

Settling-in policy

Statement of intent

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting 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.

Aim

We aim to make the 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.

Methods

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information; our prospectus, a Welcome pack with consent forms and a booklet "Information for Parents" and details of the New Parent Information Evening. .
- Our setting has a website www.stjosephsplaygroup.co.uk, which provides information on our routines, policies and general information.
- Parents may telephone to make an appointment to visit the Pre-school at any time. Before a child starts at playgroup we invite the parent/carer and child to visit the pre-school to have a look around. As part of our Welcome pack we ask if a parent requires a home visit and arrange this at a mutually convenient time. (also refer to Parental Involvement Policy)
- We assign a key person to each child and their family before she/he starts to attend and ask parents to complete a "new parent's questionnaire". This provides information on each child which will help the key person establish a relationship with that child and aid the settling in period; the key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents helping them become familiar with the setting and to feel confident and safe within it.

The key person is normally the first point of contact for the parent and they will build a close relationship, enabling the key person to meet the needs of each child and respond sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour.

The key person might not be present at every session their key child attends, but staff liaise with each other and within any one session have equal responsibility for ALL children present.

- Where necessary we use pre-start visits/New Parent's Information evening and the first session at which a child attends to explain and complete with his/her parents the child's personal 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 most of the session during the first week, 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 them 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, so we expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay for at least the first week.
- 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 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.
- You will receive a settling – in report at the end of your child's first term with us.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of St Joseph's Pre-school Playgroup
 Held on (date) 28th June 2010
 Signed on behalf of the Management Committee/Proprietor
 Role of signatory (e.g. chairperson etc.) Chair