

Key Person and Transitions Policy

Policy statement

- We believe that all our children and their families deserve support at points of transition.
- We recognise that periods of transition include major changes such as first entry to our setting and the move to a new setting or into school. We also know that children need support to change key person and also with day to day transitions such as being welcomed into our setting each morning and helped to share their experiences with parents when it is time to go home.
- We know that we have a statutory duty within the EYFS to provide each child with a key person who should help them to become familiar with our setting and to feel confident and safe within it, developing a bond with the child and family and offering a settled, close relationship.
- We also have a statutory responsibility to share relevant information about a child with parents and other settings that they may attend.
- We recognise that more vulnerable children and families may need additional support at points of transition.

Keyperson/ Keyworker system

At First Steps Preschool we want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy, and to feel secure and comfortable with staff; we also want parents to have confidence in their child's wellbeing and their role as active parents. In order to ensure every child at First Steps Preschool is given the appropriate level of attention and care, a key person is appointed for each child. A key person is a named member of staff assigned to an individual child to support their development and act as the key point of contact with the child's parents or carers.

The key person is the initial, but not exclusive, point of contact between the family and First Steps Preschool. Other staff will also maintain contact as the key person may not always be on duty every time a child is brought to or collected from First Steps Preschool. If a key person is away ill or on annual leave their key children will be observed by other staff.

At First Steps Pre-school, children are given a keyperson either initially or after settling in and getting to know the staff. This is a specific adult who has responsibility for the child's wellbeing at pre-school; they will be the first point of contact for parents and will keep, maintain and share information about the child to develop a picture of each child's level of skill, knowledge and understanding, and their interests. Any parental concerns can be discussed with the keyperson. Parents/carers receive a letter stating who their child's keyperson is. We try to put siblings with the same keyperson for continuity for families.

In line with the county council's policy, all two year olds will have a progress check completed by the key person between the ages of 27 and 30 months. This will be discussed with the parent/carer.

First Steps Pre-school keeps and maintains records relating to their child's learning while they are at pre-school. These are shared with parents, other settings the child might attend. Information is shared with onward schools via a Transitional Report (using a County Council template). We welcome input and feedback from home to add to these records.

Method

In the event that a member of staff leaves the setting, the following procedures would be used; We aim to make the process as smooth as possible using information sharing, observations of which members of staff the child gravitates towards and consultation with parents/carers.

In the event of a keyperson being absent from the pre-school for a period of time, another member of the staff team will act as a secondary keyperson and parents would be informed.

We aim to share information with other settings through the use of the Learning Journals. Staff share information about each other's key children via observations or notes.

We aim to monitor the success of transitions eg between keyworker.

Transitions Procedures

We have a person who has responsibility for co-ordinating our transition policy. That person is: the Setting Manager.

This transition policy is closely linked to our Key Person System, our Settling-in Policy and our Inclusion Policy.

At point of entry to our setting:

- We have a written welcome procedure, which includes the collection of essential information through registration forms as well as information from the parent about the child's needs, likes and development ('Getting to Know Me')
- We invite parents to visit with their child as part of the settling in process. Please see our Settling-in Policy.
- Our Parent Brochures are designed to be an effective welcome document, with the long version aiming to answer parents' frequently asked questions. The short version offers the relevant key information; both versions provide links to relevant policies. They are easy to read and can be translated for EAL families.
- We invite parents, carers and children to meet with their key person in a relaxed atmosphere before the child starts at our setting. The keyworker or supervisor fills in an induction checklist.
- We make 'Getting to Know Me' booklets to encourage parents to give us a range of information about their child's development, needs, routines, likes and dislikes.
- We display information for parents about what happens in our setting. This includes information on the website.
- We invite parents to supply photographs of their child and family to display in the setting, or into the children's journals. This helps the child to keep home in mind and shows families that we value them.
- We are happy for children to bring a favourite toy, comfort item or other transitional object with them from home, but may ask for these to be placed in bags to avoid getting lost.
- Parents and children have the opportunity to spend time getting to know their key person.
- The environment in our setting reflects the needs and interests of each child.
- The key person is aware of the likely emotional needs of the child.
- The key person has knowledge about the child's home routine and matches this, if possible, with the child's routine in the setting.
- We collect information at point of entry about any other professionals who are involved with the child and family.
- We ask for parental permission to work with other professionals before entry to ensure that the setting is ready to meet the child's physical, emotional, social and learning needs.
- We have a procedure for sharing information about a child who attends more than one setting. We give parents information about why this is important and the setting manager has responsibility for liaison with the other setting/carer. If the information relates to safeguarding, we follow current procedures.
- The setting manager monitors the effectiveness of communication between parents, child, and different settings where a child attends more than one setting on a regular basis.
- The key person is usually responsible for telling the parent or carer about events in the day that have been important for the child.
- We use observation and assessment to plan for each child's learning and development. All those involved with the child share this information.
- Learning Stories show a child's interests, learning, development and progress through written observations and photos.

