Issue 6

Review Date: January 2023

**Key Person**

**Aim**

We aim to ensure all children in our care feel safe, secure and happy, so they are able to become confident to explore and try out new experiences.

We believe it is important for children to have a genuine bond with their key person, which will provide the base for a settled and close relationship. The key person will play an essential role in supporting the child’s emotional well-being. They will meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour.

This policy supports our commitment to the EYFS theme, Positive Relationships. ‘Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or key person’.

**Our approach**

When starting at nursery, each child will be assigned a key person during their induction. The role of the key person will be explained to the parent. This will provide an opportunity for the child and parents to meet the key person, and share information about the child’s needs. The key person may make notes and keep the information safe and secure.

In order to meet the children’s needs effectively, we operate a ‘shared key person’ system. This will include a second key person, who will be able to develop close and secure relationships with the child on a daily basis. This person will also be a second point of contact for parents, especially when staff are covering shift patterns. We feel that it is important when a child’s key person is not available, the child will still be cared for by a familiar and trusted adult.

During the settling in time (or after) if the child was to develop a particular bond with a different practitioner, other than their assigned key person, then the key person could be re assigned to meet the child’s individual needs.

Key person groups are displayed either in the hallway or in the child’s room, with the name and/or photo of the children and key person and shared key person.

**Role of the key Person:**

1. Taking responsibility for developing secure, trusting relationships with their key children and families
2. Spending time during induction with each child’s family, to learn about the child’s routines, feeding, interests and dispositions etc.
3. Helping to settle new children into the nursery gradually, and maintaining a point of contact/sharing information with their family and shared key person.
4. Attending to their key child’s personal care routines i.e nappy changing, feeding, sleeping ( when possible), in a sensitive manner. Each child’s privacy and needs will be fully respected.
5. Supporting and sitting with their key groups during all meal and snack times, bottle feeding younger babies. (when possible)
6. Regularly recording observations, and sharing these with other staff and parents. Analysing the information gathered and planning experiences to meet the child’s interests and skills.
7. Maintaining individual records of their key child’s developmental progress. Including on entry data, wellcomm assessment, tracker, learning journals and 6 monthly reports. Use Tapestry software to record all of this information and share on line with parents.
8. Supporting ‘targeted support plans’ for a child in their key group who may have additional educational needs. The shared key person would also support this plan and any other staff the child may be in contact with.
9. Communicating with parents on a daily basis, either verbally or through the daily diary/ feedback sheets, and guiding/supporting the parent with their child’s learning and development at home.
10. Supporting children’s transition arrangements, i.e, helping them to settle in a new room in the nursery, new setting or school.
11. Sharing any relevant information with other colleagues, or any other external professional agencies, who are involved with the child’s care and development.

We value and respect the special and unique relationships between a child and their family, and want parents to feel reassured that although practitioners will develop close and trusting relationships, we will always fully respect that the child’s parent and family are of the most importance to them.

Children will be fully encouraged to develop healthy relationships with other practitioners and children. The key person will make every effort to ensure your child does not become ‘too’ dependant on their key person.

**Covid 19 pandemic**

Due to the current pandemic situation, parents are not able to enter the nursery and children are required to stay in their own rooms at all times. This has made settling in our new children very different and children are unable to do their transitions with their new keyworker before moving into a new age group. Children are now transitioning into their new rooms in small groups at the end of every term, this is working well and will be reviewed alongside Covid guidelines.

We are instead communicating via social media and emails with the new parents. We are encouraging new parents to join our private Facebook group where we have videos of each room and staff member, this can be shown to the child before they start. We are in the process of making a virtual tour of the nursery to enhance our communication and information to our parents.

From Sept 2021, we are allowing parents into the setting for their first initial visit to allow the child to visit and meet the key person face to face prior to starting. Parents are now able to visit the nursery to look around by appointment only, this is carried out when the nursery is less busy i.e school holidays and late afternoons.