

# Egerton Nursery & out of School Club

Settling in, The Role of Key Person & Transitions Policy



Egerton Nursery and Out of School Club

EYFS: 3.27, 3.73

## Document History

<b>Author</b>	Kerry Hurst
<b>Role</b>	Manager
<b>Approved by</b>	Board of Directors
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## Version History

Version	Date	Changes
2	07/12/2020	Major overhaul to policy document
3	10/01/2022	What's App message added
4	12/01/2023	Combined Policy with Transitions no other amendments

## List of Abbreviations Used

SENCo	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
KP	Key Person
TA's	Teaching Assistants

## Settling In & the Role of Key Person

At **Egerton Nursery and Out of School club** we aim to support parents and other carers to help their children settle quickly and easily by giving consideration to the individual needs and circumstances of every child and their families. Our aim is for children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the nursery and to feel secure and comfortable with all staff.

We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's continued well-being and their role as active partners, with the child being able to benefit from what the nursery has to offer.

The (KP) **key person** helps the child to feel known, cared about, and safe. The key person takes on a fundamental role of building a relationship, beginning with being interested in the child, available and ready to interact. The key person helps the child feel confident that they are held in mind, thought about and loved, by their home carers and by the key person.

This experience of reliable adults who remain attentive, affectionate and thoughtful is an enormously important experience. Children can form secure attachments to adults who provide consistently sensitive care, and this grounding in a sense of safety and wellbeing supports the child to trust others, feel good about themselves, and feel confident to explore the world and other relationships.

All our staff know about the importance of building strong attachments with children. They are trained to recognise the different stages of attachment and use this knowledge to support children and families settling into the nursery.

\*Due to the Pandemic (Covid19), we currently have measure in place to reduce the number of visitors enter the setting, where necessary we only allow visitors inn exception al circumstances and these would be pre-arranged with the Manager.

We have recently introduced a Messaging service 'Send a Smile'. Key persons (KP) will use the setting mobile to send parents/carers a picture of their child. We find that once the parent/carer are out of site that the child settles quicker and we take a picture to send to the parent to reassure them. Most parents go off to work worrying about their child and how they are coping. This gives the parent piece of mind.

### **The key person makes essential connections.**

Until children make the transition from home to an early-years setting, families have usually been the main providers of continuity in their lives. When children enter their new setting the task of providing continuity is made easier by a warm welcome from responsive and available practitioners. A child's key person is the essential link between home and the new setting, and is vital in providing reassurance and creating close, supportive, ongoing relationships with families.

Our setting will work in partnership with parents to settle their child into the setting environment by:

- Allocating a **key person** to each child and his/her family, before he/she starts to attend. The key person welcomes and looks after the child, ensuring that their care is tailored to meet their individual needs. He/she offers a settled relationship for the child and builds a relationship with his/her parents during the settling in period and throughout his/her time at the nursery, to ensure the family has a familiar contact person to assist with the settling in process
- Reviewing the nominated key person if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child's needs are supported
- Providing parents with relevant information about the policies and procedures of the nursery
- Working with parents to gather information before the child starts on the child's interests, likes and dislikes: as well as completing a baseline of the child's current development to plan, and meet, the individual needs of the child from the first day
- Encouraging parents and children to visit the nursery during the weeks before an admission is planned and arranging home visits where applicable
- Planning settling in visits and introductory sessions (lasting approximately 1-2 hours). These will be provided free of charge over a one- or two-week period, dependent on individual needs, age and stage of development
- Welcoming parents to stay with their child during the first few days until the child feels settled and the parents feel comfortable about leaving their child. Settling in visits and introductory sessions are key to a smooth transition and to ensure good communication and information sharing between staff and parents
- Reassuring parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling into the setting and developing a plan with them
- Encouraging parents, where appropriate, to separate themselves from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences
- Assigning a secondary/back-up key person to each child in case the key person is not available. Parents will be made aware of this to support the settling process and attachment
- Respecting the circumstances of all families, including those who are unable to stay for long periods of time in the nursery and reassure them of their child's progress towards settling in
- Not taking a child on an outing from the setting until he/she is completely settled.
- 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.
- The Key Person will also ensure that the child is supported in an Educational programme that must involve activities and experiences for children, as set out under each of the areas of learning. The expectations for children's development must ensure that cognitive development proceeds hand-in-hand with their social and personal development.
- Ensuring the child takes a Day sheet home
- Each child will receive an 'All about Me' booklet prior to visits. This will be shared with the Key Person/s
- Where the child may have extra needs the SENCO will liaise with parents/carers and any other outside agencies.
- Where necessary an extension to settling in visits will be offered

