

## Transitions Policy

Children experience many transitions throughout their lives and many whilst they are at nursery. Transitions can be a time of anxiety and insecurity, but with the right support, planning and parent partnership nursery practitioners can ease this process and give children a positive experience of change.

The numerous transitions experienced will be varied. Some will be unexpected and some will be planned. At nursery we need to be able to support all types of transitions, however it is important that we plan for those which we know are going to occur. This will include everything from starting nursery to leaving to start school. It is imperative that we plan for each of these carefully and consider how each child can be supported through this difficult period.

This policy will identify our commitment to easing the process of transition for all the children in our care. The policy should be shared with any parent who registers their child at the nursery. In following this policy practitioners will keep the following information in mind:

- Transitions do not just happen, they need to be planned.
- Every child will cope with transitions differently.
- The transition should be planned around the needs of the child.
- Parents may not understand the need for settling visits etc, so it is important to talk them through our policy at every stage.
- Timings of transitions need careful consideration; children may struggle with a number of changes in a short space of time.
- Each transition needs to be monitored closely and may need to be adapted from the original plan.
- Children with additional needs may need extra support.

### Settling Sessions

Starting Nursery will be a big step for all children and parents and it is important that we make this a positive experience. The following process should support children in 'Settling In' at nursery.

- A key person must be allocated soon after the family registers at the nursery. This should be based on the best practitioner for the job considering the information we already have about the child and family. A second key person must also be allocated who will carry out the key person responsibilities in the absence of the main key person,
- Key person to contact parent at least one month prior to start date to book in initial settling visits. Key person must decide how far in advance to book sessions based on information provided by the parent.

- Once the Settling In sessions have been booked the key person should ensure that they will be available throughout the settling period and ensure that they prepare for the process.
- Rooms will be issued with a starters / movers report which provides the information the staff need to plan for this.
- It is the responsibility of the Room Leaders to ensure that key persons are planning for transitions appropriately.

### **Before the first Settling In visit**

- Ensure that all the documents are ready for the parent to complete on arrival.
- Ensure that the parent is aware of how the settling sessions will work.
- Ensure that you have found out what the child likes to play with and have these available for their arrival.

### **The First Visit**

- Key person to greet and welcome the child and parent. Ensure the parent is fully aware of how the session will work.
- Explain to the parent the documents that need to be completed.
- Whilst the parent is completing the forms observe and interact with the child.
- Attempt to form initial bonds
- Take photos of the child within the nursery. These can be used for the child's peg, labels etc, and a copy should also be given for the parent to take home to remind the child of what they can look forward to at nursery
- Check that the parent has completed all necessary information.
- Gather all the information needed about the child including sleeping and eating habits, likes and dislikes, comforters, past experiences, additional languages, indicators the child may use for tired, hungry, needing the toilet etc.
- Begin a baseline of the child's current stage of development.
- Explain to the parent what they will need to bring with their child on their first day.
- Answer any questions the parent may have.
- Ensure that you acknowledge the needs and anxieties of the parent,
- Schedule the next and subsequent visits. These can be altered to meet the needs of the child at a later date.

Please be aware that no child can be left in the nursery without their parent without the necessary Registration and Profile document being completed. The Room Leader for the child's room must check the documents fully before authorising the parent to leave their child.

Sight of original documents must be verified.

## Following Visits

It is important for the key person to continue forming a bond throughout the settling visits; however it may become apparent that the child has formed a bond with another practitioner. At this point it may be beneficial to speak with the parent and suggest a change of key person.

It is important to ensure that the visits are arranged to allow the child to experience key times at the setting, such as meal times and sleep times. A child who is not settled and secure in their environment or the people within it is likely to become distressed at attempts to attend to their basic care needs. Length of settling sessions and amount of sessions should be planned to meet the individual needs of the child.

Although there is no set time scale to be applied to settling sessions we do recommend allowing at least 3 weeks to allow children and parents the time they need to become familiar and confident with the nursery. Practitioners should however, be aware of timescales parents may have in mind and keep them informed of the process at every stage so that they can adjust their plans accordingly. It is therefore imperative that key persons emphasise the importance of allowing sufficient time for settling and allow additional time should a parent indicate the need.

