



Settling-in and Key Person Policy

Statement of intent

At The Oak Montessori we want children to feel safe and happy within our setting as well as feel secure and comfortable with all our staff members. We recognise that starting nursery is a major event in a child's life and can often be the first separation between them and their parents. We therefore seek to ensure a smooth and calm transition by working in close partnership with home and nursery, so that both child and parent feel supported as they work towards feeling comfortable and at ease in the new setting.

At The Oak Montessori we aim to:

- Make the children feel happy and secure in their new environment in the absence of their parent/carer.
- To create a secure relationship for your child within our setting.
- To make the setting a place where your child can settle in quickly and comfortably.
- Make the children feel confident to explore and experiment in the physical environment.
- Help the children to develop independence in the new environment and freely access all the resources.
- Support the children to develop positive relationships with both adults and other children in the setting.
- Help children to communicate their needs to others in an appropriate way.
- Promote appropriate behaviour, with clear expectations and positive reinforcements.
- Work in partnership with parents in their children's learning.
- Support and build upon the children's prior experiences and knowledge gained in their home environment.
- Encourage and welcome open and honest communication between staff and parents.

Our Staff aim to:

- Show empathy and sensitivity towards new parents and children.
- Be responsive and flexible by taking into account the individual needs of the children and parents.
- Take time and space to get to know new children and their parents/carers whilst they are settling in.
- Organise and manage the environment in such a way that the children can operate independently, safely and imaginatively.



Guidelines and Procedures:

- The children and parents are always welcomed warmly and invitingly into the nursery.
- All children and their parents/carers are made aware of their individual key person during the first week after commencing at The Oak Montessori.
- Each key person is responsible for helping her group of children to become familiar with the nursery and to feel safe and confident within
- Each key person develops a genuine bond with each child in their group, and their parents/carers, and offers a settled, close relationship.
- Each key person responds sensitively to the feelings, ideas and behaviour of each of the children in their group and endeavours to meet each child's particular needs, and those of their parents.
- Information is provided to the parents to familiarise them with daily routines and an overview of the termly and yearly events.
- Parents are asked to complete an 'All About Me', before their child starts at nursery in order to give us additional information about each child.
- When the children first start at The Oak Montessori, for the first week or two they have the option of leaving earlier in case the parent feels the child will benefit from an initial shorter stay. The time will be arranged on a case by case basis.
- This flexible and staggered starting time helps each child in the period of transition as the teacher can spend more time with each child and parent.
- We encourage the parents to leave the child as soon as they can after drop off, with the understanding that if the child has been upset at the separation we will contact them soon after to reassure them that their child has settled.
- If the child continues to be upset we will contact the parent/carer asking them to return to school.
- During the 'settling in' period, all children will arrive by 9am, however, the duration and number of days attended are very much a case-by-case decision for the parent/child/teacher to make in consultation together, as they seek to make the best choice for each child.
- During the settling in period, activities and experiences provided in the nursery are geared towards helping the children settle into the new environment and routines, in response to how each child is progressing.
- An emphasis is made in the first half term on looking at the children and their families and sharing photographs and home experiences. Displays are centred on the children, their families and their experiences.
- If a child still needs support to help them to feel secure, safe and happy in the nursery, we would continue to work closely with the parents/carers to help enable their child to feel confident within the setting.

Our Policy and Procedures for 'Settling-in' are always open and responsive to any feedback from parents/carers and staff if it is felt worthwhile and helpful additions and changes can be made to the process.



In all we do in settling children into the nursery, we very much see it as a close collaboration between home and nursery, to enable the very smoothest and happiest transition into The Oak Montessori for all concerned – parents, child and staff.

Key Person System

Within The Oak Montessori we operate a key person system. The key person is responsible for working with a small group of children providing the reassurance needed for each child to feel safe and cared for as well as building a relationship with parents/carers. The key person will help the child to become familiar with the setting and feel safe within it. They will also talk to parents/carers to make sure the needs of the child are being met appropriately, and the records of development and progress are shared with parent/carers and other professionals as necessary.

How the Key Person System Works

Once your child begins at The Oak Montessori, a key person will be allocated to him/her, this person will be the named carer throughout the nursery day and the first point of contact for parents. The key person will record information regarding your child's home routine, as well as specific information such as medication instructions.

Changes in routine at home can affect your child's wellbeing so it is important that the key person forms not only a strong bond with the child but also with the child's family so that the sharing of information between the two can be done successfully, leading to the best possible outcomes for your child.

Our Key Person System Provides:

- Assistance with the settling in process.
- Building an attachment and getting to know your child.
- Building a strong relationship with parents and families.
- Key person time, in small groups or one to one time every day.
- Close monitoring of your child's progress in all areas of development.
- Knowledge of each child's needs when planning activities and curriculum.

A Child's Key Person

- Will provide parents with information regarding the routines, daily timetables, and activities in the room.
- Will assist both parent and child during the settling in period.



- Will support the child in becoming familiar with the daily routine and the layout of the nursery.
- Will be aware of circumstances at home that may affect changes in a child's behaviour from time to time.
- Will carry out observations on children in their groups and devise plans for future activities taking into account children's needs and interests.
- Will take care of your child's personal needs i.e. nappy changing, toileting, whenever possible.
- A key person, may, or may not change during a child's time with us at The Oak Montessori.

Policy Written in June 2019
Natasha Rawdon-Rego

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Charlotte Wheeler