

## **Felixstowe Nursery School**

### **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.

### **The role of the key person and settling in**

#### **Statement:-**

Our setting believes 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. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

We 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 role as active parents with the setting.

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.

The role of the key person is set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Every child must have a key person.

The procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children attending the setting.

#### **Procedures:**

- We allocate a key person before the child starts the setting.
- The key person is responsible for providing an induction to the setting and for settling the child into the setting.
- Completing relevant forms with parents, including consent forms.
- Explaining our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
- The key person acts as the key contact for the parents and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a child-minder, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.

- A key person is responsible for compiling and maintaining developmental records, 'The Learning Journey' and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents to keep the records current and 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
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children in their key group, spending time promoting this.
- We provide a backup key person so the child and the parents have a key contact in the absence of the child's key person.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our setting, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.

## **Settling-in**

- Prior to a child starting our setting we provide parents with information, verbally, in written format and visually about the setting such as our policies and prospectus, activities at nursery, where to access information daily and so on
- During the half-term before a child is due to start the setting, we provide opportunities for the child and their parents to come in and visit the setting.
- Prior to the child starting we arrange and have a home visit so the parents and child can meet the key person and manager or deputy to complete the 'All About Me' booklets, we can get to know each other and plan how to settle the child in based on their specific interests. We can answer any of the parents' questions prior to their child starting
- We allocate a key person to each child and their family before they start the setting. The manager welcomes them into the setting and introduces them to their key person and the rest of the nursery staff. The key person will support and look after the child and their family during the induction and settling-in period.
- We use pre-start visits and the first session to explain and complete the child's registration form with the parents.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with the parents and jointly decide on how best to settle the child into the setting.
- We gradually build the time the child stays in session as their confidence builds and develops.
- We appreciate it will take some children longer to settle than others, this may be the first time they have been separated from their parent/carer and support the child and their parents through this stage providing constant reassurance to the child and parent. We also realise that children who have had a period of absence and may require extra support to settle back into nursery.
- Parents are encouraged to stay as long as they want to in the first week or weeks depending on how their child settles and is ready to cope with short periods of separation.
- 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 they arrive, goes to them for comfort and is pleased to see them and 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 they will be coming back, and when. The child needs to be informed by them so they are

- aware and reassured they are coming back and when.
- We don't believe that leaving a child to cry will enable them to settle in quicker. We believe this distress will prevent them from learning, playing and gaining the best from the setting. We want them to feel comfortable and benefit from what the setting has to offer and be confident their parents will come back.
- We promise to contact the parent/carer if the child does not settle, we ask the parent to come back to the setting and reduce the time left next time until they are settled and confident to stay a little longer without parental support.
- Within the first 4-6 weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to start to create their child's record of achievement.
- We try to introduce new children into the setting on a staggered basis, for example two new children a day for a week rather than ten new children all at once so the key person can spend time settling them in properly.
- If the child forms a better bond with another member of staff, we are flexible to change and would change after discussion with the parent to ensure we do what is best for the child.

**The progress check at age two**

- The key person carries out the progress at age two in accordance with any local procedures that are in place and referring to the guidance A Know How Guide: The EYFS progress check at two.
- The progress check aims to review the child's development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their child's development.
- Within the progress check, the key person will note areas where the child is progressing well and identify areas where progress is less than expected.
- The progress check will describe the actions that will be taken by the setting to address any developmental concerns (including working with other professionals where appropriate) as agreed with the parents.
- The key person will plan activities to meet the child's needs within the setting and will support parents to understand the child's needs in order to enhance their development at home.

**This policy was adopted at a meeting of Felixstowe Nursery School.**

**Held on .....**

**Date to be reviewed.....**

**Signed by Chairperson.....**

**Signed by Manager.....**