## First Day

The following things must be in place before the child's official start date:

- The parent must be fully aware of the drop off procedures.
- The Nursery Manager and Nursery Administrator must be made aware of the start date to ensure that the child has been added to the register, meals ordered and that the appropriate staffing is in place for the increased number of children.
- All items within the room such as coat peg, nappy basket, self-registration label etc. must be in place
- Any dietary requirements must have been added to the list and displayed in the room.
- Any necessary care plans must be in place and key staff familiar with.
- Individual planning must be in place for the new child.
- A Learning Journey must be prepared and information provided by parents and initial observations during settling submitted to form a base line assessment
- The Key person must be available for the child's first day and in the room at the time of arrival of the child.
- Parent must have been given the contact numbers for the nursery including the main nursery numbers and the appropriate direct line for the room.

The parent must be given detailed feedback at the end of the day and if parent is particularly anxious it is important for the key person to invite the parent to call the nursery at any point and may call the parent themselves during the day to reassure.

## Room to Room Transitions

The following process and considerations must be followed when children are moving from one room to another. It is important to recognise that despite children being familiar with staff in other rooms and that they may have spent some time in the next room the transition still needs to be managed carefully and anxiety and uncertainty will still be felt by even the youngest child.

- There is no set time when a child should move to the next room and the key person needs to look at all the significant factors including the stage of development of the child, the child's key friendships, the age and stage of the children in the next room, and their current home situation.
- Parents must be consulted prior to planning a move to another room and their thoughts, feelings and opinions must be taken into account.
- It is the responsibility of the key person to plan and manage the transition; however the Room Leaders of both rooms must be consulted.
- The Nursery Manager must be informed of the planned room move to ensure room numbers will allow. The Nursery Administrator must then be informed to ensure the system is up to date.
- Learning Journeys must be up to date prior to planning the move and a baseline assessment must be completed to inform to the new key person prior to the move.
- The new key person must be allocated based on the information held on the child and on any observations of interactions between the child and that practitioner.
- Current and new key person must meet to discuss the child and plan the transition accordingly.
- The child must be informed about the plans in a way in which they can understand.
- The new key person must be available for all settling visits into the new room.
- The new Key person must ensure that they have all necessary items ready for when the child at the start of the settling visits, i.e. coat, peg, place mat
- The settling visits must follow a similar format to that of initial settling visits and must be adapted as they progress and meet the needs of the child.
- Parents need to be kept informed at every stage.
- If a child struggles with visits the current key person must spend time in the new room with the child and the new key worker must spend time with the child in their current room.
- All relevant documents including care plans and dietary requirements must be sent with the child to the next room.
- Only once all parties are happy with the transition and the transition documents have been signed by the manager, the child will make the move to the new room.

## Leaving Nursery

It is important to acknowledge that a child who is approaching a time when they are leaving the setting are likely to be feeling all the anxieties and uncertainties that come with a change process. Practitioners must acknowledge and plan for these feelings. We can support children in their move to a new setting by:

- Developing good communication with the new setting and providing them with the opportunity to visit the child at nursery
- Arranging a meeting with parents to discuss the planned transition ahead of the move
- Completing the transition documents and forwarding to the next school. School closure dates need to be taken into account to ensure transition forms reach the teacher in sufficient time for them to make use of them.
- Planning activities to support the child with the transition

## Family Transitions

It is important that practitioners develop strong professional relationships with parents so that parents will feel confident in sharing forthcoming transitions, such as house moves, arrival of siblings, family separations. During these times children may become very unsettled and may benefit from support and consistency at nursery. It is the responsibility of the key person to support the parent in preparing and supporting the child through the transition. The key person needs to work with the parent throughout the transition and be prepared for the changes in emotions and behaviour demonstrated by the child.

**All practitioners need to ensure that they are fully aware of the difficulties that are faced with transitions and be aware of how they can support each individual child.**

Internal use only

<b>This policy was adopted on</b>	June 22
<b>Signed on behalf of the nursery</b>	
<b>Date disseminated to staff</b>	
<b>Date for review</b>	June 23