The Mill Nursery

Settling In Policy

Aim/purpose

We aim to make The Mill Nursery 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. We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the nursery and feel secure and comfortable with all staff. We also want parents and carers to have confidence in both their children's well being and their role as active partners with the nursery.

Methods

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide their parents or carers with information. These include written information (including our policies), displays about activities available within the setting and individual meetings with parents.
- Prior to starting nursery, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents or carers to visit the nursery for taster sessions.
- We allocate a key person to each child and their family before they start to attend; the key worker welcomes and looks after the child and their parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.
- We offer a home visit by the key person and manager, to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.
- We use pre-start visits to explain and complete with parents the child's registration records. The Childcare Manager will meet with parents/carers before the start date to complete the child's registration records. The Nursery registration form will request information from families about their child. Parents will need to provide emergency contact details and telephone numbers, photographs of who may collect their child and their child's birth certificate.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with their parents and jointly decide on the best way to help their child to settle into the Centre.
- Settling-in visits are made by appointment with the allocated key person. A number of visits (depending on the child) will be made.
- We judge a child to be settled when they are familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents or carers leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- 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 the Nursery.

No matter how confident you feel your child is we recommend that you plan for the time that you may need to support your child during this time. By taking this flexible approach, practitioners at The Mill Nursery feel that each child and their family will

settle into the environment at a pace that is reflective of their needs. Different children need different amounts of time to settle in. We recommend that you plan for two weeks to support your child. Some parents have asked us to give an idea of what the process will be like. It is different for every child, but we have given a rough outline of what to expect at the end of this leaflet.

The settling in period is this time when you are here with your child in the Nursery. It is a time for your child to get to know his or her key person - with the reassurance of having you here too. No matter how confident you feel your child is, we will insist that you follow our settling in procedures. In our experience, all children benefit greatly when the nursery works closely with the family on settling in. Our aim is to settle children in at their own pace – when children are ready to move away from their parents, we will encourage and support this.

Helping your child to settle in

1. **Home Visit** (if you choose to have one). This can be very special for a child – often children remember for a long time who came to visit them and what they did. The home visit gives us helpful information about your child and it enables your child to begin an attachment with the key person on "home territory".

2. **Your child spending time in the nursery room with you**. During this time, you are available to support your child, to ease the transition for your child from home to nursery, and to help staff get to know your child. It might be best to avoid getting deeply involved in your child's play at this time. This allows members of staff to make a judgement about engaging your child in experiences. However, you are the parent and we will support you in judging how to handle this for the best. As adults, if we try to relax as much as possible and remain confident, this will help the children.

3. **Your child spending time in the nursery room whilst you are in another part of the building.** It will be up to you and the key person to discuss when your child is ready for this step. This means that your child has the opportunity to explore the nursery room and have her or his needs met by the key person and the rest of the staff. This might be for quite a short period of time at first, and then for longer stretches of time. It is very important that you say clearly to your child that you will be leaving the nursery room. It's tempting to nip out when your child is busy, but if your child turns round a few minutes later to find you have unexpectedly gone, she or he may be really distraught. It is essential that you do not leave the building without talking with your key person first.

Children settle into nursery in lots of different ways. We hope that we can use our experience to support you and your child in whatever way suits you.

Policy endorsement

Signed by:

Name:

Position:

Date: