



ROLE OF KEY PERSON POLICY

SMARTIES PRE SCHOOL & OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB

POLICY STATEMENT

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.

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 with our setting. We aim to make our 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.

'Each child must be assigned a key person' (EYFS 2021)

Procedure

For all Preschool children, we allocate a key person within the first 2 weeks of the child starting. This enables us to observe them for the initial sessions so that we can allocate a staff member who we feel fits best and bonds well with your child. Where possible a 'back up' key person is also identified for each child so that they can fulfil the role in the absence of the main key person, for example, during annual leave or sickness.

The Key Person Role

A key person builds an on-going relationship with the child and his/her parents and is committed to that child's well-being while in the setting.

- Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into our setting.
- Completing relevant forms with parents, including consent forms.
- Explaining our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as Safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
- 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 the key contact for the parents.
- The key person conducts the progress check at age two for their key children.
- Shift patterns and staff absence can affect a child who is just settling in; where possible, settling in should be matched to when the key person is on duty.
- The number of children for each key person takes into account the individual needs of children and the capacity of the key person to manage their cohort; it is also influenced by part-time places and part time staff. The setting manager should aim for consistency i.e. matching part-time staff to part-time children; full-time children should not be divided between key persons during the week.



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- 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. 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.
- Encouraging positive relationships between children in her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.
- the key person also maintains other responsibilities for key children including administering medication and signing accident records.
- The key person spends time daily with his or her key group to ensure their well-being.

We also allocate a key person for Reception children attending Out of School club, before the child starts and they carry out most of the duties listed above. While we are not required to complete developmental trackers for the Reception children (as School cover this), we do liaise with both the child's parents and their school and share information with both parties to help support the child's next steps.

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 adults and children.

Settling-in

- The key person is central to settling a child into the setting. The Pre School Lead and key person explain the need for a settling in process and agree a plan with the parents.
- Before a child starts to attend our setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our welcome pack), displays about activities available within the setting, information days/evenings and individual meetings with parents. Our policies may be viewed on our website.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting. Prospective parents can book a visit to our setting at any-time by emailing info@smartiessteeplemorden.co.uk or by telephone 01763 852888.
- The team welcome and look after the child and his/her parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- We may offer a home visit by the person who will be the child's key person to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.
- We ask parents to complete our registration form and all about me form prior to their child's first visit. We use settling in visits and the first session at which a child attends to 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 part 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 resettle them.



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- 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 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 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

- Key persons are the first point of contact for parents with regard to matters concerning their child and any concerns parents may have are addressed with the key person in the first instance.
- Key persons support parents in their role as the child's first and most enduring educators.
- The key person is responsible for the child's developmental records, completing the progress check at age two, and for sharing information about progress with the child's parents.

Learning and development

- The key person helps to ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. This is achieved through regular observation and assessment of children, using information gathered about their achievements, interests and learning styles to plan for each individual child's learning and development.
- If a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, the key person must discuss this with their Line Manager (either the Pre School-Lead or the Out of School Lead) or SENCO and the child's parents.

The progress check at age two

- The key person carries out the progress check at age two in accordance with any local procedures that are in place and referring to the guidance A Know How Guide: The EYFS progress check at age two.
- The progress check aims to review the child's development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their child's development.



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- Within the progress check, the key person will note areas where the child is progressing well and identify areas where progress is less than expected.
- The progress check will describe the actions that will be taken by us to address any developmental concerns (including working with other professionals where appropriate) as agreed with the parent(s). The key person will plan activities to meet the child's needs within the setting and will support parents to understand the child's needs in order to enhance their development at home.

Back-up key person

- The role of the back-up key person is to step in when the main key person is absent or unavailable to provide a stable and consistent care relationship for the child.
- The back-up key person is identified when the child starts but is not introduced to the child until an attachment is beginning to form with the key person.
- The back-up key person gradually forms a relationship with the child until the child is happy to be cared for by this person.
- The back-up key person shares information with parents in the key person's absence and makes notes in the child's records where appropriate.
- The back-up key person ensures information is shared with the key person.

Safeguarding children

- The key person has a responsibility towards their key children to report any concern about their development or welfare to the Pre School-Lead or for Reception children, to the Out of School Lead. For child protection matters, they should raise this with the Designated Lead and to follow safeguarding procedures.
- Regular supervision with their Line Manager (either the Pre School-Lead or the After School Lead) provides further opportunities to discuss the progress and welfare of key children.
- The back-up key person has a duty likewise.

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Date to be reviewed:

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Name of signatory:

Victoria Hutter

Role of signatory:

Chairman of the Committee

Signed:

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