

Settling In Policy:

At First Step Playgroup we recognise that children go through many transitions in the first few years of life, and that many children experience changes in circumstances along with this, such as; arrival of siblings; walking instead of using a pushchair; going to a child minder; moving house; sleeping in a bed not a cot, giving up their dummy, separation of parents, attending other groups etc.

Our AIM is to treat each child individually, do all we can to reduce anxieties, and make each transition a positive one for all involved including starting a nursery and settling in.

- When a child starts to attend First Step Playgroup, as much information as possible is sought from parents / guardians. (The registration form enables us to record essential details, but parents are also requested to fill in an "All about me" sheet for their child, so we know things that may help the child to settle, and things we can talk about with the child, such as their siblings and places they like to go.
- The length of the settling in period may vary but is usually between 2-6 weeks depending on the individual needs of the child and family.
- Each child is allocated a key person, and communication between home and setting can begin. The parent is encouraged to stay with their child in the beginning and play alongside them and their key person until a relationship has been formed. The close adult is welcome to spend as much time as necessary in the nursery with the child to settle them.
- The key person will ask you what your child likes to play with, what comforts them and any special words that they use. The settling in period is an opportunity for you to with us any of your concerns and to help your child to feel safe and secure. So please ask questions and play with your child and key person during this time.
- The close adult should be contactable at all times whilst your child is settling in.

Starting Off:

The settling in period is intended to bridge the gap for your child between home and the playgroup. It will help them to become accustomed to the playgroup and form an attachment with their key person, who will be with them for much of the time.

Being prepared is the key to success so that when the time comes everybody and everything is ready to get your child off to a good start.

In order to do this at First Step Playgroup we create the right nursery environment which is:

- Child-friendly, homely and welcoming
- Have places for your child to store their things (coat hooks and boxes)
- Allows your child's comforter to be available at all times
- Reflects the diversity of where we live by providing pictures, books and toys which represent the children and families that attend the playgroup.

All the people involved should also be prepared:

Parents and child:

- Parents are invited to visit the playgroup before the first day with their child.
- Parents are encouraged to talk about going to playgroup and recall the staff they have met especially their key person.
- An email link will be set up to share photographs of the playgroup and their key person and to make a book together to help the child settle.
- Get personal items ready for the first day- special bag, photograph of family members, comforter and clothes.

Key person and parents:

- Plan how the child will start playgroup
- Discuss the routines and how your child will manage them
- Show your child pictures of the playgroup and their key person
- Observe special times between parent and child
- Observe parents feeding and changing their child so the key person can follow your lead
- Share information
- Help your child become familiar with the environment by taking toys out and playing together or paint or read a book together.
- Discuss how we will share the care of your child.
- Talk about how your attitude to leaving your child will affect your child's feelings.

Child and key person:

- It would help if you could encourage your child to spend time with their key person during the settling in period.
- Talk to the key person about the activities your child enjoys best.
- Look at talk about pictures of your family with your key person (we can take photographs and the nursery and make a book together).
- Introduce your child to other children and the adults

Slowly does it:

- We use the words "little and often" is useful to remember when your child is getting ready to start playgroup. In other words the start should be gradual beginning with a short introduction and building up to longer periods as your child becomes more familiar with the environment, their key person and the other adults and children.
- As this happens your key person will discuss with you how they will increase their involvement with your child whilst you will gradually lesson yours. This could involve just sometimes sitting back from the situation and eventually leaving for a period of time.
- When parents and the key person feel your child is ready the parting arrangements will be agreed so that the parent then leaves for part or a full session. You should let your child know you are going and will return later.
- Arrangements will be flexible at the start to allow your child to stay for only part of a session if they are struggling with separating from you.
- As your child becomes more accustomed to their key person, they will usually find it easy to settle, although there will be occasions when this does not happen- perhaps if

your child is upset after a fall. These everyday occurrences, though unpleasant, tend to be short lived and children quickly get over tumbles. However, if your child continues to be upset there may be other factors that should be taken into account

