Froxfield Pre-School
The Role of the Key Person and Settling-In

Policy statement

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. We are committed to the key person approach which benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting. It encourages secure relationships which support children to thrive, give parents confidence and make the setting a happy place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with the adults who work in the setting. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the pre-school. We aim to make the setting 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.

The key person role is set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each child must have a key person. These procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children.

Procedures

- We allocate a key person before the child is left for their first unaccompanied session.
- The key person is responsible for:
  - Settling the child into the pre-school.
  - Completing relevant forms with parents, including consent forms.
  - Explaining policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
  - Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
  - Working with the parents to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning.
  - Acting as the key contact for the parents.
  - Developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents to keep those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in the pre-school 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 her/his key group, spending time with them as a group each day.

- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in the pre-school, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other adults and children.
- A buddy system is in place for those times in which a key person may be absent.

Settling-in

- Before a child begins at pre-school, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our policies and procedures), displays about activities available within the setting, information events and individual meetings with parents.
- Before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the setting.
- We offer a home visit and provide a 'Starting Pre-School' leaflet, containing images of the staff and setting – this will help the child to become more familiar with the different things that they may see as they start at pre-school.
- During the child's settling sessions, staff will get to know the child. The key person will be allocated after the settling sessions but before the parents leave the child for their first unaccompanied session. The key person will be allocated depending on which member of staff the child has formed a bond with during the settling sessions.
- Settling sessions are tailored to meet the needs of each individual child and family.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- Parents are welcome to stay in the pre-school, for as long as it takes for their child to feel safe and settled.
- Younger children may take longer to settle in, as may children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be on hand to re-settle them.
- Before the child is left for their first unaccompanied session, we gather as much information as possible, to support settling. Parents are asked to complete an 'All About Me' leaflet.
- A child is deemed to be settled when they have formed a trusting relationship with their key person; for example, the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents leave, we encourage them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- The key person will ring the parent/carer during the child's first unaccompanied session, to let them know how the child is getting on.
- We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others, but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left. We encourage parents to stay until their child can stay happily without them.

- Leaving a child to cry will not help them to settle any quicker as a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the setting.
- For those children who have attended a setting prior to starting with us, a handover call will take place.
- For those children who attend more than one setting, a shared care book will be put in place.
- We work closely with parents to plan next steps and share progress.

The progress check at age two

- The key person carries out the progress check at age two in accordance with any local procedures that are in place and referring to the guidance *A Know How Guide: The EYFS progress check at age two*.
- The progress check aims to review the child's development and ensures that parents 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 the pre-school 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.

This policy was adopted by	Froxfield Pre-School
On	May 2026
Date to be reviewed	May 2027
Signed on behalf of the provider	
Name of signatory	Mrs Vickie Farrow
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Headteacher