Early years practice procedures

**Prime times – Settling in and transitions**

To feel securely settled and ready to learn, children need to form attachments with the adults who care for them, primarily a key person, but others too. In this way they feel part of a community; they are able to contribute to that community and receive from it. Very young children, especially two- to three-year-olds, approach separation from their parent with anxieties, older children have a more secure understanding of ‘people permanence’ and are able to approach new experiences with confidence; but also need time to adjust and feel secure. It is the entitlement of all children to be settled comfortably into a new environment.

1. Young children feel safest when a familiar adult, such as a parent, is present when they are getting used to a new carer and new surroundings. In this way they can become confident in engaging with those experiences independently later on. We strongly recommend that your child attends Messy and Sensory Play Classes before joining Little Learners Pre-school.
2. Because the initial need for proximity of the parent has been met, young children gradually begin to feel secure with a key person in a new surrounding so that they are able to participate independently for small periods of time.
3. Young children are able to separate from parents’ and main carers when they have formed a secure attachment to their key person who knows and understands them best and on whom they can depend for their needs to be met.

The setting manager and key person explain the need for settling in and agree a plan with the parents. **Settling-in for children with SEND**

* If a child has been identified as having SEND then the key person/SENCO and parents will need to identify and address potential barriers to settling in e.g. timings of medication and invasive procedures, specific routines and levels of support.

**Settling-in**

* Some children take longer, and their needs for proximity and secure base stages should be accommodated as much as possible.
* Some children appear to leap to dependency/independence within a couple of days. In most cases, they will revert to the need for proximity and secure base. It can be difficult to progress to true dependency/independenceand this can be frustrating.
* On the first day, the parent attends with the child and stays for the morning or less on day two, longer and the next day stays until and including lunch (if full day care).
* If the child shows interest in the activities and is beginning to engage with the key person and other children, the parent spends time in away to see how the child responds.
* Parents are encouraged to explain to their child where they are going, and that they will return.