

Key Person Policy

Aim

At Moorwell Miracles we endeavor to make every child feel safe and confident here at the setting through a special relationship with a key person. We create a welcoming environment where children settle quickly, providing individual care to the child by working closely with parents and families.

We recognise that for some children and parents, starting a new setting can be a worrying time. We make sure we have a settling in procedure and a thorough key person approach for us to get to know the child and parents from the start, giving them reassurances to feel safe.

As outlined in the EYFS: *'Each child must be assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with parents.'* (EYFS, 2012, p.18)

This policy will provide staff with guidance to implement the key person system, it will outline the roles and responsibilities of a key person and how these translate into practice.

Practitioner Responsibilities

Whilst all staff in the nursery work with every child and support their individual needs, personal care requirements and ongoing development, each member of staff will have specific responsibility for their own group of key children.

Relationships with key children

- They help these children settle in and become familiar with the setting.
- The key person will provide a secure attachment for their designated children.
- They ensure the needs of these children are met, responding sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour.
- They provide a 'secure base' by being there to support, encourage and allow them to explore at their own pace.
- They are primarily responsible for the child's care routines, for changing and for other personal care needs specific to them. They support their dressing and washing, where possible. Also supporting the child's growing independence and development of skills.
- The key person will comfort the child when distressed by calmly and gently acknowledging their feelings, offering explanations and reassurances.
- The key person will work closely with a key buddy. The key buddy steps in as a secondary key person in the event of absence. It is part of the key persons role to ensure their buddy is aware of the children's needs and have a strong relationship with the parents to enable clear communication.



Relationships with parents/carers

- The key person acts as the key contact for parents, carers and children.
- The key person will lead the settling in sessions alongside the parents/carers to discuss the child's individual routines, the people who are special to them, their likes and dislikes and any other information to ensure this is incorporated into the daily care of the child.
- The key person has a sound knowledge and range of skills to provide parents with advice and guidance, supporting any concerns. Also answering any questions in relation to transitions between rooms and starting school.
- Key people will develop a close professional working relationship with parents/carers, ensuring that each child is cared for appropriately and their individual needs are accommodated for.
- The key person will develop a two-way flow of information between themselves and the parent/carer to ensure they become aware of any significant aspects of family life that may be important to the child.
- The key person has responsibility for sharing their key child's development with parents and other professionals as required.
- The key person is responsible for communicating with parents and holding parent evenings to discuss progress at the end of the child's focus week.
- They are also responsible for communicating with parents daily, both in person and over the phone, wherever possible.

Records

- The key person is responsible for maintaining observational records and completing termly cohorts of their key children, using these to inform next steps, providing challenge through play and supporting individual challenge based on the knowledge of the children.
- Where a child is also supported by another member of staff, who is not their key person, record keeping becomes a joint responsibility. (E.g. for children identified as having a special educational need.)
- When a child is 2 years of age the key person will complete the Integrated Health Check, alongside parents and the health visitor.

Welfare and Safeguarding

- Key people are responsible for the welfare of ALL the children in their care, monitoring patterns of absence, injury and development, referring any concerns to the Nursery Manager, or any designated safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- The key person will be responsible for completion of accident and incident forms, administering medication and notifying parents of any of the above.

Transition

- The key person plays an integral role in the child's transition between rooms, settings and to school. Aiding this by introducing the child and the parents /carers to their new key person, school or teacher and helping them to become familiar with their new environment.
- The key person will offer parents a settling in session, through letter, to their new room, ensuring they are available to guide this session alongside the parents and new key person.

- It is the responsibility of the key person to pass on records during the transition process, ensuring all records are all up to date.
- In the case of a staff member's absence, it is the responsibility of a buddy to cover the role of the primary key person.

Nursery Manager Responsibilities

- It is the Nursery Managers responsibility to ensure that each child has a buddy who will take responsibility in the event of staff absence.
- The Nursery Manager will provide opportunities for staff to give regular feedback as well as provide staff support in their role.
- The Nursery Manager will monitor all children's records of development and learning and ensure they are updated regularly and to an appropriate standard.

To summarise, we say that a key person is a significant, valued, fundamental and essential person in a child's journey within the nursery. A key person holds the vital knowledge to unlock a child's potential, happiness and learning. A key person is there to tune in to the child, so that the two harmonise their shared understanding of one another. A key person adjusts their approach to fit with the child's needs; they bond, and so an attachment relationship is formed.

