

Acorns Community Pre-School  
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### **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.*

## **Key Person**

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

#### **Policy statement**

We believe 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. We are committed to the key person approach which benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting. It encourages secure relationships which support children to thrive, give parents confidence and make the setting a happy 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 partners with our setting. We aim to make [our/my] 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.

#### **EYFS key themes and commitments**

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.2 Inclusive practice 1.3 Keeping safe	2.2 Parents as partners 2.4 Key person	3.2 Supporting every child	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

1.4 Health and well-being		3.3 The learning environment	
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## Procedures

- We allocate a key person within the first three weeks of the child starts.
- The key person is responsible for:
  - Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into [our/my] 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.
  - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
  - Working with the parents to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
  - Acting as the key contact for the parents.
  - 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 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.
  - Encouraging positive relationships between children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our pre-school, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.

### *Settling-in*

- Before a child starts to attend pre-school, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus), displays about pre-school activities, an open door policy and individual meetings with parents.
- During the half-term before the child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the pre-school.
- We allocate a key worker to each child and his/her family, before she/he starts to attend; the key worker welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- We offer a home visit by the person who will be the child's key person or supervisor, to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.
- 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, and 'story so far'.
- 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 pre-school.

- We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for most of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
- Younger children will 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 their key person or another specific member of staff; for example the child looks for the person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems to be 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.
- When parents leave, 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, so we expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay for at least the first week, or possibly longer, until the child can stay happily without them.
- 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 pre-school.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the pre-school 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 create their learning journey which forms their child's record of achievement.

#### *The progress check at age two*

- The key person carries out the progress check at once the child has started pre-school before their 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday in accordance with any local procedures that are in place and referring to the guidance *A Know How Guide: The EYFS progress check at age 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 parent(s).
- 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.

#### **Primary Legislation**

- The Children Act (2004)
- Childcare Act (2006)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- The Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Equalities Act (2010)

#### **Secondary Legislation**

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Human Rights Acts (1998)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001)

**Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications**

- Play is What I Do (2010)
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012) With supporting documentation

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Acorns Community Pre-School held on .....

Date to be reviewed:.....

Signed on behalf of the management team:.....

Name of signatory: .....

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner):.....