



4.1 The role of the key person and settling-in

Policy statement

Here at The Learning Meadow, we believe that children settle best when they have formed a bond with a staff member. Someone they can relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. We are committed to the key person approach and where possible within the first two weeks of the children starting with us we assign them to the staff member who they have formed a bond with. As a team we are all involved with all children and the key person ensures that the children are progressing and that all their developmental needs are met.

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 partners with our 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. Each child must have a key person. These procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children.

Procedures

- The key person is responsible for:
 - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
 - Developmental records 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 the 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.
 - Encouraging positive relationships with all children.
- All staff care for all children at The Learning Meadow however, we promote the role of the key person as the child's primary role model in our setting, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other adults and children.

Settling-in

- Settling in sessions are offered only within term time sessions to ensure the child and parents get a realistic example of a session. Parents are invited to stay or leave the child as appropriate. We do not offer settling in sessions during holiday club weeks.
- Before a child starts to attend our setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our handbook and policies), information days and evenings and individual meetings with parents.
- During the term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
- We use pre-start visits and the first session at which a child attends to explain and complete, with his/her parents, the child's registration records including the ey log system.
- When a child starts to attend, 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.
- We have an expectation that if needed the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for the desired time, during the first week, gradually decreasing this time as and when the child is able to cope.
- Younger children will sometimes 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 a staff member for example, the child looks for the staff member 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. If possible this staff member will become the child's key worker.
- 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, but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left. We expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay if needed, during the first week, or possibly longer.
- 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.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
- Within the first four to six weeks of starting, we discuss and work with the child's parents to begin to create their child's starting point through the ey log system
- We follow 'In the moment planning' where most of the time the children lead their learning with input from staff only to extend their learning and help to create further learning opportunities. Each child is a focus child once a term and each term their development is then plotted. Parents are invited to tell us a bit about home life during this week and share photo's of what they do at home. This ensures parents input into their child's development. Parents can access their child's learning journey anytime on the ey log system.

The progress check at age two

- The key person carries out the progress check at age two in accordance with any local procedures that are in place: *The EYFS progress check at age two*.
- The progress check is completed on the ey log system by the end of their first term. Parents can access these checks once they are published on ey log.
- The progress check aims to review the child’s development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their child’s development in the prime areas of learning.
- 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 therefore able to identify any early learning SEN concerns
- The progress check will 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).
- The key person will ensure our environment provides 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 by	<u>The Learning Meadow</u>	<i>(name of provider)</i>
On	<u>October 2018</u>	<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed	<u>October 2019</u>	<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of the provider	<hr/>	
Name of signatory	<u>Dawn Pirie</u>	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	<u>Owner/manager</u>	

Review record.

Date reviewed	comments	Sign	Next review
Oct 2019	No updates	DP	Oct 2020
Oct 2020	Updated as introduced EY Log	DP	Oct 2021
Nov 2021	ITMP updates	DP	Nov 2022