



Settling in Policy

Our Aims

- To work in close partnership with parents and carers, to meet the needs of each child and support them with any difficulties that may arise.
- To support all children during transition from home, family or nursery as they start their journey at The Life Nursery.

Helping your child to settle in

Children settle into The Life Nursery in lots of different ways. Some children will confidently explore and settle into the new environment as soon as they arrive at nursery. Other children may be nervous and anxious about leaving their parent.

Please be reassured and try not to worry if your child experiences difficulties – it is a very normal part of a child's development to be anxious, nervous or upset about starting nursery. We also recognise that many parents will find this a difficult and sometimes upsetting process. We hope that we can use our experience to support you and your child in whatever way suits you.

Please remember that we require all parents and carers to help their children settle in. No matter how confident you feel your child is; all families will be expected to follow our settling in procedures. In our experience all children benefit greatly when the nursery works closely with the family on settling in.

Children can be helped to settle in by their parents, and other important people who they know well and can be comforted by – aunts, uncles and grandparents for example.

The settling-in period

Different children need different amounts of time to settle in. Some parents have asked us to give an idea of what the process will be like. It is different for every child; settling in procedures for our nursery are set out in this policy and are purposefully designed to be flexible to suit every child.

The settling in period is the time when you are here with your child in the nursery. It is a time for your child to form relationships with staff, environment and their peers while reassured that you are here too. As the relationships develop, your child will be able to trust that:

- The Life Nursery staff are able to meet her or his needs
- Staff can be helpful, comforting and deal positively with any problems
- Interesting experiences are provided which make it worthwhile to come to nursery

The settling in process gives **you** a chance to see:

- The nursery routine

- The kinds of experiences we offer to the children
- Form professional relationships with staff
- Ask any questions and complete any outstanding paperwork

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. We have found that long term, this means more settled confident and happier children – and parents!

Settling-in procedures

Before the children start their journey at The Life Nursery:

- Parents /carers are able to view the nursery at any time during the hours of 8.30am and 3.15pm. We have an ‘open door policy’.
- Parents /carers are informed about our website and facebook page.
 - Children are able to explore the nursery environment and activities and meet their peers;
 - Parents /carers and children are able to meet the staff to ask questions about the nursery;
 - Parents /carers are given paperwork to complete prior to their child starting. This includes an admission form, funding parent agreement, privacy notice and All About Me booklet.
 - Parents are informed about The Life Nursery’s Safeguarding and Prevent Duty procedures and made aware of other policies and where these can be found.
 - Parents are made aware of who the Designated Safeguarding Leads are in the nursery.
 - Parents /carers are given confirmation of their child’s start date.
 - A home visit will be arranged for the staff to visit the child in their home environment.
 - Parents/carers are able to stay with their child for a limited amount of time to help with the settling in process if the child is unsettled.

First day at The Life Nursery:

Stages of settling in -

- Parents /carers or a familiar adult will be expected to spend time in the nursery with their child to ease the transition for their child.
 - At this stage we will support parents in judging how to handle separating from children for the best, dependent on how confident the child is.
 - Children spending time in the nursery whilst parents are present will enable them to have the opportunity to explore their environment and have their needs met by staff as well as parents.
 - It will be up to parents and nursery staff to discuss when each child is ready for the next step. During this time, it is very important that you say clearly to your child that you will be leaving the nursery. It can be tempting to leave when your child is busy, but if your child turns round a few minutes later to find you have unexpectedly gone, they may be upset. It is essential that you do not leave the nursery building without talking with a member of staff first.
1. When children are ready to be left in the nursery with the staff.
 - Child might be very sad at the moment of parting, but if the settling in process has gone well they will be able to manage this with the support of the staff. If any child continues to be upset after parents have gone, staff will contact parents. It is important for parents to say goodbye to their children clearly, so that the child knows what is going on and can express how they feel about it. Some parents find it easiest to set a limit on how long they will stay at dropping-off time, for example “I’ll read two books with you and then it will be time for me to go.” It is up to each parent how they manage this, but please do ask for

support or advice if it will be helpful. It is not uncommon for a child to settle very well into the nursery, and then unexpectedly a few weeks later to find it difficult to come in. This might be for any one of a variety of reasons, and again we will offer our support or help if you would like it.

2. Each child is allocated a Key Person.

- Parents will be informed who their child's Key Person is – this is a member of staff who becomes first point of contact for parents and their child should they have any issues or questions about their child and their learning experiences. We allocate a Key Person to each child once children are settled into nursery to ensure as far as possible that your child has formed an attachment with a member of staff with whom they are building a strong and positive relationship. If your child's Key Person ever needs to be changed for any reason, you will be informed about this at the earliest possible time.

At any stage of the process – if parents would like to talk to someone, or need ideas, or support, or help ... then staff are always available.

The Life Nursery believe it is best to arrange to do this in a private space – not in front of your child.

This policy was revised by Louise Gray, Nursery Manager and Kirsty Beck, Deputy Manager – September 2024

Policy read by: