the parents/carers, the staff and the preschool by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents/carers have confidence, staff are committed and Windmills is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy at Windmills and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents/carers to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with Windmills. We aim to make Windmills 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. We will assign each child a Key Person or Key Persons.

Procedures

These procedures set out a model for developing our Key Person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children at Windmills

- We allocate (a) Key Person(s) before the child starts at Windmills and parents/carers will be informed of who this is .at induction.
- The Key Person(s) is/are responsible for:
 - The Induction Session of the family and for settling the child into Windmills (this may not always be possible, but will be discussed with parents/carers before the Induction Session).
 - Completing relevant forms with parents/carers, including consent forms.
 - Explaining our policies and procedures to parents/carers with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.

- Offering unconditional regard for the child and remaining non-judgemental.
- Working with the parents/carers to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
- Acting as the key contact for the parents/carers and maintaining links with other carers involved with the child, such as a childminder.
- Co-ordinating the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- Developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents/carers to keep those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child at Windmills and at home.
- Encouraging positive relationships between children in their Key Group, spending time with them each day.
- . The manager or deputy are back up Key People for all children.
- We promote the role of the Key Person as the child's primary carer at Windmills, but encourage them to establish good relationships with other staff and children.

Settling-in

- Before a child starts at Windmills, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents/carers with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies) and individual meetings with parents/carers, including an Induction Session prior to the child's first day at Windmills.
- We welcome at any time children and their parents/carers to visit the preschool prior to them starting by prior arrangement with the Preschool Manager.
- We allocate a Key Person or Key Persons to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend; Where possible the Key Person or Key Persons will welcome and look after the child and his/her parents/carers at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- We endeavour, where possible, to introduce new children into Windmills on a staggered basis so that no more than two children will start on the same day.
- Prior to the child's first session we ask parents/carers to complete an 'All About Me' section in the 'Registration Form'. This information is then discussed with the parent at the child's Induction Session, together with other registration documents.
- At the child's Induction Session we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents/carers and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into Windmills.
- We welcome and support parents/carers who wish to stay for the start of the session to help their children settle until their child is confident enough to enter Windmills independently.
- We ask that a parent or carer in the first couple of weeks is contactable and easily able to return to Windmills to provide reassurance should their child become unsettled.

- If a child does become unsettled we will call the parent/carer and ask them to return to reassure their child that they will come back and collect the child at a later time, play with them while they settle again and then explain that they are leaving and when they will return.
- Younger children are likely to 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/carer to be on hand to re-settle them.
- Session time for the younger 2 – 2.5 year old children is initially limited to the morning session only (9am – 12noon). Extended sessions can be offered at the discretion of the Preschool Manager and subject to availability.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their Key Person(s); for example the child looks for the Key Person(s) when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. A settled child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents/carers 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, and that even those children who appear to settle rapidly may not actually be ready to be left. We expect that the parent/carer will honour the commitment to be contactable and accessible in at least the first couple of weeks, or possibly longer, until their child can stay happily without them.
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry uncontrollably for a long period of time will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from Windmills. Children who become upset will only be left for a short period of time before the parent/carer will be called and asked to return.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the session without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left.
- If a child is finding it difficult to settle at Windmills after the first two weeks then we will discuss with the parent/carer a different way to approach the settling in process and agree a way forward with the parent/carer.
- Parents/carers are welcome to come in and speak to their child's Key Person(s) at any time.

The Progress Check at Two (A Unique Child)

- The Key Person(s) will carry out the progress check of any two year olds in attendance 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 clearly communicates this to parents/carers.
- Within the progress check, the Key Person(s) will note areas where the child is progressing well and identify areas where progress is slower than expected.

- The Progress Check will describe the actions that will be taken by Windmills, including working with other professionals where appropriate, to address any development concerns as agreed with the parents/carers.
- The Key Person(s) will plan activities to meet the child's needs within Windmills and will support parents/carers to understand the child's needs in order to enhance their development at home.
- If your child attends another provider, including a childminder, we will contact them to gain their input into the record with consent of the parent/carer. We will also meet with parents/carers to help gain a full picture of the child's development.
- Parents/carers will be given a document explaining the process of the two year check.