



Organisation and administration

4.3 Our settling in policy and procedures

Policy statement

We aim to make our nurseries welcoming places, where children settle quickly thanks to the consideration given to the individual child's needs. To achieve this we apply the knowledge we have gained over many years while at the same time working closely with parents.

Procedures

Before a child starts

- Before a child starts at nursery we suggest parents read up about how we operate, so that they know what the nursery experience will be like for their child. Information about the nursery can be found on the website and in the Welcome Pack, which is provided at the child's first settling-in session. The nursery's policies and procedures, sent out by email before the child starts, will also be useful.
- Children who have not previously spent time away from home before joining nursery may find it a little more difficult to settle. For this reason we always suggest that a child spends some time away from their parents before they start with us, even if it is only for a few hours at their grandparents', perhaps, or at a friend's house.
- Children who are always comforted at home in ways that are not easily replicated at nursery can also find it more difficult to settle. It could be that a child is constantly carried around at home, for example, or perhaps that they are given snacks every time they become unsettled. We ask parents to think this through in the weeks leading up to their start at nursery, and to do what they can to break habits which may make it more difficult for their child to adjust to nursery life.

The settling in sessions

- Our settling in process usually involves three sessions in the classroom. The Key Person looks after the child and his/her parents during the settling-in sessions.
- We use the first settling-in session to explain to parents how the settling in process works, to learn more about the child, and to explore with parents how best to settle the child. We also complete



some of the child's records (such as the 'All about me', 'Daily routine' and 'Permissions for walks' forms). The parent is expected to stay in the classroom for the first settling-in session.

- Usually, the parent will be able to leave their child part way through the second settling-in session, and drop the child with us for the third settling in session, as they would on a normal nursery day. Parents leave the nursery during the third settling-in session, safe in the knowledge that we will call on their mobile if there is any need.
- We judge a child to be settled when:
 - They have formed a relationship with their Key Person.
 - They are familiar with their surroundings and know where to find things.
 - They are pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- If after three sessions we and the parents think that a child hasn't sufficiently settled additional settling in sessions can be arranged. We might also try other settling techniques, including a visual nursery timetable for home, or photos of family in the classroom. We will probably not suggest that parents stay in the classroom, however, as this can be upsetting for the other children and creates safeguarding issues (as no adult visitor can be left unaccompanied in the classroom.)

The best way to say goodbye

- When parents leave their child with us, we ask them to say goodbye, to tell their child when they will be coming back, then to leave promptly.
- This can be difficult, particularly if you haven't left your child much before, or if your child is unsettled as you go. But in our experience prolonging the moment of separation only serves to prolong the upset on all sides. Please do remember that children are very rarely unsettled for long, and that they are being left with caring professionals who will do everything they can to comfort the child.
- We always give an unsettled child one-to-one care, with cuddles and undivided attention, as we do not believe in leaving a child to cry. We would always call parents if a child was not happy at nursery, for whatever reason.
- In almost all cases a child will find it easier to settle if their parent hands them over to us in a positive way, without being upset themselves or lingering in the classroom.
- It is very rare that it's best for a parent to stay with their child as they settle but we will tell you if we believe that this is the best option.
- Children who have had a prolonged period of absence from nursery may need their parent on hand to help them resettle.

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	