

The Importance of a Key Worker Role

Over these next few weeks your child is settling in to the Nursery, even if your child was here previously, they will be gaining understanding of the routine, new friends/staff within the room and separation from carers. We understand that separating from your child is not always an easy task and we are here to talk if you feel emotional, anxious or worried about anything. A key person has special responsibilities for working with a small number of children, giving them the reassurance to feel safe and cared for and building relationships with their parents.

By now, you would have been introduced to your child's friendly Key Person and fellow members of the team that are in the room with them, they will greet you on handover/collection time as this helps you to gain their trust and speak to them if you have any updates or concerns with your child. The Key Person will take lead on supporting towards their next step in their development, they will discuss with you, other professionals and agencies involved and find the best route to meet their needs. As the relationship grows, the child's key people are better able to 'tune in' to their needs, their moods and enthusiasms and provide the intuitively nurturing responses that are essential if a child is to feel safe and secure. This doesn't mean, however, that a child is restricted to being just with either of their key people and the other children in their care. Feeling safe enough to explore and interact with others in the setting is very important, and more easily achieved when a child knows the security of being 'held in mind' by their key people.

What is the role of a Key Person?

- Promote a positive relationship between nursery and home, engage in a positive way, create a bond with the parent/carer
- Developing a positive and secure relationship with each child.
- Building trust and understanding through responsive and sensitive care.
- Observing, assessing, and planning for each child's learning and development needs.
- Working with parents to ensure continuity of care and support.
- Closely observing a child's progress and providing targeted support when needed.
- Tailoring activities to the child's interests and abilities.
- Enhancing their learning journey.

What are the benefits?

For children- having a close and affectionate relationship with one or two adults who are responsive and emotionally available to them, away from home and family, provides the reassurance and comfort they need to feel safe. Knowing they

are cherished and 'held in mind' by their key people amid the hustle and bustle of daily life in a setting gives them the confidence to explore and develop independence.

For parents- the approach makes sure that they also feel reassured and confident about their child's experience of being cared for away from home. It provides the opportunity to build a partnership with someone else who is fully committed to their child's well-being and, with the parents' help, will become familiar and 'tuned in' to their child's particular needs and motivations.

For the key person- the benefits from this intense and demanding approach are to be found in the satisfaction and fulfilment that comes from being someone who really matters to a child and their family, and who is recognised for their professional commitment and the impact that they have on a child's future development.

What happens if my child's key worker leaves/changes room?

As a setting we make changes when we feel there is a need in progression for the children, staff and center. All of our team work very closely and will explore in all the rooms, you will often see staff members that are not working in your child's room will greet children around the center as they would have spent time with them at some point. We encourage that when you are talking about Nursery with your child to discuss all the adults within their current room so your child can gain trust with each adult and not sole focusing on the Key Person as this may cause anxiety if the particular member of staff isn't in that day.

Additional Information

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Chloe and I'm the Early Help Support Worker and here to help with any advice or further support needed for your child(ren). I upload Parenting Posts fortnightly with guidance of relevant advice for Early Years and things you may relate too. If you need to contact to discuss anything at any point, my phone number and email will be on all Parenting Posts.

I have previously submitted a post discussing separation anxiety and have attached this for you to read if you feel this is relevant. For all previous posts submitted they can be found on our website- <https://www.norcotearlyyearscentre.co.uk/help-and-advice>

If you find there's anything you would like to discuss, please feel free to contact me on-

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