

Dean Field Community Primary School

EYFS: Nursery: The Role of the Key Person and Settling-in Policy



Name of Policy Writer/Amendments	Date Written/Amended	Next Review Date
KFudge	July 2020	July 2021
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L Brambani	July 2024	July 2025
L Brambani	July 2025	July 2026

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Key Person

Each child must be assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents.

At Dean Field, we believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. We are committed to the key person approach which benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting. It encourages secure relationships which support children to thrive, give parents confidence and make the setting a happy place to attend or work in. In addition to this, we are fortunate that we have Miss Fitzpatrick as our Lead Early Years Practitioners, who have completed their BA Hons in Early Years. This benefit means they are able to work closely with our Nursery staff and to oversee all children in regards to their learning, development, individual needs and parental contact. As Miss Fitzpatrick works alongside our team of teachers, they are able to apply their skills of tracking, assessing and providing all children with the opportunities to achieve their full potential.

At Dean Field, we want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with our staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners in our setting. Miss Fitzpatrick and the Nursery team aim to make the Nursery setting a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

The key person role is set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each child must have a key person. These procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children.

Procedures

We allocate a key person before the child starts. Miss Fitzpatrick is introduced to all children prior to them starting in Nursery.

- **The Key Person (Miss Fitzpatrick, Mrs Mullen, Mrs Baker, Mrs Robertshaw) is responsible for:**
- - Settling the child into our setting.
 - Attending a home visit with Miss Fitzpatrick.
 - Supporting the completion of relevant forms with parents, including consent forms.
 - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
 - Working with the parents to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
 - Acting as one of the key contact for the parents.

- Contributing to developmental records (Sonar, Seesaw and Assessment Wallets) and for sharing information on a regular basis with Miss Fitzpatrick and the child's parents to keep those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.
- Liaising with the Early Years Practitioner Lead to ensure Sonar is updated half-termly.
- Encouraging positive relationships between children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.
- Promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our setting, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other adults and children.

■ **The Early Years Practitioner Lead (Miss Fitzpatrick) is responsible for:**

- Providing an induction for the family and child to the setting, including conducting a home visit with the child's allocated key person.
- Overseeing and working with key persons and parents to ensure a plan is in place to deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
- To oversee the completion/collection of consent forms.
- Explaining our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
- Overseeing developmental records (Sonar, Seesaw and Assessment Wallets) and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents and the EYFS Lead (Miss Brambani) to keep those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.
- Having links with other carers involved with the child and co-ordinating the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- Liaising with outside agencies and professionals such as Portage and EYST who have children with SEND on their caseloads.

Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend Dean Field Nursery, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), displays about activities available within the setting, information days and evenings and individual meetings with parents.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting. (During times where this is not appropriate e.g. illness/lockdown, virtual meetings are conducted via Zoom or telephone).
- Miss Fitzpatrick and the key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- We offer a home visit by Miss Fitzpatrick and the child's key person to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known. Where possible, Mrs Stansfield (Dean Field's pastoral manager) attends too.
- We use 'stay and play' visits and the first session at which a child attends to explain and complete, with his/her parents, the child's registration records.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for some of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child; increasing this time as and when the child is able to cope.

- Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be on hand to re-settle them.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person for example, the child looks for their key person when they arrive, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others, but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left. We expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay for at least the first week, or possibly longer, until their child can stay happily without them.
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the setting.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it overly distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
- Within the first four to six weeks of starting, we discuss and work with the child's parents to begin to create their child's record of achievement.
- Parents are added to Seesaw to start the communication and relationships with parents and a two-week timetable is created to stagger the intake of children.