



Next Steps Pre-school of Elms Vale, Church Road, Dover, CT17 9LW
Tel: 01304 226234
Registered Charity No. 1156391

Settling-in Policy

Statement of intent

At Next Steps preschool we want children to feel safe, stimulated, and happy within the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with the staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well being and their role as active partners with the setting.

Aim

We aim to make the setting a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to their individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

Methods

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our policies), displays within the setting, open mornings and individual meetings with parents and home visits.
- During the term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to have information about the preschool which is found on the website.
- We allocate a key person/buddy system to each child and his/her family when they start to attend. The key person will welcome (phone conversation or outside introduction) and look after the child and his/her parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process. These can be for 1-2 hours over two sessions to start with.
- We use the introduction/phone call/emails from the key person/manager to complete with his/her parents the child's registration records, explain the Early Years Foundation Stage 2025 and a 'all about me' form which is a profile of the child to help with settling in.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help each child settle.

- We hope to include the parent, by gradually leaving their child for increasing time periods as and when the child can cope. Or picking the child up earlier than the other children or having 1-2 hours settling in period over two sessions or more.
- It is usual for younger children to take longer to settle in, as well as children who have not previously spent time away from home. A parent/ carer may also be needed to re-settle a child who has had a period of absence
- We watch and observe a child to be settling and see when they have formed a relationship with their key person or buddy, the child is also familiar with where things are, pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back.
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the setting.
- All children are individual and need different methods to help them settle within the group.
- We will continuously reflect and understand the diverse and individual needs of every single child settling in our pre-school.

This policy was reviewed and updated in Sept 2025

Dated to be reviewed in Sept 2026

Name of signatory Virginia McCarthy

Role of signatory Manager