

Stepping Stones Childcare

Policy for Settling Children into the Nursery.

Prior to the child commencing at nursery staff need to:

1. Familiarize the child
2. Build a relationship with the parents
3. Gain relevant information

Information required:

The age of the child

An important consideration, as children go through many stages during their early years. For example, a baby can become very clingy at 9 months and this often reappears at 18 months. This is perfectly normal and needs consideration.

Young children may need short burst of cuddles and reassurances in the early days. This should be given whilst the child is encouraged to play independently.

Stage of development

A child's chronological age is not always on par with-it development stage. It is important not to prejudge the situation but to wait and see, and therefore make a valued assessment of the child.

The child's previous experience

This could be the child's first outside contact with other children almost certainly in the group situation. This can be very daunting even to the most confident children. The number of toys and type of equipment can also be unfamiliar and will need staff's guidance and help.

The child's use of language

How can the child use language? Can they express their immediate needs? Do they understand simple commands, or their ability to listen to a story and understand the content.

Is English their first language. If not, how much do they understand/speak. What is their first language? Find out the child's words for toilet, bed, sad, happy, thirsty, and any special words they may have for objects or belongings.

Parent's feelings and needs

How do the parents feel about leaving their child, particularly with strangers? The staff have a responsibility to gain the parent's confidence, especially the key worker. Do not cause undue anxiety to the parents, they may feel they have no choice about leaving their child, and feel pressured, guilty, jealous etc. So, make the parent feel that the nursery is a part of their lives too, and they are welcome at any time. A particularly anxious parent may benefit from a coffee with staff, a phone call at work, text a photo etc. Get to know the parents first name and make a point of chatting to them each day.

Cultural, religious, ethnic background

The background of each family should be recorded any special needs eg diet should be noted in line with the Children Act, familiar objects, scripts, audio tapes etc of other languages should be used in the nursery.

The approach in the Nursery and possible effect on the Child

A child who is confident at home, maybe quiet and subdued in the nursery. Some children regress, develop temper tantrums etc. This is possibly due to the vast difference between home and nursery. Help the child by gently encouraging him/her to familiarise themselves, gain their confidence, get to know the other children; be comfortable with the toys and equipment; to develop their relationship with the adults; and learn to share space and time with others.

Use of comforter.

If a child has a comforter ie blanket, dummy, or soft toy, they should be allowed free access in the early days, when they are ready they will not need to use one - do not rush them.

As all children are individuals it follows that each child will settle into nursery life at their own pace. We have a week settling in period, but some children may need a longer period, and more sustained adult contact and reassurance before feeling settled, for these children it is vital that their needs are met, with lots of positive attention.

If a child is upset, very early intervention can direct their attention, this can be done by a quick cuddle, reassurance that Mummy or Daddy will be back soon, or gently weaning the child to play as soon as possible. Lots of eye contact, smiles etc whilst the child is playing happily are important, so the child realises that happy faces get attention too.

If a child seems to be taking excessive time to settle in, taking into account their individual circumstances it could be beneficial to discuss the situation with staff and parents to agree on a plan of action.

All the staff should respond to the child in a similar manner. The key workers assessment should be valued here. Other staff should be supportive of the key worker and aware that he/she may need a break.

Parents are encouraged to spend as much time in the nursery with their child during the settling in period. Then gradually wean themselves away from the child in stages, beginning by leaving the nursery room for short periods ie to have a cup of coffee in the staff room. The following day they may leave the building for one hours, after which the child could be left for a morning or afternoon making sure they experience different times of the daily routine like mealtimes and rest time.

Parents will need as much reassurance and encouragement as their children during this settling in period. A successfully settled child will result in a child who attends nursery happily and parents who can go to work knowing their child is happy and secure in their new environment. This is our most important responsibility.

Susan Perkins 14/03/01

This policy was revised on	26.01.15
Signed on behalf of the nursery	<i>Susan Perkins</i>
This policy was revised on	02.04.16 <i>Susan Perkins</i>
This policy was revised on	17.05.17 <i>Susan Perkins</i>

Policy renewed	Signed on behalf of the nursery	To be revised on
09/01/2019	<i>Susan Perkins</i>	09/01/2020
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