

## **22. Settling in Pre-School policy**

### **Statement of intent**

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the Pre-School and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well being and their role as active partners with the Pre-School.

### **Aim**

We aim to make the Pre-School a welcome place for all families where their children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

### **Methods**

Before a child starts to attend the Pre-School, we use a variety of ways to provide parents/carers with information. These include written information such as our prospectus which invites parents/carers to request the policies and procedures booklet if required beforehand. Also a copy of the regular newsletter which informs parents/carers about Pre-School activities, future plans, fundraising events, social outings and meetings. We provide opportunities for parents/carers and their child to visit the Pre-School for play sessions or open afternoons. We offer a home visit if required, by the person who will be the child's key worker. We will then contact parents/carers to arrange a suitable start date and this will be confirmed in writing, either by post or email.

This letter will contain the following:

- Start date and sessions allocated.
- Confirmation of key worker
- Invite to parents/carers to help settle their child.
- Information on the lunch facility.
- Information on payment of fees or educational grants.
- Information regarding show and tell activities and lending books from the pre-school selection.
- Reminding parents/carers to make contact if they have any further concerns or enquiries.

When a child starts, we work with the parents/carers to decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the pre-school. We allocate a key worker to each child and their family, before they start to attend; the key worker welcomes and looks after the child and their parents/carers at the child's first session. Parents are also made aware of other key workers they may approach if their main key worker is not available so they have a point of contact at all times. On the first session each parent/carer is given a comprehensive welcome pack which the key worker will go through and explain in detail.

The welcome pack contains the following information

- The child's registration form
- Emergency contact details and parental consent form for applying first aid or emergency treatment.
- Parental consent for photographs being taken of their child.
- Parental consent for outside play, applying sun cream, walks around the local village.

- Parental consent to allow Ofsted to access their child's records.
- Pre-school Policy and Procedures Handbook with confirmation slip.
- Home link book 'All About Me', if required.
- Newsletter.
- Contact card for pre-school.

From time to time the pre-school is in receipt of various information, advice and guidance booklets from a wide range of statutory service providers. As these become available, we endeavour to pass them on to parents, whilst retaining a copy for the Families Information Basket, situated on the front desk.

The key worker will check the registration details are up to date. This will include any information on additional needs, medical or dietary requirements. We encourage parents to share any information about their child that will help them settle more quickly such as any special toy or comforter, toileting, any dislikes, and encourage them to complete a 'favourite things' leaflet which focuses on the child's current interests. If their child is attending another setting we obtain written permission from the parent to contact the other provider to gain more information on their child. This information enables us to settle their child and talk about familiar experiences to them building on what they already know and can do. Parents are given the option of receiving information by paper copy or via email.

The key worker will also point out the following:

- Where the main notice board is highlighting the registration certificate, insurance details, complaints procedure and other useful information.
- Where to access details on the Early Years Foundation Stage and planning for the week.
- How the planning works, using the parents and child's information, recording observations and forward planning.
- Family basket, where to put home link books, show and tell and returning pre-school books.
- Introduce staff.
- Make existing pre-school children aware of the name of the new child, asking them to share their names, be helpful and kind.
- Talk through routine from arrival to the end of session explaining about the departure record.
- Explain our confidentiality policy
- Explain our keeping of records and data protection (GDPR May 2018)

If a child is comfortable about their parents leaving and they are happy to do so, we always ensure we contact the parents by telephone during the child's first morning session to reassure them. We also reassure parents/carers whose children seem to be taking a long time settling, making it clear they will be supported for as long as it takes and encourage them to support this. We sensitively encourage parents/carers to separate from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences during their stay. We share information about what their child has enjoyed at the end of the session.

We have flexible admission procedures to meet the needs of individual children. When arranging start dates we only introduce a maximum of two new families into the group a week to ensure they get our full attention. We offer support and advice to parents where an early identification of additional need has been identified by the staff or parent (refer to **Policy 1. Special Educational Needs**).

**Links to other policies, legislation and forms:**

- Prospectus
- Welcome Pack
- Registration Details
- Emergency Contacts
- Permission Confirmations
- Data Protection Policy 9.
- Confidentiality Policy 8.

This policy was first adopted at a meeting of Walton Under Fives Pre-School held May 2011.  
It was reviewed and adapted at a committee meeting in June 2021

Signed (Pre School Leader) ..... Date .....

Signed (Committee Chair) ..... Date .....