



Bright Stars Settling In Policy



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Director:

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Chair of Governors

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Introduction

Nursery is often the first time that a child experiences separating from their main caregiver for any length of time.

The PNSF recognises that all children are unique and their families have expert knowledge regarding their own child's needs.

Rationale

Settling in procedures at PNSF are always tailor-made to meet the individual needs of each child to ensure they have a positive, secure start to their nursery education and develop the confidence to separate happily from their care giver by building up strong, trusting relationships with key staff over time.

PNSF staff understand their key role in supporting children emotionally during their settling in period as they develop understanding of the routines and expectations of the provision and get used to the setting and being away from their family. Supporting children's emotional regulation is an essential element in ensuring that all children are able to access learning and achieve their full potential.

Aims

At PNSF we believe that the structure of a child's settling in period should be led by the child, at their own pace and be reflective of their needs. We also believe that each child's settling in period should be determined through discussion and agreement with their family and in accordance with what is best for the child.

The following is representative of the structure that the settling in process will take for children at PNSF:

1. **Family** contacts the nursery school to request a place. Contact details and other initial information shared by the family is recorded by the admin team and passed on to the member of SLT responsible for the part of the school the child will be entering i.e. – the Assistant Headteacher or Day Care Manager.
2. **A 'look around' appointment is arranged** with the family to provide an opportunity for them and their child to visit the setting, meet the staff in the provision, see the environment in action and ask any questions they may have. The 'look around' appointment is usually carried out by a member of SLT or the room lead. It is a valuable opportunity for staff to meet the child and their family, discover what interests the child within the setting and at home and begin to forge a relationship with both the child and their parents / carers. How children respond to different staff may be used to inform the allocation of their Key Worker, and where appropriate, Inclusion Support Worker.
3. **The child is allocated a Key Worker** by SLT.
4. Ahead of a child starting at nursery:
 - a **new parent appointment** is made with the family and the child's allocated Key Worker. At this appointment information is obtained from the child's family regarding their child's interests, skills, medical/ health needs and key information about the setting is shared with the family e.g. date of their child's 'stay and play' session and their start date.

- Where it has been identified that the child presents with additional educational and / or health / medical needs, the SENCO will also attend the new parent appointment. If this is not possible, an additional meeting will be scheduled.
 - A multi-agency meeting with the family may also be held ahead of the child starting nursery to ensure the right support is in place for the child to meet their needs and an appropriate settling in schedule is agreed to align with obtaining any inclusion funding that is required to provide additional support for the child.
5. The child attends a **'stay and play' session** with their parents / carers. If this is missed for any reason the nursery will contact the family to arrange an alternative session.
 6. Additional stay and play sessions will be offered as required.
 7. The child's **first session**:
 - PNSF will always endeavour to ensure that the child's Key Worker and where appropriate, allocated Inclusion Support Worker is in the setting for the child's first session. Where this is not possible, the nursery school will notify the family and a decision will be jointly made as to whether to make alternative arrangements.
 - A post will be sent to the child's family via the setting's digital correspondence platform (currently Family), during their first session to let the parents / carers know how the child is getting on.
 - The length of the child's first session and the speed with which they start to attend for their full entitlement in nursery may vary according to the family's wishes, the child's confidence and independence within the setting, their emotional regulation, their educational and or medical/health needs and the information gathered by the staff through the earlier stages of the settling in process.
 - If during the child's first session, or any subsequent session, the child is emotionally dysregulated for a prolonged period and staff are unable to calm them, the setting will contact the child's family to discuss action to be taken e.g. arrange an earlier pick up and discuss next steps.
 - Where it is felt that a child requires a staggered start, the length of session that a child attends will be increased over time and centred on what is best for the child. PNSF will always ensure the child is able to access their full entitlement as quickly as possible.
 8. During the settling in period and beyond, **emotional co-regulation will be provided**, as required, by the child's Key Worker and the other staff in the setting.
 9. Any **deviation to the procedures** outlined in this policy must be discussed and agreed by SLT before being carried out.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour and Relationships
- SEND