

The role of the key person and settling-in policy

**Our Aim:**

Fowlmere Playgroup 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. A key person is a named member of staff assigned to an individual child to support their development and act as the key point of contact with that child’s parents or carers. The key person has special responsibilities for working with a small number of children and supports each child to nurture their development and progress through the Early Year’s Foundation Stage Curriculum. We do all we can to ensure that a child’s key person remains the same for their duration at Fowlmere playgroup and believe that this continuity truly helps children to be prepared for their transition into school/education. Where possible, we allocate keyworkers to the same families as younger siblings join Playgroup, to build on the relationship and familiarities the children may already have with staff.

Fowlmere Playgroup 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 own role as active partners with our setting to extend their learning at home too. This can be supported through completing home learning tasks with the children linked to our learning focus that we are exploring currently at the 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.**

**Procedures:**

We allocate a key person before the child starts and they are responsible for (Information of this will be sent to parents/carers in a new starter email):

* Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into our setting.
* Completing relevant forms with parents, including consent forms and to build starting points together to determine how we can help them to progress through the Early Year’s Foundation Stage.
* Making parent/carers aware of our policies and procedures with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
* Completing Developmental records (learning journals)/fixed assessments to determine progress that is being made 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 such as other early year’s settings/childminders the child attends.
* Ensure rising 5 children attend stay and play sessions or attend our planned visits to the local primary school to support their transition into education.

Settling in:

We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others and want to ensure that ALL children have formed a relationship with their key person; for example, the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives and goes to them for comfort. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in daily activities/routines.

We provide opportunities for the child and their parents/carers to visit the setting and use pre-start visits to complete, with his/her parents, the child's registration records and collect information such as our “tell us about” and “my favourite things” to support the settling in process. We also ensure children have a named Peg in our cloakroom to store their belongings and when possible will have made name cards/taken pictures for our self-registration board at settling in visits, to help children feel part of our setting upon starting by being able to see their name and picture in our environment on arrival.

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 and ask that you work in partnership with us to ensure that child are settled to truly be able to enjoy all that Fowlmere Playgroup has to offer.

Usually our settling in procedures are…

1. **Two 45 minute visit with parent staying.** This visit allows children to explore our environment, meet staff and children whilst knowing that their parent/carer is nearby. Ideally one indoor and one outdoor to enable children to experience both of our environments.
2. **Morning session.** At this session we suggest the parent/carer comes with the child stays for around 30 minutes or until they are settled before leaving them and returning at the end of the session (12pm). We try to ensure that this session is organised for the day/days that the child plans to attend to ensure they are familiar with the children and staff who will be present when they attend.
3. **Official start with other children.** To arrive at the start of their allocated day/session and to be left for the duration. We will contact you if your child becomes upset and may organise another morning session to ensure they are completed settled.

We are aware that many of our families work and may not be able to complete/attend all of our settling in procedures but strongly recommend that these happen and happily welcome other family members (such as grandparents) to bring children if these clash with work commitments. We are also aware that some children may take longer to settle and are therefore happy to provide further settling in sessions when/if needed.

Assessment:

The Key person will observe and keep on going records within the child’s learning journal so that they review and track the child’s progress to ensure that they and the child’s parents/carers have a clear picture of their child’s point of development. The key person will note areas where the child is progressing well and identify areas where progress is less than expected and will use this information to plan activities/next steps to meet the child’s needs within the setting and will support parents to understand how they can help enhance their development and progress levels made at home.

Mandatory Assessments will be completed such as the 24-36 Month progress check. Parents/carers and other early year’s settings that children attend if applicable will also receive a learning and development summative report in July to update all carers involved of the progress that children are making through the Early Year’s Foundation Stage. On leaving Playgroup in July to progress to Primary School, keyworkers will complete a final report on each child to go in their finished learning journal which goes home. Along with a progress tracker which is reviewed/ updated each term during the child’s full journey through Playgroup on to the child’s upcoming Primary School.

Assessments will also 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).

To support progression of children’s development we provide parents/carers with next steps on their summative assessments, or via email termly along with ‘new things I can do’ and achievements so that these can be celebrated and supported at home too.

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| This policy was adopted by | Fowlmere Playgroup |  |
| On | 7th Jan 2019 |  |
| Date to be reviewed | Jan 2025 |  |
| Signed on behalf of the provider |  | |
| Name of signatory | K Holwell | |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) | Chairperson | |

Reviewed …………Feb 2020……. ……………Jasmine Redrup……….

……….. Feb 2021……. ……………Jasmine Redrup……….

…………Feb 2022……. ……………Verity Smith…………….

…………Jan 2023…….. ……………Verity Smith…………….

…………Jan 2024…….. ……………Verity Smith…………….