Next Steps Pre-school, Elms Vale, Church Road, Dover, CT17 9LW
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Registered Charity No. 1156391

Key Person Policy

Policy statement

The role of the key person 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, to offer a settled relationship for the child and to build a relationship with their parents.

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to attend and work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents/carers to have confidence in both their children's wellbeing and their role as active partners with the setting.

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

The key person role is set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2026. Our setting meets this requirement by assigning a key person to each child.

Procedures

- We promote effective and positive relationships for all children in the setting by using the key person approach.
- We allocate a key person when the child starts; this depends on the days the child attends and the days their key person works.
- The manager and the key person are responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting, through phone calls, meetings outside the setting and home visits.
- The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgemental.
- The key person acts as the key contact for parents/carers and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information. When the child is aged between two and three, practitioners will review their progress and provide parents with a short written summary of the child's development in the prime areas. This check must identify the child's

strengths and any areas where the child's progress is less than expected.

- The key person is responsible for developmental records and for sharing information regularly with the child's parents/carers to keep those records up to date, reflecting the whole picture of the child in our setting and at home. If a child also attends another setting, the key person will develop a regular two-way flow of information with that setting.
- The setting will ensure that there is a place where staff can talk to parents/carers confidentially, as well as an area for all staff to take breaks away from the areas being used by the children.
- The key person encourages positive relationships between children in their key group, spending time with them as a group each day they attend.
- We provide a back-up 'buddy' key person so that the child and parents/carers have a key contact in the absence of the child's key person.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our setting, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.

Settling in

Settling in is carried out in conjunction with our settling-in policy and procedures. The pre-school will introduce the key person/manager to the parents by phone and at a meeting outside the setting, attended by the child, to explain and complete the child's registration records with their parents/carers.

We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person; for example, the child looks for the key person when they arrive, goes to them for comfort and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are, is pleased to see other children and participates in activities.

This policy was adopted in September 2026.

Next review: September 2027.

Name of signatory: Virginia McCarthy

Role of signatory: Manager