**Key points:**

- **The key person helps the child to feel known, cared about, and safe.**
- **The key person role involves a triangle of trust with the child and family.**
- **An effective key person approach needs strong leadership and committed practice.**
- **An effective key person has special qualities and dispositions.**

## Transitions

At **Egerton Nursery and Out of School Club** we recognise that young children will experience many transitions in their early years; some of these planned and some unplanned.

We are sensitive to the impact of such changes to children and this policy sets out the ways in which we support children going through these transitions.

### **High quality transitions recognise the importance of feeling ‘known’.**

Key to a high-quality experience for all children in the early years is ensuring continuity between home, key people and all the settings that make up children’s individual educational journeys.

Transitions include not just movements between one setting and another, but also moving rooms and key person within the same setting or moving to a more structured part of the day such as lunchtime.

It is vital that children’s emotional, physical, social and educational needs are sensitively addressed at all these points of transition and transfer so that children can thrive and flourish in situations that are unfamiliar to them.

Moving from a place or situation in which children feel ‘known’ into one in which they feel ‘unknown’ can raise insecurities about having their needs met.

While some children have the resilience to cope with change, others are more vulnerable to uncertainty. Some children are particularly vulnerable at times of transition.

Children who lack confidence or have low self-esteem, those who are too young yet to have skills of self-regulation, or those who have simply had to cope with too much change or loss in their young lives may all be vulnerable at times of transition.

Children who are youngest in their age group (often referred to as ‘summer borns’) and children born prematurely who find themselves in an age group ahead of their due date may also be disadvantaged because of their relative immaturity, and inappropriate expectations.

Many children become anxious about making new relationships, whether those are with other children or with the adults with whom they will spend their time.

The support of friends and friendship groups helps protect children from the potentially negative impact of transitions.

Transitions are opportunities for professional dialogue. Points of transition can provide excellent opportunities for professional dialogue both within and between settings, as well as with the home.

It is the responsibility of all early year’s practitioners to ensure that children feel welcomed, gain a sense of belonging and are helped to settle happily so that they can thrive and develop a sense of wellbeing and belonging within their new setting.

Practitioners will spend time observing the children as they settle in the setting, which will promote further professional dialogue with colleagues and support practitioners’ understanding of each child.

Transition is a process, not an event. It is important to remember that any effective transition is a process rather than an event and should be planned as such.

Practitioners demonstrate this by enabling children and their families to become as familiar as possible with where children are going and with whom they will be building relationships, before any move actually takes place.

Expectations can be formed over an extensive period of time in the lead-up to transitions. Children's expectations are formed largely by what their families say and how they act, so practitioners need to work in partnership with children, families and communities in a planned and proactive way to make transitions as smooth and seamless as possible.

Practitioners can make transitions more seamless by first visiting children in the setting in which they are known, confident and comfortable (including the home) so children meet new adults in a familiar place.

During these times practitioners can gather as well as give information, in order to be fully aware of and responsive to the needs and concerns of each child and their family. It is important that families' concerns are listened to but are voiced away from the child.

Some examples of transitions that young children and babies may experience are:

- Starting nursery
- Moving between different rooms within the nursery
- Starting school or moving nurseries
- Family breakdowns
- New siblings
- Moving home
- Death of a family member or close friend
- Death of a family pet.

Staff are trained to observe their key children and to be sensitive to any changes in their behaviour and personality.

We respectfully ask that parents inform us of any changes in the home environment that may impact on their child so staff can be aware of the reasons behind any potential changes in the child's behaviour.

