# Settling In and Transition Policy

**Purpose**

At Hopscotch Day Nurseries our aim is to work in partnership with parents to help them become familiar with the setting and offer a settled relationship for the child, giving consideration to their individual needs and the circumstances of every child and their families. We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the nursery and to feel secure and comfortable with all staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's continued well-being and their role as active partners, with the child being able to benefit from what the nursery has to offer. All our staff know about the importance of building strong attachments with children

Our nursery will work in partnership with parents to settle their child into the nursery environment by:

- Allocating a key person to each child and his/her family, before he/she starts to attend. The key person welcomes and looks after the child ensuring that their care is tailored to meet their individual needs, builds a relationship with the child and their parents during the settling in period and throughout their time at the nursery, to ensure the family has a consistent familiar person.
- Reviewing the nominated key person if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child's needs are supported
- Providing parents with relevant information about the policies and procedures of the nursery
- Working with parents to gather information before the child starts on the child's interests, likes and dislikes and their favourite things available at settling sessions, e.g. their favourite story or resource, as well as completing a baseline of the child's current development to plan, and meet, the individual needs of the child from the first day
- Planning settling in visits and introductory sessions (lasting approximately 1-2 hours). These will be provided free of charge over a one to two-week period, dependent on individual needs, age and stage of development.
- Requiring parents/ carers to stay with their child during the first visit which is approximately an hour. To give the key person an opportunity to understand the child's routines and needs, by completing the Registration Paperwork. Settling in visits and introductory sessions are key to a smooth transition and to ensure good communication and information sharing between staff and parents
- Reassuring parents whose child needs some additional support settling into the nursery and developing a plan to achieve this with them.
- Encouraging parents, where appropriate, to separate themselves from their child for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences.
- Assigning a co key person to each child in case the key person is not available. Parents will be made aware of this to support the settling process and attachment.
- Carrying out home visits where we feel the child starting with us may require additional support when attending our setting.
- Not taking a child on an outing from the nursery until they are completely settled.
- Encouraging parents to send in family photos to display to help settle the child
- Creating photo books of the setting including photos of staff for the child to take home and share with their parent and become familiar with the staff and new environment

We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it too distressing to be left. We will then work on a plan of support to settle the child as appropriate.

**Transition**

At Hopscotch Day Nurseries we recognise that young children will experience many transitions in their early years; some of these planned and some unplanned. We are sensitive to the impact of such changes to children and this policy sets out the ways in which we support children going through these transitions.

Some examples of transitions that young children and babies may experience are:

- Moving between different rooms within the nursery
- Starting school or moving nurseries

- Family breakdowns
- New siblings
- Moving home
- Death of a family member or close friend
- Death of a family pet.

Staff are trained to observe their key children and to be sensitive to any changes in their behaviour and personality. We respectfully ask that parents inform us of any changes in the home environment that may impact on their child so staff can be aware of the reasons behind any potential changes in the child's behaviour.

**Moving rooms procedure**

When a child is ready to move to a different room in the nursery, we follow the process set out below and work with the parents to ensure this is a seamless process in which the child is fully supported at all stages. This may include a handover meeting between the existing key person, new key person and parents if we consider the child may need additional support.

- When a child is due to move up to the next room a transition booklet will be issued to each parent, this will include details of the settling in sessions, as well as introduce them to the new room, staff members, routines etc. The time of day, length of session and number of sessions will all be adapted to meet the unique needs of each child.
- A transfer form will be given to the child's next key person explaining the child's care, routine and development to ensure all of his/ her needs are being followed.
- The child will spend short sessions in their new room prior to the permanent move to enable them to feel comfortable in their new surroundings
- The child's key person will go with the child on these initial visits to enable a familiar person to be present at all times
- Wherever possible groups of friends will be moved together to enable these friendships to be kept intact and support the children with the peers they know
- Parents will be kept informed of all visits and the outcomes of these sessions e.g. through on-line learning journey updates and verbally during handover
- Only when the child has settled in through these taster sessions will the permanent room move take place.

If a child requires more support this will be discussed between the key person, parent, manager and room leader of the new room to agree how and when this will happen.

**Starting school or moving childcare providers**

Starting school is an important transition and some children may feel anxious or distressed. We will do all we can to facilitate a smooth move and minimise any potential stresses. This following process relates to children going to school. However, wherever possible, we will adapt this process to support children moving to another childcare provider e.g. childminder or another nursery.

- We provide a variety of resources that relate to the school, e.g. uniform to dress up in, a role play area set up as a school classroom, photographs of all the schools the children may attend. This will help the children to become familiar with this new concept and will aid the transition
- We invite school representatives into the nursery to introduce them to the children
- Where possible we use other ways to support the transition to school, e.g. inviting our staff visiting the schools so that they can come back and talk to the children about their experience
- Where possible we plan visits to the school with the key person. Each key person will talk about the school with their key children who are due to move to school and discuss what they think may be different and what may be the same. They will talk through any concerns the child may have and initiate activities or group discussions relating to any issues to help children overcome these.

- Once confirmation of school placement is received, we will make every effort effort to contact the receiving school.
- We produce a comprehensive report on every child starting school to enable teachers to have a good understanding of every child received. This will include their interests, strengths and level of understanding and development in key areas. This will support continuity of care and early learning.
- If the school has Tapestry we will transfer the child's account to them.
- With parental permission around school allocation day, we may share details of the schools children are going to so parents can see which children may be going to the same school. This can offer some reassurance for the children to know that are moving with some familiar peers.

**Other early years providers**

Where children are attending other early years settings or are cared for by a childminder we will work with them to share relevant information about children's development. If a child is brought to nursery or collected from nursery by a childminder or nanny we will ensure that key information is shared directly with the parent via Tapestry or Famly (depending on the setting)

**Family breakdowns**

We recognise that when parents separate it can be a difficult situation for all concerned. We will work alongside families to support children as best we can during this difficult time.

**Moving home and new siblings**

We recognise that both these events may have an impact on a child. Normally, parents will have advance notice of these changes and we ask parents to let us know about these events so we can support the child to be prepared. The key person will spend time talking to the child and providing activities that may help the child to act out any worries they have, e.g. through role play, stories and discussions.

**Bereavement**

We recognise that this may be a very difficult time for children and their families and will do all that we can to offer support to all concerned should this be required.

If parents feel that their child requires additional support because of any changes in their life, we ask that you speak to the nursery manager and the key person to enable this support to be put into place.

| *This policy is to be read in conjunction with:* | |
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| EY06 | Key Person; |
| EY08 | Parents as Partners |