

09 Early years practice procedures

09.03 Prime times - The role of the key person

'Each child must be assigned a key person' (EYFS 2021)

Children need to form a secure attachment to key person when they join the setting to feel safe, happy, and eager to participate and learn.

The key person role

- A key person builds an on-going relationship with the child and their parents and is committed to that child's well-being while in the setting.
- Every child that attends is allocated a key person before they begin settling in – it is not the responsibility of the child to choose their own key person. **Siblings are not normally allocated the same key worker, as this makes it difficult for siblings to do small group work separately.**
- The role is fully explained to parents on induction.
- **The number of children for each key person takes into account the individual needs of children and the capacity of the key person to manage their cohort; it is also influenced by part-time places and part-time staff. The setting manager should aim for consistency i.e. matching part-time staff to part-time children; full-time children should not be divided between key persons during the week.**
- Photographs of staff are displayed clearly.
- **If a key worker is absent for a significant period, the Preschool Manager will assign a new key worker.**

From previous Policy 4.1 The role of the key person and settling in:

The key person is responsible for:

- Working with the parents and are responsible for planning and delivering the child's Next Steps and reports; helping each child progress following the Early Years Foundation Stage profile.
- Developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents (and other settings and professionals as appropriate) to keep those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.
- Having links with other carers involved with the child and co-ordinating the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- Encouraging positive relationships between children in their key group, spending time with them as a group regularly.

All staff at Pippins are encouraged to build good relationships with each child and we encourage the children to get to know all the staff as time progresses. Staff are available to talk to at the start of each session and at the end of the session.

Pippins Preschool offers two parents' evenings per year, where parents can meet their child's key worker and discuss progress.

Parents

- Key persons are the first point of contact for parents with regard to matters concerning their child and any concerns parents may have are addressed with the key person in the first instance.
- Key persons support parents in their role as the child's first and most enduring educators.
- **The key person is responsible for the child's developmental records, completing the progress check at age two, and for sharing information about progress with the child's parents.**

Learning and development

- The key person helps to ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. This is achieved through regular observation and assessment of

children, using information gathered about their achievements, interests and learning styles to plan for each individual child's learning and development.

- If a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, the key person must discuss this with the setting manager or SENCO and the child's parents.

Prime times

The key person role is explained further in the prime time procedures (see Section 09 Prime times); the key person also maintains other responsibilities for key children including administering medication and signing accident records.

From previous Policy 4.1 The role of the key person and settling in: Transition from preschool to school

- Reception class teachers are welcome to come into preschool to meet the children and look at the work they have been doing. The transition from preschool to school will be organised with the co-operation of the school involved. Activities such as circle time, using appropriate books, will be organised in the summer term to help children adjust to the change in their life and to give them a chance to discuss any fears.
- With the agreement of parents, children's busy books (records of achievement) and reports will be available for teachers to see, and these will be given to parents to keep at the end of the summer term.

From previous Policy 4.1 The role of the key person and settling in: The progress check at age two

- The key person or a senior member of staff complete a Learning and Development Summary 1 which follows the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The progress check aims to review the child's development and ensures that parents and Pippins have a clear picture of their child's development.
- Within the progress check, the key person will note areas where the child is progressing well and identify areas where progress is less than expected.
- The progress check will describe the actions that will be taken by us to address any developmental concerns (including working with other professionals where appropriate) as agreed with the parent(s).
- The key person will plan activities to meet the child's needs within the setting and will support parents to understand the child's needs in order to enhance their development at home.

Safeguarding children

- All staff have a responsibility towards children to report any concern about their development, welfare or child protection matter to the setting manager and to follow the procedures in this respect.
- Regular supervision with the setting manager provides further opportunities to discuss the progress and welfare of key children.

Further guidance

Being a Key Person in an Early Years Setting (Alliance 2015)