

Key Person(s)

This policy will cover;

- **The role of the key person**
- **Working in partnership with parents**
- **The role of the co-key person**
- **Purpose of key person time**

The role of the key person

Every child must have a named key person, as set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This key person is the first port of call for parents, and is the key adult at the setting for the child. Parents/carers should be informed of who their key person is on their settle visits. A key person must help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs, by getting to know the children, their interests, needs and abilities well. This will help key people to pick up on any developments in children's learning, any areas of concern, changes in behaviour or other worries.

It is vital for the key person to build relationships with both children and their families and respond sensitively to their feelings and wishes. This allows a mutual trust, respect and bond to build so that children and their families feel settled, comfortable and confident within the setting. This makes it easier to have honest conversations with parents about how their child is progressing, especially when there are any worries. Building up these bonds encourages partnership with parents, which will support the knowledge that you have of the child and the family, and will allow you to work collaboratively to support children to reach development goals.

Working in partnership with parents

Parents/guardians are the most important people in a young child's life. We believe that working in partnership with parents and carers enhances and supports the relationship between both parties and is important at this very significant stage of development for children. The nursery will support, encourage and reinforce best practice and guide or advise when parents ask for suggestions of ways of caring for, and supporting their children. The nursery will offer social events, key person evenings, stay and play sessions and opportunities for fundraising.

To work in partnership with parents we will:

- Ensure friendly, open but professional relationships
- Ensure that all parents are aware of the nursery's aims, policies and systems
- Inform and encourage parents to become actively involved within the nursery through social events, stay and play sessions, and use of iConnect and ParentZone
- Ensure that parents are regularly informed about their child's progress, via day to day feedback, termly assessments, 2 year checks, and twice yearly key person evenings
- Involve parents in shared record keeping about their own child, verbally and from examples of work, observations and play;
- Provide opportunities for parents to learn about the nursery curriculum and about children's learning and development;
- Welcome all parents to the nursery making them feel their contribution is valued
- Keep parents informed of upcoming events, recent activities, and other key information via regular newsletters, our Facebook page, emails and day to day feedback.
- Welcome all feedback from parents/carers to celebrate what is going well and to enable us to reflect on our practice. Feedback can be in many forms, from informal conversations, to completion of surveys/questionnaires, testimonials, etc. If parents/guardians wish to raise a concern/complain then please refer to the concerns and complaints policy.

Key Person(s)

(continued)

The role of the co-key person

Each key person will also have a co-key person, who will fulfil the day to day role of the key person in their absence. This means that the co-key person will be responsible for being available for parents and children and will ensure that they provide the planned learning opportunities to support the development of these children. The key person must ensure that their parents/carers are aware of who their co-key person is.

Allocation of the key person

The nursery manager will allocate a child's key person prior to them starting. They will base this decision on the information that they have, such as the child's age and booking pattern. These will be factored in to ensure that part time staff are not allocated children that they will not see. We group key children by age, so that in rooms with wider age bands each key person is responsible for a group of children who are of similar age and stage. This makes planning relevant and appropriate learning opportunities for their key group easier to manage. If a child were to start and were to develop a natural inclination to someone other than their allocated key person then we would reflect on this and liaise with parents and staff about the best way to support the child moving forward, which may be a change of key person.

Purpose of key person time

Key person time is used as a daily opportunity to ensure that each key person gets to spend some quality time with their key children (carried out from Step 2 age and upwards). This helps to strengthen bonds and relationships, and to ensure that the child's voice and views are heard. The below guidance will help you to get the most out of key person time.

Principles of key person time;

- Staff use the time to build and strengthen relationships to ensure that they are “key” to their key children.
- The key person looks out for and observes children's interests, strengths and weaknesses, to support the planning of activities.
- Key persons allow the children to make choices about what they would like to do during this time.
- The team ensure that the opportunities provided are varied, these do not need to be adult led, formal activities. Key person time should be relaxed and enjoyable.
- Opportunities can link to planned learning intentions for the week but weekly planning is for the play sessions and not for key person time.
- Staff use the opportunity to give children a voice and for their opinion to be valued, talk about things that interest them, upcoming events or things that children would like to learn about and explore. These can then be linked to ongoing planning.