



Settling-in and Transition Policy & Key Person Role

At WildTime PlayGroup we are committed to meeting and supporting the needs of each individual child. We aim to make sure that the transition process into and within our playgroup is a positive and happy experience. We acknowledge that as we currently offer provision only two days a week that children have a large gap between visits and we allow extra transition times due to this.

Our morning soft-start allows parents to settle their children gently, adjusting and accommodating the length of time taken based on the child's needs in each individual session.

Transition into playgroup

We understand the importance of the settling-in process and are committed to making it as stress free as possible. We approach settling-in in a flexible open-minded way, and try to find out what works for each individual child, allowing each family their own input and settling in journey.

How it will work

- The playgroup manager will contact you to arrange a settling-in visit, this normally takes place a week before your child's full sessions start. You are encouraged to stay with your child initially, allowing them to get to know the other children and adults. Once your child is happy we encourage you to "step back" either by sitting a little way away from your child, going for a stroll in the park or perhaps for a coffee. We will play this by ear and if your child is upset at the idea, then you can stay on site, but take more of a background position.
- When the timetable starts properly, you are welcome to stay until your child feels more settled and leave as/when you both feel comfortable.
- We have an open door policy and encourage you to have two-way communication with your child's key worker (and other staff) including sharing information on how your child is settling in, progress and any concerns relating to the child. This is usually done daily on drop off and collection but if you require longer or more privacy you may choose to make an appointment.
- Sometimes after a holiday or absence your child may need to be helped to settle again. We will support you in this.

Preparing your child

- At WildTime we believe that honesty is definitely the best policy when leaving children in another adults care for any period of time.

Maybe they are already used to this separation and have experience of being looked after by adults other than you. If not, you could try this with a close friend that they know well for short periods before they start playgroup. It's important to always emphasise that you are coming back. Be specific as possible. "I'm going to the shops, Kerri will look after you, I'll be back when you have had your lunch."

- Always say goodbye to your child before you go. It's tempting to leave quietly when they are happily playing, as you don't want to disturb them and risk upsetting them. But if they look up and you have gone, they are left with the insecure feeling that you could disappear at any time.

You know your child best, leave when you feel comfortable and when they feel comfortable. We want children in our care to be happy, secure and confident. We will follow the lead of you as parent or carer.

What is a key person?

The welfare requirements from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 1.10 states that "Each child must be assigned a key person" Providers must inform parents and/or carers of the name of the key person, and explain their role, when a child starts attending a setting.

The key person must:

- help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.
- seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home.

The framework also states 'Each child must be assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents.' Paragraph 3.27.

The Key person should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

The key person should meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour, talking to parents to make sure that the child is being cared for appropriately for each family.

Your Child's Key Person

As we are a small playgroup, all the adults will be part of your child's experience, however your child will be designated a member of staff that is their 'key person'. A key person will be chosen for your child within the first few weeks of them starting playgroup, based upon who the child has formed a bond with thus far. Parents will be introduced to their child's key person and will be advised this key person will be their initial point of contact at the playgroup and will be responsible for updating the children's records and updating parents about their child's progress within the play environment.

Key Person Responsibilities

- The key person provides a secure attachment for their key children in the playgroup.
- They help their key children settle in and become familiar with the setting.
- The key person meets the needs of their key children responding sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour.
- The key person provides a 'secure base' for the children by being there to support them and allowing them to explore at their own pace.
- They are primarily responsible for their key child's care routines.
- As part of our weekly meetings, our managers will provide support and time for their staff to talk through any difficult issues and feelings that may arise as part of the key person role.

Relationships with parents/carers

- Key persons should develop a good relationship with parents / carers, ensuring that the child is cared for appropriately at playgroup and accommodating their individual needs within the daily routine.
- The key person needs to develop a two-way flow of communication between themselves and the parent/carer to help them become aware of any significant aspects of family life that maybe important to the child.
- The key person has responsibility for sharing their key children's development profiles with parents and other professionals as required, in cases of children with additional needs or identified children in need they will be called upon to attend reviews and core group meetings with the support of a senior manager.

Records

The key person is responsible for observational records of their key children, using these to inform next steps, individualised planning, Targeted Plans, and completing development profiles for each of their key children. Where a child is supported by another member of staff who is not their key person e.g. SEN support record keeping then becomes a joint responsibility.

Welfare and Safeguarding

Key persons are responsible for the welfare of the children in their care monitoring patterns of absence, injury and development referring them on where necessary. Any concerns should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Transition to school

At the end of the pre-school age, children may go off to school, be home educated or attend WildTime Nature School. We like to make sure a smooth transition ensues and to help this along we work closely with the child's new school/teacher wherever possible.

Assessments and Learning Journals are forwarded to the new school setting if the parent requests.

Transition to WildTime Nature School

For those children leaving WildTime PlayGroup and continuing their adventures with us at WildTime Nature School we have a flexible transition programme that allows each individual child's needs to be taken in to account. The term before your child turns 6 years old is an ideal time to begin introducing them to their peers at Nature School and allowing them to spend some time with the older group. This could be done with the company of their Key Person if needed. Individual transition plans will be discussed with the child, Nature School staff, child's Key Person and child's parents/carers.

It is our aim that no child shall be disadvantaged due to transition. They will be allowed to settle at their own pace. Children who are settled and happy will demonstrate involvement and wellbeing and continue to make progress in their learning.