



Panda Playgroup, Sticky Mitts and Tiny Tots

WI Hall, Station Road, Copmanthorpe, YO23 3SX

Member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance

Registered charity number 1035584

Ofsted number 321619

Child care practice

The role of the key person and settling-in

Policy Statement

At Panda Playgroup 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. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the playgroup and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the setting.

We aim to make the playgroup 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 Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. All children must have a key person.

Procedures

- We allocate a key person before the child starts.
- The key person, in conjunction with the Playgroup leader, is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- The key person works with the parent and the Playgroup leader to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.



- The key person acts as the key contact for the parents and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a childminder, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- The key person, in conjunction with the Playgroup Leader, is responsible for developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents to keep those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.
- We provide a back-up key person so the child and the parents have a key contact in the absence of the child's key person.
- If the child doesn't settle with the allocated key person or the parents request a change of key person, Panda Playgroup will look for an alternative key person for the child. The key person may also be changed if it is felt by the staff or parents that the child has built a particularly strong relationship with a different member of staff.
- We 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 staff and children.

Settling-in

- Before a child starts to attend the playgroup, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), 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.
- We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend; 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 use pre-start 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 are happy for the parent, carer or close relative, to stay for most of the session during the first day or week, or longer if required, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this 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 the key person when he/she arrives, 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 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. Where possible, the child's key person will provide one-to-one or small group support for a child who is distressed until they are settled into the session. Where not possible this support will be provided by another familiar adult.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Panda Playgroup held on:
Date to be reviewed:

Signed on behalf of the management committee:
Name and role of signatory:

Signed on behalf of the staff team:
Name and role of signatory:

