



First Steps Children's Nursery & Forest School

Settling-in Policy

Statement of intent

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 the nursery.

Aim

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.

Methods

- 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 evenings and individual meetings with parents.
- During the few weeks before a child begins at the nursery, 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 she/he starts to attend; the key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents at the child's first trial session and during the settling-in process.
- During the child's first trial session, we will gather important information about that child from his/her parents and give them a record card to complete for registration purposes.
- When a child begins his/her trial sessions, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- Parents/carers do not have to stay with their child but we suggest that trial sessions are kept short and the amount of time that a parent is away from their child is gradually increased as the child is more 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 and generally offer two trial sessions. However, if we feel that a child is not yet settled will suggest that we continue with shorter trial sessions until the child is more able to cope.
- 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 being at nursery.
- Within the first four to six weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to create their child's record of achievement.