



Settling-in Policy

We understand that every child is different; some settle very quickly and others take longer to adjust. We therefore encourage parents/carers not to feel worried or concerned if their child takes a while to settle. After all, this is all new to them!

We endeavour to keep the lines of communication open before, during and after the settling-in process. Here are some ways in which we do this;

Before Joining us:

- Each family is invited to come and visit the Pre-school with their child and speak with us in person regarding a place for their child. Each applicant is then contacted and sent a letter of confirmation which includes important things to remember when you join.
- We send a 'Welcome Pack' to each family which includes information such as:
 1. Helpful Hints for Settling in your Child
 2. Pre-school Calendar
 3. Guidance to our website, where you can find our 'Meet the Team' page
- Before a child's first day with us, we ask families to complete a full Application form and 'This is Me' page, which include specific details of home routines regarding sleep patterns, eating habits, toileting needs, favourite books, toys & activities etc. and is posted on our notice board for all staff to be aware of.
- We ask parent/carers to provide us with 'key words' that their child uses/understands, which will help us to communicate with them. This is important for every child and especially for those with English as an additional language.
- Each new family is asked to provide photos of their child's main carers including other adults who may pick up... and these will be included on their 'This is Me' page. These can also be posted on the '[Family](#)' app. // This helps the team to become familiar with new faces and Key Persons to share an interest in the people who are special to your child.
- We encourage families to share photos from home via the 'parent-share' feature within our on-line observation platform '[Family](#)' app.
- *Before joining, each family is invited to create an account with 'Family' and download the app. so that the flow of communication is easy.* This online platform provides the space to create a child profile with details of family and emergency contacts, medical and dietary needs. It is also where we report any accidents/incidents and parents/carers are immediately notified. There is a messaging service which can go through to your child's key person or be posted as a message to the whole team. Parent/Carers can log in and see their child's attendance, observations, invoices and more! Parents/Carers can also mark their children absent/on holiday and give a reason. And lastly, the Newsfeed feature means that important updates can be sent out efficiently to all families.
- We take great care in being sensitive to each diverse family situation and work together with families to understand and support each child's needs.

Your Child's First Day:

- The Key Person will have already read your child's 'This is Me' page and Admissions Form to make sure they are aware of routines, support needs and other important details you have provided.

- We are flexible as to whether a parent/carer stays with the child for a while to settle them and will work in harmony with the needs of the family.
- As *most* families will have attended a previous 'Stay & Play' event, we encourage a 'Goodbye' at some point, to move the transition along and gauge your little one's needs in this area.
- We always encourage parents/carers to say "Goodbye", so that the child knows exactly what is happening and can start to build trust with their key person; beginning to understand that they are safe with us, and you will come back soon, as promised.
- *We find that it is also helpful (once "Goodbye" has been said) that there is a quick exit - as it is our experience that delaying the process or changing one's mind can become more upsetting for both parties.*
- We communicate with parents/carers a short while after they have left to give an update about their little one. This may take the form of a phone call, text or video and will be continued each day as needed.

On-going Settling Procedure:

- Staff make themselves available to speak at arrival/departure times and we have an effective communication system, should the whole team need to be aware of a new situation.
- We make regular observation notes of each child and specific needs are identified quickly. We invite parents/carers to discuss any matters arising and make it our priority to work together with families to help children settle well and achieve positive outcomes.
- We ask families to keep in regular contact with us about important information such as their child's absence or illness.
- It is also helpful for us to know whether there are any contributing factors to behaviour changes e.g. if they have not eaten breakfast or had a disturbed sleep and this can usually be mentioned at drop off time.
- We begin and end our day in the Main Hall and all staff share responsibility for your little people! This means that children are familiar with the whole team and feel safe and welcomed even if their named key person is not present.

Working Together with Families:

- Group observations are sent out by Hannah (Manager) on the Newsfeed to celebrate what your little ones have been enjoying each week in their respective teams.
- Individual observations are sent out weekly by Key People to update each parent/carer what their child's needs and interests have been and how he/she is being supported.
- Parents/carers are sent our planning sheets in advance and asked to be part of Pre-school life by getting involved with any topic they have an affinity with.
- Parents/carers are invited to share in their child's learning by replying to observations by Key People on the Famly app.
- We invite parents, siblings, and extended family along to various events such as our Nativity and Easter Play.
- Feedback is welcomed and responded to by management; we send out short polls on Famly App. to gauge opinions.
- We respond to any concerns raised by parents/carers quickly and efficiently. It is our firm belief that whilst Pre-school life may not be *perfect*, it can be **Excellent**; which means that each family is listened to and responded to properly. Outcomes and changes because of raised concerns are shared with the families and the matter is not closed until a satisfactory outcome is agreed upon by all parties involved.