



## Childcare practice procedures

### 4.1a Prime times – Settling in and transitions

To feel securely settled and ready to learn, children need to form attachments with the adults who care for them, primarily a key person, but others too. In this way they feel part of a community; they are able to contribute to that community and receive from it. Very young children, especially two- to three-year-olds, approach separation from their parent with anxieties, older children have a more secure understanding of 'people permanence' and are able to approach new experiences with confidence; but also need time to adjust and feel secure. It is the entitlement of all children to be settled comfortably into a new environment.

We follow a three-stage model of settling in based on three key needs:

1. *Proximity* - Young children feel safest when a familiar adult, such as a parent, is present when they are getting used to a new carer and new surroundings. In this way they can become confident in engaging with those experiences independently later on.
2. *Secure base* – Because the initial need for proximity of the parent has been met, babies and young children gradually begin to feel secure with a key person in a new surrounding so that they are able to participate independently for small periods of time.
3. *Dependency* – Young children are able to separate from parents' and main carers when they have formed a secure attachment to their key person who knows and understands them best and on whom they can depend for their needs to be met.

The setting manager's and key person explain the need for settling in and agree a plan with the parents. Each day they review the plan and agree what will happen the next day.

- We provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting and have a look around prior to starting. This will be done outside of hours so not to disrupt the other children in the setting.
- We will communicate with parents every session their child attends, through the Family app, email and phone about how their child is doing.
- We start charging a child attending our setting after their first one hour settling session.
- Parents, carers or close relatives, are welcome to stay and wait for a while during your child's settling process. Please note you cannot stay in the room with your child. You can stay in a different area on site, we make a great cup of tea.
- If your child needs longer to settle your key person will communicate with you and you can help them form a plan of the best way to support your child whilst settling. We aim to try and increase their attendance time at each session

### Settling-in for children with SEND

- Start times for children with SEND are staggered to allow sufficient one to one time with each child and parent.
- Children should at least be at stage 2 of settling before the key person begins settling another child.
- Where a number of children need to start – key persons can start settling one child in the morning and another in the afternoon. In their first week, children who are settling in will not stay all day.

- If a child has been identified as having SEND then the key person/SENCO and parents will need to identify and address potential barriers to settling in e.g. timings of medication and invasive procedures, specific routines and levels of support.

#### **How Perranporth Pre-School settles children:**

- Its important for us to know If the child has little or no experience of group care. As part of gathering information from parents, it is important to find out about the child's experience of non-parental care, for example grandparents, or childminder; this informs staff as to how a child may respond to a new situation.
- The three-stage approach involving *Proximity*, *Secure Base* and *Dependency/Independence* is applied to all children. Some children take longer, and their needs for proximity and secure base stages should be accommodated as much as possible.
- Some children appear to leap to dependency/independence within a couple of days. In most cases, they will revert to the need for proximity and secure base. It can be difficult to progress to true dependency/independence and this can be frustrating.
- After the induction meeting with the setting manager or deputy and key person, a settling-in plan is drawn up. Where possible.
- Children and their families are invited into the setting to have a stay and play together for half an hour with their key person. This is done outside of setting hours.
- The next session the child attends will be in the setting with other children without their parents.
- Parents/Carers are welcome and encourage to stay on site with the Manager so if their child needs them they are there.
- This first session will last for however long the key person feels the child can cope, byut never longer than 1 hour maximum.
- After this session the key person chats with the parents/carers again to make a plan for the next visit, this may include increasing the hours spent at the setting.
  - We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from our setting.
- To settle in a child experiencing a setting for the first time, we will go through the same process of gradually increasing the time a child attends with a parent/carer during the proximity stage.
- If a child is not ready to be in the setting without their parent/carer, we will invite you to attend more stay and play sessions with your keyperson outside of setting hours and will be done every day for a maximum of two weeks, so you child can really establish a bond with their keyperson with their parent/carer present.
- If after two weeks the child will still not be left or has not formed a bond, we reserve the right to delay a child starting until they are ready.
- It is evident that the child is developing a sense of secure base when he or she shows interest in activities and begins to engage with the key person and other children.
- Separation causes anxiety in child, as they have no concept of where their parents have gone. Parents should always say goodbye and tell them when they will return. Patience with the process will ensure children are happy and eager to come to play and be cared for in our setting.

- If you are EVER wondering how your child is doing during a session, please feel free to call us we really do not mind. 01872 573205

**For children whose first language is not English**

- For many children learning English as an additional language, the stage of proximity takes longer as the child is dependent upon the parents' input to make sense of what is going on.
- If the parent does not speak English, efforts are made to source an interpreter for induction; it will be helpful for them to see around the setting and be clear about their role in interpreting in the play area.
- The settling-in programme is explained to the parent, and it is emphasised how important it is that they stay with the child and talk to him/her in the home language to be able to explain things.
- Through the interpreter, the key person will try to gauge the child's level of skills in their home language; this will give the key person an idea of the child's interests and levels of understanding.
- The need for the parent to converse in the child's home language is important.
- The key person makes the parent feel welcome using smiles and gestures.
- With the parent, make a list of key words in the child's home language; sometimes it is useful to write the word as you would pronounce it. These words will be used with the child and parents will be addressed with 'hello' and 'goodbye' in their language.
- The key person prepares for the child's visits by having a favourite toy or activity ready for the child to provide a means to interact with the child.
- Children will be spoken to as per any other child, using gestures and facial expressions to help.
- Progress with settling in will be done as with any other child; it just takes a little longer to reach dependency/independence.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Perranporth Pre-school	(name of provider)
Held on	<u>July 2024</u>	(date)
Date to be reviewed	<u>July 2025</u>	(date)
Adopted by	<u>Perranporth Pre-School Committee</u>	