



## Settling in Policy

Early Years Foundation Stage states that **3.1 - Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the people caring for them.**

### Our aims at The Life Nursery:

- Creating a safe and healthy environment, where children and their families feel safe, secure and happy to come to nursery.
- For families and their children to develop a relationship of trust and care with their key person from the start.
- 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 parents.

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.

### Ways that we support your children for nursery

**Show around at nursery** – First step at nursery is a show around and picking up the forms. This includes an admission form, funding parent agreement, privacy notice and All About Me booklet. We always encourage children to come to the nursery for show around, where they have an opportunity to explore the nursery for a very short time, but they will have parents/carers to support them. It helps you to see how the nursery works in a very brief moment. We will spend time explaining the nursery, introduce our staff members, informing you about The Life Nursery's Safeguarding and Prevent Duty procedures and make you aware of other policies and where these can be found. We will introduce you to the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) – Louise Gray (manager/director) and Dharmita (deputy nursery manager and DSL in absence of Louise).

**Stay and Play session** - An invitation to join in an hour long stay and play session for all new children to come and play at the nursery with their parents/carers. This is an opportunity to start forming bonds with their new peers and staff. It can ease the children into their new routine more comfortably and with greater confidence.

**Home visits** - A home visit will be arranged for the staff to visit the child in their home environment and to go through the paperwork. This gives our staff the best opportunity to observe your children in their natural environment. Parents/carers are given confirmation of their child's start date on the home visit, with a start time to help with the settling process.

### The settling-in period at nursery

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 their key person, staff, environment and their peers while reassured that you are here too.

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.

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

### First day at nursery

Your child's key person will greet you and your child and support you both during the settling in (this will be a later start time and staff will give a timing on the home visit). 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. This will be decided on the day, once we know how the children have settled in. Please be available if your child doesn't settle.

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. Having a gradual approach for those children that don't settle, who receive the time and patience they need to adjust to coming to nursery without feeling rushed, will settle much better and happier.

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, including the manager, 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.

At the start, if children are not settled and are upset, one thing they may not allow staff to do is changing their nappies. In this instance, we will not change their nappy and will ring you to let you know about the situation. We do not want to upset them more and make the stay at nursery unsettling for your child.

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.

**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 Dharmita Mistry Deputy Nursery Manager – January 2026**

**Policy read by:**