### **Starting nursery**

We recognise that starting nursery may be difficult for some children and their families. We have a settling in policy to support the child and their family.

### **Moving groups procedure**

When a child is ready to move to a different group in the nursery, we follow the process set out below and work with the parents to ensure this is a seamless process in which the child is fully supported at all stages.

This may include a handover meeting between the existing key person, new key person and parents. Where possible we would avoid change in (KP)Key Persons.

- The child will spend short sessions in their new group prior to the permanent move to enable them to feel comfortable in their new surroundings
- The child's key person will be with the child to enable a familiar person to be present at all times
- Wherever possible groups of friends will be moved together to enable these friendships to be kept intact and support the children with the peers they know
- Parents will be kept informed of the outcomes of these sessions e.g., through photographs, discussions or diary entries
- Only when the child has settled in through these taster sessions will the permanent move take place. If a child requires more support this will be discussed between the key person, parent and manager to agree how and when this will happen.

### **Starting school or moving childcare providers**

Starting school is an important transition and some children may feel anxious or distressed. We will do all we can to facilitate a smooth move and minimise any potential stresses.

This following process relates to children going to school. However wherever possible, we will adapt this process to support children moving to another childcare provider e.g., childminder or another nursery.

- We provide a variety of resources that relate to the school, e.g. uniform to dress up in, a role play area set up as a school classroom, photographs of all the schools the children may attend. This will help the children to become familiar with this new concept and will aid the transition
- We invite school representatives into the nursery to introduce them to the children
- At Egerton our children are familiar with the class teacher and TA's
- During the year the setting is involved in many daily activities within Egerton CP school e.g., Lunch times, Playground area & assemblies/other celebrations.
- Where possible we use other ways to support the transition to school, e.g. inviting previous children from the nursery who have moved on to school to come back and talk to the children about their school experiences
- Where possible we plan visits to the school with the key person. Each key person will talk about the school with their key children who are due to move to school and discuss what they think may be different and what may be the same. They will talk through any concerns the child may have and initiate activities or group discussions relating to any issues to help children overcome these
- We produce a comprehensive report on every child starting school to enable teachers to have a good understanding of every child received. This will include their interests, strengths and level of understanding and development in key areas. This will support continuity of care and early learning.
- Where necessary the Senco will report to the schools senco/nurse/teacher
- At Egerton we share our children's Progress from baseline to achieved development, this is done with the class teacher.

### **Other early years providers**

Where children are attending other early years settings or are cared for by a childminder, we will work with them to share relevant information about children's development.

Where a child is brought to nursery or collected from nursery by a childminder, we will ensure that key information is being provided to the child’s parent by providing the information directly to the parent via email or telephone.

**Family breakdowns**

We recognise that when parents separate it can be a difficult situation for all concerned. We have a separated families policy that shows how the nursery will act in the best interest of the child. We are able to provide resources such as books.

**Moving home and new siblings**

We recognise that both these events may have an impact on a child. Normally, parents will have advance notice of these changes and we ask parents to let us know about these events so we can support the child to be prepared.

The key person will spend time talking to the child and providing activities that may help the child to act out any worries they have, e.g. through role play, stories and discussions.

**Bereavement**

We recognise that this may be a very difficult time for children and their families and have a separate policy on bereavement which we follow to help us offer support to all concerned should this be required.

If parents feel that their child requires additional support because of any changes in their life, we ask that you speak to the nursery manager and the key person to enable this support to be put into place.

We are able to provide resources such as books.

**Key points:**

- **Transition is a process, not an event.**
- **High quality transitions recognise the importance of feeling ‘known’.**
- **Some children are particularly vulnerable to at times of transition.**
- **Transitions are opportunities for professional dialogue.**
- **The key person makes essential connections.**
- **Transition includes moving from EYFS to KS1.**

<b>This policy was adopted on</b>	<b>Signed on behalf of the nursery</b>	<b>Date for review</b>
<i>07<sup>th</sup> December 2020</i>		<i>January 2024</i>