Progress and Development

- As time goes on your key person will start to track what your child enjoys and where they are developmentally through using the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS). Their progress is recorded in a learning journal which is online and available for you to look at and add to. It will contain pictures, your child's work, observations and video footage from both at the nursery and from home. Parent / carers and practitioners work jointly on the child's learning journey, and it is strongly encouraged that information about the child's well-being is shared both ways regularly.
- Each observation, photograph and video will be available for you to look at on the same day as it is taken, in this way you can share with your family what your child has been doing and also make a comment on the journal. If you want you can print off these observations at home and make your own book. You can also add your own photographs and observations to your child's learning journal by emailing them to the playgroup. At the end of the academic year your child's complete learning journey will be given to you on a CD. If a child spends time with a childminder, or is brought to the group by a childminder, nanny or extended family member, notes or phone calls can be used to pass on information to parents, as well as verbally through the carer. Or we can set up an email link with them to allow them to share what your child has been doing and so that we can work together to develop your child. Appointments can be made by parents if they would like to talk in person to discuss any issues, and / or the child's progress.

Other Professional Involvement:

- If a family has received support from another professional, such as a portage worker, health visitor, community nurse etc, information from such professionals will also be sought after, with parental permission. (Eg. A child with Cystic Fibrosis - the nurse and/or parent will be invited to help staff understand issues for the child in the setting, and how to make the child's transition as smooth and unsurprising as possible). Parents of children with Special Educational Needs or disabilities will always be assured that their child's presence in the group will have a positive impact on other children, as all will be supported to include and understand the child's needs, interests and routines.

Moving On:

- When a child leaves, either to attend another setting, or to begin their school Nursery / Reception year, contact is made with the relevant setting. In some circumstances, staff from the new setting is invited to visit the child at playgroup.
- Information is passed on to schools in the form of Hounslow Borough's Tracker, including notes and reports that may be relevant. The child's learning journey, `

10.8 Transfer of records to school

Policy statement

We recognise that children sometimes move to another early years setting before they go on to school although many will leave our setting to enter a nursery or reception class.

We prepare children for these transitions and involve parents and the receiving setting in this process. We prepare records about a child's development and learning in the EYFS in our setting; in order to enable smooth transitions we share appropriate information with the receiving setting or school at transfer.

Confidential records are shared where there have been child protection concerns according to the process required by our Local Safeguarding Children Board.

The procedure guides this process and determines what information we can and cannot share with a receiving school or setting.

Procedures

Transfer of development records for a child moving to another early years setting or school

- Using the EYFS assessment of development and learning ensure the key person prepares a summary of achievements in the 7 areas of learning and development.
- This record refers to any additional language spoken by the child and his or her progress in both languages.
- The record also refers to any additional needs that have been identified or addressed by the setting.
- The record also refers to any special needs or disability and whether an EHH/CAF was raised in respect of special needs or disability, whether there is a Statement of Special Educational Needs and gives the name of the lead professional.
- The record contains a summary by the key person and a summary of the parent's view of the child.
- The document may be accompanied by other evidence such as photos or drawings that the child has made.
- For transfer to school, most local authorities provide an assessment summary format or a transition record for the setting to follow.
- If there have been any welfare or protection concerns a star is placed on the front of the assessment record.

Transfer of confidential information

- The receiving school or setting will need to have a record of concerns that were raised in the setting and what was done about them.
- A summary of the concerns will be made to send to the receiving setting or school along with the date of the last professional meeting or case conference. Some Local Safeguarding Children Boards will stipulate the forms to be used and provide these.
- Where an EHH/CAF has been raised in respect of any welfare concerns the name and contact details of the lead professional will be passed on to the receiving setting or school.
- Where there has been a s47 investigation regarding a child protection concern the name and contact details of the child's social worker will be passed on to the receiving setting or school – regardless of the outcome of the investigation.
- This information is posted or taken to the school or setting, addressed to the setting or school's designated person for child protection and marked confidential.

Legal framework

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Act 1989

Further guidance

- What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2006)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (DCSF 2008)