



Settling in Policy

Aim:

To support children and parents to settle in and to feel happy and at home at Nursery School.

Objectives:

- Child's individual needs are identified and met.
- Settling in is a positive experience; family and child feel supported throughout.
- To work in partnership with parents.

Settling sessions:

A child has two free settling sessions before properly starting at nursery. These will happen on the days your child will normally attend nursery so they can become familiar with the other children and staff there on those days. There are staggered so there is only one new starter during each session. The first session will be one hour and the second an hour and a half. They will normally be scheduled to happen during a time of free flow as transitions can be unsettling for children not yet used to our routine. Please bring in a photo of your child's family to be put on display and any comforters they may use e.g. blanket, dummy or special toy.

We would recommend following the child's lead for the settling sessions. If they are happy and confident, you are welcome to leave and return once the session has finished. If your child is unsure and needing more support, we ask that you stay until they are comfortable. In some instances where the child is finding it very difficult to separate from their parent or carer, we follow a longer and more structured approach to settling.



Example of structured approach to settling for children needing more support

Step 1

Child plays with key person while the parent is alongside. After a while, parent disengages from activity although is present.

Step 2

Child plays with key person with parent alongside. Then parent moves away slightly to pick something up e.g. magazine.

Step 3

Child plays with key person. Parent is alongside at first. But then parent strolls in and out of sight e.g. gets something from a cupboard

Step 4

Child plays with the key person - parent pops out of room to collect an object e.g. sticker for the child. Parent confidently tells child that they are going to do this and then goes. 1 minute absence

Step 5

As step 4 but increase length of time that parent is out of the room by 5 mins each time.

Eventually, build this up to the child attending for a full session or day.

We will stay in contact with you during the time the child is left, via a call or message. If your child is very distressed and is unable to be settled, you will be contacted and asked to collect your child.



Saying goodbye

During the settling-in period, say goodbye in a calm, brief and positive manner (even if you may be feeling teary yourself!) and tell your child when you'll be back. Some children do cry initially after saying goodbye but settle quickly. If there is continued crying and we are unable to calm your child, we will call and ask you to return to be with them.

Staff approaches to helping children settle:

Our staff are all experienced practitioners who have a wealth of experience to draw upon and a range of different strategies to try with an unsettled, upset child.

- We try and get to know your child as quickly as possible in order to tailor our approach to the individual. This is why the 'All about Me' forms and the initial conversations we have with parents and carers are so important.
- Your child's Key Person will be the one specifically dealing with your child in the first instance, so there is that continuity and relationship building happening. If your child prefers someone else that day, that's fine, we are happy to follow your child's lead!
- We have found some children are easily distracted by all our exciting toys and activities here so we help them settle this way, others may prefer to sit and have a cuddle or read a book, others like to go to our quieter Butterfly room or go outside for a change of scenery. We keep trying different methods until we find what works for your child and will only call if your child is not responding to our efforts.

Communication is key!

Please keep us informed throughout your child's time here if there are factors that can affect their settling in the morning. They may have had a bad night's sleep, fallen over, seem unwell or there may be a change in family circumstances. This helps us understand their mood that day so we can keep that in our mind when dealing with them.

Home visits:

We are happy to offer home visits, if requested. Please mention this when completing the Nursery paperwork during the admissions process.



Further information:

<https://www.pacey.org.uk/parents/working-with-your-childcarer/helping-your-child-settle-in/>

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date disseminated to staff	Date for review
1 st Sep 2023	Laura Rowland	5 th Sep 2023	1 st Sep 2024