



## Key Person Policy

### Statement of Intent

At Toddington Childcare and Forest School, we believe that children thrive when they feel safe, secure, valued, and supported by caring adults who understand their individual needs. A strong Key Person approach helps children build secure and positive relationships, promotes emotional well-being and supports their learning and development.

We recognise that positive partnerships between children, parents/carers and Early Years practitioners are fundamental to ensuring children settle successfully and enjoy their time within our setting. We aim to provide a welcoming, inclusive and nurturing environment where every child feels respected and supported.

It is a Safeguarding and Welfare requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework that each child is assigned a Key Person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, helping the child become familiar with the setting, building positive relationships with their family and helping families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

### Key Person Procedures

The role of the Key Person is to:

- Welcome the child and their family and support them through the settling-in process.
- Build a warm, trusting and secure relationship with the child.
- Work closely with parents/carers to understand the child's individual needs, interests, routines, and family circumstances.
- Plan and support personalised learning, care, and wellbeing experiences.
- Act as the main point of contact for parents/carers and maintain regular communication regarding the child's progress and development.
- Work collaboratively with any other professionals or carers involved in the child's care, where appropriate and with parental consent.
- Maintain and contribute to the child's developmental records and assessments, ensuring these reflect the child's achievements both at home and within the setting.
- Encourage positive relationships between children and support their emotional wellbeing.

- Monitor the child's welfare and raise any concerns in line with the settings Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Where possible, a home visit will be arranged by the Setting Manager and Key Person to support a smooth transition into the setting.

In the absence of a child's key person, any member of the room team may undertake key person responsibilities, as all staff work closely with the children and are familiar with their individual needs, routines, and interests.

### **Settling-In Procedures**

We recognise that every child is unique and will settle into their new environment at their own pace. Our settling-in procedures are flexible and tailored to meet the individual needs of each child and family.

### **Before a Child Starts**

We provide families with information about the setting through:

- Our website and prospectus.
- Parent information packs.
- Policies and procedures.
- Open days and visits.
- Arranged home visits.

### **Settling-In Process**

- Parents/carers will be involved in planning the child's transition into the setting.
- Initial sessions may be shorter and gradually increased according to the child's needs.
- The key person will observe and respond to their key child's emotional needs, helping them develop confidence and security within the setting.
- Children will be supported in becoming familiar with indoor and outdoor learning environments, including Forest School sessions where applicable.

We understand that some children may require longer settling-in periods than others, particularly:

- Younger children.
- Children who have not previously experienced separation from their parents/carers.
- Children with SEND or additional needs.
- Children returning after a prolonged absence.

## **Supporting Separation**

When parents/carers leave:

- We encourage them to say goodbye clearly and positively.
- They should reassure their child that they will return and explain when.
- Staff will comfort and support the child as needed and keep parents informed if concerns arise.

We do not believe that leaving a distressed child to cry without support helps them settle. Children's emotional wellbeing remains our priority at all times.

If a child experiences significant distress that cannot be eased, we will work closely with parents/carers to review and adapt the settling-in arrangements. In exceptional circumstances, we may delay sessions until a suitable transition plan can be agreed.

## **When a Child is Considered Settled**

A child may be considered settled when they:

- Show confidence in the setting environment.
- Form a secure relationship with their key person and other familiar adults.
- Engage in play and learning opportunities.
- Seek comfort from trusted adults when needed.
- Show interest in other children and activities.
- Separate from their parent/carer with manageable levels of anxiety.

## **Partnership with Parents/Carers**

During collection, the key person will provide parents/carers with brief feedback on:

- The child's wellbeing and engagement during the session.
- Activities and experiences the child has enjoyed.
- Any significant achievements or notable moments.
- Any important information regarding the child's care or welfare.

More detailed discussions regarding the child's progress, development, and next steps will take place during parent evenings, held twice annually.

We value parents/carers as partners and encourage ongoing communication to ensure the best outcomes for every child.

## **Statutory Progress Check at the Age of Two**

Where applicable, between the age of 24 and 35 months, the Key Person will complete an assessment and write a summary of progress for every key child attending Pre-School who has settled in partnership with parents/carers.

The progress check aims to:

- Review the child's development in the prime areas of learning.
- Celebrate strengths and achievements.
- Identify any areas where progress may be less than expected.
- Support early identification and where early intervention strategies may be of benefit to support a child's individual needs.
- Ensure parents/carers have a clear understanding of their child's development.

Where concerns are identified, the key person will work with parents/carers and other relevant professionals, where appropriate, to plan appropriate support and next steps.

## **Equality and Inclusion**

Toddington Childcare and Forest School is committed to providing an inclusive environment where all children and families feel welcomed, respected, and valued.

Wherever necessary, we aim to make reasonable adjustments for settling-in arrangements to meet individual needs, including those relating to SEND, medical conditions, language, culture, religion, or family circumstances.

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## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains compliant with current legislation, the EYFS Statutory Framework, and best practice guidance.

Signed on behalf of Toddington Childcare and Forest School May 2026

Sarah Malcolm

Chair of Toddington Childcare and Forest School Parent Management Committee