



Key Person and Settling in procedure policy

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Attachment theory

'Babies and children become attached to significant adults within reliable, respectful, warm and loving relationships which are essential in order to thrive. Babies and children experience wellbeing and contentment when their physical and emotional needs are met and their feelings are accepted. The key person approach, reflecting relationships within families, helps serve to meet these conditions. Such a grounding provides a "secure base" from which children feel confident to explore the world and form other relationships. The key person role involves a "triangle of trust" with the child and family.' (Birth to 5 Matters)

Children's attachment experiences do not need to be perfect, and not all children develop attachments in the same way, but without 'good enough' attachment, healthy all-round development, though possible, becomes more difficult to achieve. This can lead to long term physical and emotional consequences. The quality of attachments made in the early years are likely to have an impact on future relationships, well-being, aspirations and achievements.

Key person and the EYFS

The key person role is set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS, last updated in 2021) and it states that the key person must:

- Help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet his/her individual needs
- Seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home
- Help families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate
- When a child begins to attend a setting, the provider must inform the parent/carer of the key person's name and explain what the role involves.

Effective early years provision encompasses and pays as much attention to children's care as it does to play and learning. At Rocket Productions we believe that 'children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person' (DCSF, 2008). As the EYFS states, the key person approach allows teachers to form close attachments of emotional significance with children as well as being able to work closely with their parents, carers and other professionals. We refer to the staffing ratios set out on in paragraphs 3.28-3.39 of the EYFS framework.

Procedures

- Although our classrooms have a team-teaching approach whereby both teachers in the class know all children and families really well, the Pre-Prep will allocate a key person within the first weeks and inform parents
- The key person is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into his/her class (the key person will call parents if child is in distress and will be responsible for maintaining effective communication with them)
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- The key person works with the parent to plan, care and to meet the children's individual needs and the child's well-being, care and learning.



- The key person acts as the key contact for the child's parents and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a nanny, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- The key person will be responsible for carrying out observations, collecting evidence and maintaining developmental and progress records including uploading moments from the week into the child's SeeSaw (this is done every Thursday for parents to have a little peek into what children have been doing that week, please note that we ask teachers to focus their interactions and teaching and not carrying Ipads around to take photos).
- The key person will be expected to hold at least one meeting per term in which parents can discuss their child's learning and development stage as well as any concerns or suggestions. An end of term report (HIVE) is also produced to celebrate children's achievements and how they are developing.
- The settling in/baseline assessment the first few weeks of the term will be made up from observing and interacting with the child and from discussions with parents/carers. Parents have access to the EYFS guide for parents which includes developmental checkpoints, see the online Parents Portal. By identifying each child's starting points, teachers can make a judgment on the progress each child is making throughout their journey with us. This allows teachers to plan learning experiences and tailor the support and next steps so they enable and challenge children sufficiently. Parents please access links and resources via the online Parents' Portal on the website.
- The key person is responsible for discussing any concerns with parents and to work with them to provide the right support including working the Learning Support Coordinator (LSC/SENDCO) and other external professionals. See SEND policy for more information.
- The key person is responsible to pass on key information about the child to those working with the child, e.g. if the child has a different teacher in the afternoon, e.g. if the child has an allergy and needs to be shared with someone coming in to do an activity, e.g. if the child needs additional support during extra-curricular activities...
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.
- Reviewing the nominated key person if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child's needs are supported

Settling in Procedure for New children

When joining our Pre-Preps, parents are provided with the following information in the Rocket Parents Manual (this can be accessed securely via the Parents Portal on our website). Please notice this could change if there were any new Covid-19 restrictions.

'The following is a guide to the best settling in process for children when it comes to their first few weeks at Rocket. We realise that this can be a daunting time for both children and parents, but we want to reassure you that all the staff at our Pre-Prep are highly qualified and experienced in settling children.

In September, your child's teachers will host a short 1:1 session with both parents/carers and the child to introduce themselves and to show your child their new class as well as discussing daily routines such as where to hang their coats, where to put their water bottles, etc. and help you with any questions you might have.



The key to an easy 'settling in period' is effective and open communication between the child/parent/teacher. Speak positively about the school and your child's teachers to help develop relationships and trust. Talk to your child about the school routine to familiarise them with it and always say 'goodbye' to your child before you leave.

Dropping off your child in their class for the first time can be a very anxious time for both parents and children. In our experience, the best method is to avoid staying too long. It is better to spend only a very short time at the school at 'drop off' time and come back earlier than it is to stay initially for a longer period. Often spending longer periods during the first few weeks prolongs the nervousness and builds up their emotions for being upset when you do eventually leave.

We will call you if we feel your child is in distress, however it is important that teachers and children have time together to bond, our teachers are incredibly experienced and nurturing. The relationship between your child and their teacher at this age is extremely important. We have a very soft and gentle approach to settling in. For a child who is upset we would gradually increase the length of time at nursery over a period of weeks. For example, on the first week we will work with the parents to come back after an hour, then we may suggest increasing the time to 1.5-2 hours, and so on. For the following weeks they are usually ready and keen to attend the full session but we will always discuss this with you.'

For children who come to school with English as an additional language it would be helpful teaching your child's teachers a few key words in your home language. We are privileged to have a very diverse teaching staff who are able to communicate with children in a variety of languages if needed, however we do have an all English language approach for our day to day routines and education and so knowing a few key words will help whilst they are learning the routine. For more information please see your EAL policy.

If your child has a favourite soft toy or small blanket that helps settle them initially they are more than welcome to bring this in with them. Also, please let the teachers know if they have a favourite activity or toys i.e. songs, favourite stories, cars, building, water play, etc that may be familiar and comforting so teachers can set these up during the first week. Questions related to your child's interests and needs, including medical and dietary information, must be filled in the '**All About Me**' online form. It is very important we have these forms prior to their first day at the Pre-Prep.'