

2. The Role of the Key Person and Settling In

2.1 The Role of the Key Person and Settling In

'Each child must be assigned a key person' (EYFS 2025)

Babies and young 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 his/her 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.
- Where possible a 'back up' key person is also identified for each child so that they can fulfil the role in the absence of the main key person, for example, during annual leave or sickness.
- The key person conducts the progress check at age two for their key children.
- The role is fully explained to parents on induction and the name of the child's key person and 'back up' key person is recorded on the child's registration form.
- The key person is central to settling a child into the setting. The setting manager and key person explain the need for a settling in process and agree a plan with the parents.
- Shift patterns and staff absence can affect a child who is just settling in; where possible, settling in should be matched to when the key person is on duty.
- 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

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should not be divided between key persons during the week.

- Photographs of key persons and their key groups are displayed clearly.
- The key person spends time daily with his or her key group to ensure their well-being.

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 support 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; the key person also maintains other responsibilities for key children including administering medication and signing accident records.

Back-up key person

- The role of the back-up key person is to step in when the main key person is absent or unavailable to provide a stable and consistent care relationship for the child.
- The back-up key person is identified when the child starts but is not introduced to the child until an attachment is beginning to form with the key person.
- The back-up key person gradually forms a relationship with the child until the child is happy to be cared for by this person.
- The back-up key person shares information with parents in the key person's absence and makes notes in the child's records where appropriate.
- The back-up key person ensures information is shared with the key person.

Safeguarding children

- The key person has a responsibility towards their key 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.
- The back-up key person has a duty likewise.



This policy was adopted by	St Mary's Nursery, Camberley	(name of provider)
On	1 st September 2025	(date)
Date to be reviewed	1 st September 2026	(date)
Signed on behalf of the provider		
Name of signatory	Andrew Knowles	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Chairperson	

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2.2 Progress Check at Age Two

- The key person is central to the progress check and must be the person completing it.
- Settings should take guidance from their local authority as to when the progress check at age two is completed; if no such guidance is provided, the progress check is completed when the child is between 26 and 30 months old. The child should be attending the setting for at least 1 term before the check is completed.
- Once the timing of the child's progress check is confirmed, parents are invited to discuss their child's progress at a mutually convenient time.
- The setting must seek to engage both parents and make allowance for parents who do not live with their child to be involved.

Completing the progress check at age two

- On-going observational assessment informs the progress check and must be referred to.
- Children's contributions are included in the report. Staff must be 'tuned in' to the ways in which very young children, or those with speech or other developmental delay or disability, communicate/
- Where any concerns about a child's learning and development are raised these are discussed with the parents, the SENCO and the setting manager.
- If concerns arise about a child's welfare, they must be addressed through Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures.
- The key person must be clear about the aims of the progress check as follows:
 - to review a child's development in the three prime areas of the EYFS
 - to ensure that parents have a clear picture of their child's development
 - to enable practitioners to understand the child's needs and, with support from practitioners, enhance development at home
 - note areas where a child is progressing well and identify any areas where there are concerns



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