

## **Birdwood Nursery Settling-In and Key Person Procedure**

At Birdwood Nursery we want children to feel safe and happy within our setting as well as feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want you as parents to have confidence in both your child's wellbeing and your role as an active partner within our setting.

### **1. Our Aims**

- To make the setting a welcoming and happy space for your child;
- To create a secure relationship for your child within our setting;
- To make the setting a place where your child can settle in quickly and comfortably.

### **2. Our Methods**

Before you register your child, we will provide you with the opportunity to visit the nursery with your child and meet the staff. Once you accept a place, we will allocate a Key Person to your child who will welcome and look after them during their first sessions and continue providing them with support throughout the settling-in process.

When your child begins their first session with us, we will explain the process of settling-in again with you as parents and jointly decide on the best way to help your child settle into the nursery.

Younger children might take longer to settle, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence for whatever reason may need to be re-settled.

We consider a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their Key-Person. Each child should also be familiar with where things are in the hall and be happy to participate in activities.

We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting if the child finds it too distressing to be left with us. This is especially the case with very young children.

### **3. Key Person System**

At Birdwood Nursery we operate a Key Person system. The key person is responsible for a small group of children providing the reassurance needed for each child to feel safe and cared for as well as building a relationship with parents/carers. The Key Person will help the child to become familiar with the setting and feel safe within it. They will also talk to parents/carers to make sure the needs of the child are being met appropriately, and the records of development and progress are shared with parent/carers and other professionals as necessary.

## **4. How the Key Person System Works**

Once your child begins nursery, a Key Person will be allocated to him/her. The Key Person will record information regarding your child's learning and next steps of learning, as well as specific information such as medication instructions.

Changes in routine at home can affect your child's wellbeing so it is important that the Key Person forms not only a strong bond with the child but also with the child's family so that the sharing of information between the two can be done successfully, leading to the best possible outcomes for your child.

### **4.1 Our Key Person System Provides**

- Assistance with the settling in process;
- Building an attachment and getting to know your child;
- Building a strong relationship with parents and families;
- Close monitoring of your child's progress in all areas of development;
- Knowledge of each child's needs when planning activities and curriculum.

### **4.2 A Child's Key Person**

- Will provide parents with information regarding the routines, daily timetables, and activities in the hall;
- Will assist both parent and child during the settling-in period;
- Will support the child in becoming familiar with the daily routine and the layout of the nursery;
- Will be aware of circumstances at home that may affect changes in a child's behaviour from time to time;
- Will carry out observations on children in their groups and devise plans for future activities taking into account children's needs and interests;
- Will take care of your child's personal needs i.e., nappy changing, toileting, whenever possible.

## **5. At Birdwood Nursery we use the following procedure to settle the children into nursery**

Before the child starts, they will visit the nursery to fill in their registration form and be given written information, and pictures of the staff and the setting, or be directed to our website for more information about the setting. They will be allocated a Key Person who will welcome the child and their family at their first session and during their settling-in process.

- We ask the child's parent/carer to drop the child off at the door of the nursery whereupon the key person will greet them both and take the child into the nursery. We ask that you explain to the child before coming to the nursery the process of being dropped off:
  - i.e., 'Today Daddy is going to leave you in the nursery to play, I'm going to take you to the door then say goodbye and will be back for you in a little while.'
- On the first day the child will be left with us. If the child settles, we will text you during the morning to let you know how they are doing. If a child

continues to be distressed, we will ring you to collect your child and then have a meeting to plan the next steps. This could involve coming to nursery for 30 mins and then going home again. Increasing the time in nursery by 10 mins each time they are at the setting;

- Depending on the child the process will be repeated for the rest of the week increasing the time the child stays with us each day building them up to staying for a full session.

We understand that some children will settle more quickly than others, but do not feel that allowing a child to cry will help them settle any quicker. We will expect parents to be available to come and pick up their child early for the first week and possibly longer depending on the child's needs, until they are happy enough to stay for the whole session.

Some children may take longer to settle and become very upset upon parting from their parent/carer, if this is the case with your child, we ask that the child is still left with us so that he/she has an opportunity to form a bond with their Key Person and eventually fully settle.

During the settling-in process children are still taking up their place even though they may only spend a short time in the setting and fees are still required to be paid in full.