

# Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Key Person

## The role of the key person and settling-in

### Policy statement

At Ready Steady Grow Pre-School we recognise that secure, trusting relationships are the foundation for children's emotional wellbeing, learning and development. We implement the statutory Key Person approach as required by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2024) to ensure every child has a named adult who builds a strong attachment, understands their needs and works in genuine partnership with parents.

Our key person system:

- promotes emotional security, confidence and belonging
- ensures children's individual needs, interests and cultural identities are understood
- supports smooth and well-planned transitions
- facilitates effective communication with families, other professionals and external agencies
- ensures children's needs inform the curriculum and learning environment

All staff understand that relationships drive progress, and that a stable and responsive key person supports safeguarding, learning, SEND identification, communication and wellbeing.

### Procedures

#### 1. Allocation of Key Person

- Every child is allocated a **named key person** before or on their first day.
- Allocations consider **continuity, work patterns**, families' needs, additional needs, and where possible, parental preference.
- Children with **SEND**, emerging needs or multi-agency involvement may be allocated a key person with additional experience or training.

#### 2. Responsibilities of the Key Person

The key person will:

##### **Relationships & Emotional Security**

- Build a warm, nurturing relationship with the child through consistent, responsive interactions.
- Provide a safe base that supports emotional regulation and confidence.
- Offer unconditional positive regard, being non-judgemental, respectful and sensitive to the child's background, culture, identity and experiences.

##### **Partnership with Parents/Carers**

- Act as the main point of contact for parents.
- Share information daily and maintain open, respectful communication.
- Work collaboratively with parents to develop a clear understanding of children's routines, preferences, needs and home learning experiences.
- Hold regular meetings with parents to share progress, next steps and any concerns.

##### **Learning & Development**

- Observe, assess and plan for each child's needs using the EYFS 2024 framework.
- Maintain accurate, timely and meaningful developmental records.
- Provide targeted planning, including early identification of emerging SEND needs.
- Work alongside the SENCO when additional support or referrals may be required.

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### **Safeguarding & Welfare**

- Ensure that children's welfare, safety and wellbeing are central to all decision-making.
- Immediately share any safeguarding concerns with the DSL, following BSCP procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality in line with data protection and safeguarding legislation.

### **Working with Other Agencies**

- Link with any other professionals involved with the child (e.g., health visitor, speech and language therapist).
- Support multi-agency meetings, reports and transition documentation where required.

### **3. Key Buddy System**

- Every child also has a key buddy who knows their needs, routines and interests.
- The buddy provides continuity during staff absence, supporting secure relationships and consistent care.
- Parents are introduced to both the key person and buddy during the settling-in period.

### **Settling-In Procedures**

#### **1. Pre-Start Arrangements**

To support a positive transition, we will:

- Provide families with information about the setting, routines, curriculum and policies.
- Offer opportunities for the child and parent to visit the setting prior to the start date.
- Gather information through registration forms, "All About Me" profiles and parent discussion to understand the child's background, routines, languages, SEND needs, allergies, culture and family preferences.

#### **2. First Sessions & Early Settling**

- The key person welcomes the child and family, supporting them through the first sessions.
- Parents are expected to stay for part of the sessions initially, gradually withdrawing as the child develops confidence.
- We take a flexible, child-centred approach—there is no fixed timeframe.
- If a child is not emotionally ready to separate, the key person will support a slower transition.
- We reserve the right to insist a parent stays if a child becomes distressed and their wellbeing may be compromised.

Children returning after an extended absence may also require a re-settling period.

#### **3. Partnership and Review**

Within the first 4-6 weeks, the key person meets parents to:

- Review how the child has settled
- Discuss wellbeing, routines, strengths and emerging interests
- Share initial observations
- Agree next steps for learning and development
- Check whether any early intervention or additional support may be needed



## **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Key Person**

### **The progress check at age two**

In line with the EYFS 2024 and Bromley local procedures, the key person, working with the Manager/Deputy, will:

- Complete the progress check between 24-36 months
- Provide parents with a clear summary of the child's development in the prime areas
- Identify strengths, emerging needs and areas where progress is less than expected
- Agree targeted strategies to support development
- Liaise with other professionals where required
- Ensure parents understand the findings and how to support development at home
- Share the check with health visitors (with parental consent)

Children with SEND or emerging needs may require additional assessments or multidisciplinary involvement.

### **Transitions Beyond Ready Steady Grow**

The key person plays a central role in transition to school or another setting by:

- Preparing transition documents and developmental summaries
- Holding transition meetings (where appropriate)
- Supporting emotional readiness and resilience
- Ensuring information is shared securely and professionally
- Working with parents to promote a smooth, confident start

### **Further information**

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures
- Development Matters (2023 update)
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (2025)