- We make our Learning Stories easily available for parents at our Next Steps consultations or parent drop ins to look through or to borrow or at any time on request to take home to share with other family members.
- We encourage parents and children to look at and to add information to the Learning Story through 'Wow' moments and Next Steps Parental Consultation questions and Journals.
- We deploy staff to allow key people to be available at hand-over/drop off times to talk to parents.
- We make photo diaries of activities and events to show parents what happens in our setting.
- We organise displays, open sessions/ curriculum days and workshops to help parents to understand how young children learn and develop. We also use these sessions to help parents to enhance learning opportunities at home.
- We promote communication with families by using a variety of methods, for example newsletters, open sessions, meetings, parents' boards, informal conversations and the setting website.
- We work with parents as equal partners with, for example, Support Plans and IEPs (Individual Education Plan). We ask for permission before sharing information with other professionals.

At transition to a new setting, or transition into school:

- We talk to parents and children about the application for a place in the setting/school.
- We ask parents for permission to contact the new setting/school to share information about the child's needs and interests.
- We ask parents to tell us about the school place that has been given to their child. We invite school staff to visit their 'new' children in our setting and we talk to key practitioners about individual children's needs.
- We complete a copy of the Norfolk County Council Record at Transfer from Pre-school to School for each child in the half term prior to school entry. This is completed with the child's parents and sent to school before the end of the term in which the child starts school.
- We work with our local schools to make simple books or displays about school for our book area.
- We help our children to explore positive ideas about school by introducing 'school' role-play materials during the summer term.

We offer the following additional support for more vulnerable children and families.

- Our inclusion policy identifies the procedures for transition for children with additional needs.
- We ask for parental permission to contact other professionals before entry to ensure that we are ready to meet the child's physical, emotional, social and learning needs.
- We collect information at point of entry from any other professionals who are involved with the child and family.
- We welcome professionals who support individual children to work in our setting where appropriate.
- We make referrals to our Children's Centre where appropriate and signpost families to services provided.
- We work with parents as equal partners with for example, IEPs and support plans.
- We offer families the opportunity to attend a transition meeting at points of entry. (Home to pre-school, pre-school to school).
- We make an application for additional funding if we believe a child has a sufficient level of identified need.
- When needed, we contact and work with an appropriate Outreach Key Person for vulnerable groups, including, English as an Additional Language (EAL), Portage, Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT). This includes family support from relevant professionals prior and during entry to our setting or on transfer to school.
- We have a flexible approach with those children who are highly mobile, for example GRT, Forces and Migrant Families.
- Looked After Children in our setting may require additional education and care plans as required by individual needs.
- Each child in our setting with complex medical needs has a Care Plan, which is shared as required.
- We assess and modify our environment to ensure that it meets the needs of the child.

Transition to School Process

Autumn term

Last review 05/11/2024

Next review November 2027

3

Parents informed of transition to school process via a letter sent in September (link to Norfolk County Council given).
County Council applications for admissions to primary schools.

Spring term

Easter - County Council informs parents/ carers as to which school their child has been accepted at.

Summer term

Visits from feeder school reception teacher (usually Ashill VCP but others arranged if needed).

Transitional reports are sent out to parents/ carers (summer term 2)

Transitional meeting with parents

Local schools set dates for new children to visit their onward school. If appropriate, pre-school staff to accompany children on one of the visits.

Keypersons or individual support workers for children identified as having a specific learning or physical requirement or have English as a second language are required to attend any extra meetings needed to support the child's transition if required.

Others

We aim to attend events at the school and/or to let parents know about events at the primary school and invite the reception teacher to events at pre-school.

School role play materials and photos about school are used (throughout the year but focus in summer term).

The setting manager is responsible for organising visiting dates and appropriate information sharing as primary school liaison.

Parent survey/transitional meetings are a forum for any comments regarding transition to school.

Autumn term after the children have started school

Visit to reception class if appropriate.