



## Little Swans Day Nursery

### Settling in and Transition Policy

**Reviewed:** May 2020

**Reviewed by:** Samantha Tranter – Nursery Manager

#### **Rational**

At Little Swans Day Nursery, we are committed to meeting and supporting the needs of each individual child. We aim to make sure that the transition process into and within our nursery is a positive and happy experience.

#### **Transition into Nursery**

We want children to feel safe and happy in the absence of their parents, to recognise other adults as a source of authority, help and friendship and to be able to share with their parents afterwards the new learning experiences in the nursery.

We appreciate that this may be a very stressful time for parents/carers and their children and all staff are sensitive to their needs and views.

***As Early Years Practitioners' we have a key role to play in working with parents to support their child***

Before the child starts at the nursery a home visit will be made to discuss settling in and any concerns the parent or carer may have. Staff take a Home Visit book and the nursery bear along to the home and from the meeting, with parent's consent, document information that is relevant and can be shared with others back at the setting. We recognise that parents know their child best and we will work with them to make the transition process as happy as possible for each child by finding out more about them and their routine, as well as allowing the child to see the key person in the home environment. This instils confidence for when they start at the setting. Settling in is arranged at a convenient time for the family and consists of as many settling in sessions as the child needs. This is tailored appropriately. Once the child has started parents or carers are encouraged to phone the nursery at any time to check how their child is and speak directly to a member of staff caring for their child.

During the child's first week at the setting their key person will be solely accountable for all the child's needs until they are more confident to start exploring the environment by themselves.

**In order to accomplish this, we will:**

- Encourage parents to visit the nursery with their child during the week before admission and when booking an appointment to view the nursery prior to any decision being made
- Introduce flexible admission procedures, if appropriate to meet the needs of individual families and children, at no additional cost to the parent/carer
- Make sure that children receive no less than two/three settling in sessions of two/four hours per time, according to the needs of the child

**For pre-school children the key person will make sure that each child:**

- **knows the layout of the nursery**
- **knows where to find their personal belongings**
- **understands the daily routine**
- **Knows the expectations of the nursery such as behaviour, access to and care of resources**
- **Knows that the key persons will be there for them**

If a child is finding settling into nursery especially difficult we will work with the parents/carers on the most appropriate approach. We are aware that sometimes a child can seem to settle well only to become distressed after a few weeks and we will support the family through this difficult period. There is no time limit on settling into a new setting, each child will be supported at their own pace. However, parents must take into account fees will not change during this time and the cost of childcare will be the same amount of hours/days they signed their admissions contract for, as reduction of hours has come from the family/parents and not the setting. If the setting decides for whatever reason to reduce hours then the fee will be reviewed.

- Consider changing days or times if a child is taking longer to settle
- Introduce new families into the nursery on a staggered basis, for example two new children a day for a week if new intake is busy
- Encourage parents, where appropriate to separate from their child from the first short session by being honest with them, telling them that they will not be staying at the nursery themselves but will be coming back in a short while to collect them. Goodbye, followed by 'I'll be back soon' is much more reassuring to a child than disappearing once the child has started to play

At little Swans we understand that children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious or unhappy. Our settling in procedures aim to help parents to help their child to feel comfortable in the nursery. To benefit from what it has to offer, and to be confident that their parents will return at the end of the session/day.

## **Initial Assessments**

An 'All about Me' sheet and an assessment baseline after 6 weeks of attendance will be completed to establish schemas, abilities and interests. This will be used to ensure the child settles and to plan for their progress/ next steps going forward. From gathering information about the child, the key person will be able to look at them as a whole; building up a picture of their well-being, interests, and characteristics as well as Learning and Development across all areas of development.

We have a parent questionnaire as part of our admission process for the parent to complete asking how they feel about their child starting at the setting, how they would like the nursery to assist in this process as well as how we may help the parents feel more confident to leave their child.

We gather as much knowledge about each child from observations and communication in different settings; such as home and nursery as well as discussions with parents, family and other settings that a child has/does attend across the course of a week.

After the child has been attending the setting for a period of six weeks we hold a review with the parent/carer. This gives an opportunity for parent and key person to share information where parental contribution is valued.

For families where English is not the first language we try to make sure we appoint the right key person for the family. This could be for example a member of staff who speaks the home language, such as Urdu.

In the instance that a child speaking Urdu comes to the setting and the key person is English we will use Makaton sign language to ease communication between other children and staff. Children are encouraged to bring comforters into nursery when they start as we have found that they are more easily settled with familiar toys and items around them that they associate with home.

Children are individuals and must be treated as such. We do not expect all children to settle at the same time and in the same way. We consider family background e.g. have they attended nursery before or playgroup? Have they been to a childminder? Have they brothers and sisters at home etc. All of these questions are important and the more we ask the more we will understand about the needs of each child. Once a child's background and confidence/character have been assessed the nursery may then alter their timetable accordingly, this is particularly relevant to babies.

## **Transition**

At the end of the pre-school age at nursery children will go off to school, usually within the local community. We like to make sure a smooth transition ensues and to help this along we work closely with the child's new school/teacher wherever possible. The new teacher has the opportunity to visit Little Swan's to enable the child to become familiar with him/her. This then progresses to the children spending time in their new environment for short periods. In addition, we take the children to visit the local primary school in June each year, prior to them starting in September. This allows the children to become familiar with school, staff and the

new surroundings. Assessments are also forwarded /shared and the Learning Journeys are passed to the new teacher.

For children that are making the transition throughout the nursery we make sure they are familiar with the new area by giving them settling in sessions that are run over a period of time. They will usually, wherever possible, move with their friends. Their key person will take them to the new area so that they know that someone they feel secure with is happy for them to stay in the new room. Parents are also given the opportunity to have a look around the classroom and speak with the child's new key person. New staff will have the child's assessments to look through as well as their Learning Journey. Prior to this, parents will have a letter home letting them know about the transition before it starts and detailing how this will take place.

**Children who have additional needs:** We will ensure that all paperwork is passed on, and if necessary, to a new school or nursery. Individual Education Plans for Individual Activity Plans and any other relevant information regarding the children's additional needs. We will forward their SEN profiles which contain a page profile 'All About Me' and their targets. Where necessary and will liaise with staff to ensure the child's needs are still being met.

It is our aim that no child shall be disadvantaged due to transition. They will be allowed to settle at their own pace. Children who are settled and happy will demonstrate involvement and wellbeing and continue to make progress in their learning.