



49. Settling In

EYFS: 3.27, 3.73

At Step By Step Montessori Ltd we aim to support parents and other carers to help their children settle quickly and easily by giving consideration to the individual needs and circumstances of every child and their families. Our aim is for children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the nursery and to feel secure and comfortable with all staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's continued well-being and their role as active partners, with the child being able to benefit from what the nursery has to offer.

All our staff know about the importance of building strong attachments with children. They are trained to recognise the different stages of attachment and use this knowledge to support children and families settling in to the nursery.

Our nursery will work in partnership with parents to settle their child into the nursery environment by:

- Allocating a key person to each child and his/her family, once he/she starts to attend. The key person welcomes and looks after the child ensuring that their care is tailored to meet their individual needs. He/she offers a settled relationship for the child and builds a relationship with his/her parents during the settling in period and throughout his/her time at the nursery, to ensure the family has a familiar contact person to assist with the settling in process
- Reviewing the nominated key person if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child's needs are supported
- Providing parents with relevant information about the policies and procedures of the nursery
- Working with parents to gather information before the child starts on the child's interests, likes and dislikes: as well as completing a baseline of the child's current development to plan, and meet, the individual needs of the child from the first day
- Encouraging parents and children to visit the nursery during the weeks before an admission is planned
- Planning settling in visits and introductory sessions (between 20 mins - 1 hour). These will be provided free of charge over a one or two week period, dependent on individual needs, age and stage of development
- Welcoming parents to stay with their child during the first few weeks until the child feels settled and the parents feel comfortable about leaving their child. Settling in visits and introductory sessions are key to a smooth transition and to ensure good communication and information sharing between staff and parents
- Reassuring parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling in to the nursery and developing a plan with them
- Encouraging parents, where appropriate, to separate themselves from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences
- Assigning a buddy/back-up key person to each child in case the key person is not available. Parents will be made aware of this to support the settling process and attachment
- Respecting the circumstances of all families, including those who are unable to stay for long periods of time in the nursery and reassure them of their child's progress towards settling in
- Not taking a child on an outing from the nursery until he/she is completely settled.



Covid-19

We will work with all families that have not attended the setting during the lockdown period to arrange suitable settling times. These may include video calls to begin with, to minimise the time spent in the setting. Settling visits may be planned based on individual needs, taking in to account the age/stage of development and how the child feels about returning.

Where settling visits are required, different options will be considered such as:

- Whilst the nursery is still closed, so there are no other children/adults around
- Having a settling in period over a couple of weeks just for visits to take place
- Settling visits outdoors
- Shorter sessions to begin with building up to the full session

The settling in policy for new children will be adapted during the pandemic based on the individual needs of the children and staff at nursery. We may have to suspend these or, where possible, we will encourage virtual show rounds and online video calls prior to children starting. Most of the information will be gathered over the telephone to limit the time spent in the setting.

Any new families will be asked to sign a health declaration to confirm the child or no one in the family has any symptoms of coronavirus.

Once children are settled parents will be asked to follow the same drop off/collection procedures as the other children, maintaining safe distancing between them and others (see arrival and departure policy.)

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>January 2021</i>	<i>Khadijeh Nauji</i>	<i>January 2022</i>