



Organisation and administration

4.2 How we care for your child: Your child's Key Person and Key Buddy

Policy statement

At School House Nurseries we operate a Key Person system to help give your child the care they need.

The Key Person will be on hand during the child's induction sessions, helping the child to settle at the nursery and talking to parents about the child's individual needs.

Then over time, Key People (and their Key Buddies, who deputise for the Key People when necessary) will be a point of contact for the parent/carer. They maintain the child's individual records and help ensure the child's care needs are met.

However, in a Montessori setting one of our ambitions is to promote the children's independence. We do this in part by ensuring the children receive support from everyone on the team, rather than developing an over-reliance on an individual carer. Children receive care from and are comfortable with, everyone on the team – not just their Key Person.

To explain what this means to you and your child, we'd like first to describe how the main nursery classroom operates. (Minis parents will also find the following useful, as the general principles of the main classroom apply in their area too.)

Your child's experience on a typical day

When children arrive in the morning they are greeted in the classroom by one or more of the team. Any one of us might do this – we all know the children's names and they know us – but it is likely that one of the staff from your child's area (i.e. the 2s or 3s) will step forward. (Minis parents go straight to the Minis area.)

Children will then go to the breakfast table if it's a morning session, or perhaps we'll guide them into the area which has activities that are best suited to their age and stage (for older children, the 2s or 3s).



Over the first two and half hours of each session your child will certainly spend some time in their area with the staff from that team, participating in a group focused activity and taking activities from the shelves.

However, your child won't have to stay in their area all the time, as the outdoor classroom will probably be open, there may well be something creative and messy on the go in the craft room, and of course the whole classroom is open for them to explore. As your child travels around the nursery they will be cared for by staff from across the whole nursery team.

During outdoor play the ages often mix together, while at music and circle times we tend to break into smaller, age-related groups as this generally provides the best experience for the children.

So, as you can see, the children have a varied day with us and while the staff in their room are central to that experience, they are not the only people who will care for your child. Everyone in the team works hard to create the warm and caring environment that allows your child to explore and learn.

The role of a Key Person and Key Buddy

A Key Person's / Key Buddy's role is to help ensure that learning and care is tailored to the individual needs of your child. They must have a detailed understanding of the stage your child has reached and how to help them take the next steps on their learning journey.

But Key People and their Buddies are not the only staff in the nursery who know what to teach your child. As is apparent, hopefully, from the description of how the classroom works, every member of your child's 'room' team (Minis, 2s, 3s) knows the steps your child needs to take to progress, and they are all able to take the observations that you see in Tapestry.

Moreover, we want your child to feel happy, comfortable and safe every second they're in the building, irrespective of what they're doing or whether their Key Person is working that day (Key People and their Buddies need holidays too!). So no matter what your child is engaged with, no matter where they are in the nursery, they'll know and be comfortable with the person looking after them.

'Key People' are useful because they take charge of record keeping and give you a point of contact, but they're not the only people who look after your child. Over the course of a day, lots of the team will, including those who may be your child's Key Person in the future.

Children develop so quickly in the early years we do not encourage attachment to a single member of staff. We prefer instead to foster security through a regular routine and familiar faces, so that whenever a child needs support, we're always there for them.

Key Person / Key Buddy tasks

- Our Key Person and Key Buddy system ensures there is always someone in the classroom to act as a child's Key Person.
- Parents are introduced to both the Key Person and Key Buddy during the settling-in sessions.
- The Key Person/Key Buddy is responsible for the induction of child and family into the setting. They work with the parent to plan for, and deliver, a personalised programme of care for the child.
- When a child joins the nursery the Key Person makes a 'Baseline assessment' of the child, which is to say, they assess the child's progress in each of the curriculum's seven areas of learning.
- The Key Person uses the 'Baseline assessment' to create an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for the child. The ILP helps us deliver continuity of care when the child's Key Person changes.
- From the child's first day onwards, the Key Person/Key Buddy:
 - Acts as the point of contact for parents.
 - Maintains the link with other carers involved with the child, such as childminders, by working with the Manager to co-ordinate the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development.
 - Writes the child's Individual Learning Plan.
 - Records the child's developmental progress (by making observations on Tapestry, our online Learning Journal.)
 - Talks with parents to ensure that Individual Learning Plans reflect the whole child – both in our setting and at home.
 - Is responsible for the ensuring the child's care needs are met. They work with others to achieve this (such as with the care assistants on the changing of nappies) but ultimately, they make sure the child's individual needs are taken care of.

This policy was updated and reviewed in:

Reviewed date	Name	Signature
September 2015	Stuart Watt	
May 2016	Stuart Watt	
August 2016	Stuart Watt	
September 2016	Stuart Watt	
April 2017	Stuart Watt	
April 2018	Lindy Baldwin	
August 2018	Lindy Baldwin	
April 2019	Lindy Baldwin	
May 2019	Stuart Watt	

January 2020	Stuart Watt	
January 2021	Stuart Watt	
January 2022	Stuart Watt	
March 2023	Stuart Watt	