

Wolfson College Day Nursery

Settling in Policy

EYFS: 3.27, 3.73

At Wolfson College Day Nursery we aim to support parents and other carers to help their children settle quickly and easily by giving consideration to the individual needs and circumstances of every child and their families. Our aim is for children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the nursery and to feel secure and comfortable with all staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's continued well-being and their role as active partners, with the child being able to benefit from what the nursery has to offer.

All our staff are aware of the importance of building strong attachments with children. They are trained to recognise the different stages of attachment and use this knowledge to support children and families settling in to the nursery.

Our Nursery will work in partnership with parents to settle their child into the nursery environment by:

- Allocating a key person to each child and his/her family, before he/she starts to attend. The key person welcomes and looks after the child, ensuring that their care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person will offer a settled relationship for the child and builds a relationship with his/her parents during the settling in period and throughout his/her time at the nursery, to ensure the family has a familiar contact person to assist with the settling in process
- Providing parents with relevant information about the policies and procedures of the nursery
- Encouraging parents and children to visit the nursery during the week before an admission is planned
- Planning settling in visits and introductory sessions (lasting approximately 1-2 hours). These will be provided free of charge over a one week period, dependent on individual needs, age and stage of development
- The key person can also explain how you, as a parent, can help during the settling-in period. The key person will spend time with you both to build a relationship between you. For very young children, we suggest you visit at different times of the day the week prior to your start date to give your child experience of different social situations and activities in the Nursery (i.e. meal times, story time etc.). You may then wish to leave your child for short periods after the first visit so they gradually become accustomed to being in the nursery without you, gradually building up to longer absences
- Welcoming parents to stay with their child during the first few weeks until the child feels settled and the parents feel comfortable about leaving their child. Settling in visits and introductory sessions are key to a smooth transition and to ensure good communication and information sharing between staff and parents
- Reassuring parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling in to the nursery and developing a plan with them
- Assigning a buddy/back-up key person to each child in case the key person is not available. Parents will be made aware of this to support the settling process and attachment

- Reviewing the nominated key person if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child's needs are supported
- Respecting the circumstances of all families, including those who are unable to stay for long periods of time in the nursery and reassure them of their child's progress towards settling in
- Not taking a child on an outing from the nursery until he/she is completely settled.

The Nursery Manager or Room Leader will introduce you to the staff team and answer any questions you may have. The Nursery Manager/Room Leader will discuss with you any queries you may have relating to Nursery Policies and will complete any required documentation with you.

Guidance for Parents

There's a rite of passage in the journey through parenthood that can cause mums and dads no end of anxiety - placing your child into the care of others when we return to work. Even the most easy going parent can find the whole experience quite heart-wrenching, and as is often the way with these things - our stress can rub off on our children, making an otherwise adaptable child suddenly resistant to change.

The tips below are designed to make the transition from home to nursery as smooth running as possible for your child...and you! Of course the advice will vary slightly depending on the age of your child but we hope you'll find the general guidance below adaptable, whatever your personal circumstances.

1. Be positive about the change

Even very little children are incredibly intuitive and will pick up on adult stresses and anxieties. So if you've been feeling a little unsettled about your imminent return to work/ studies and settling in to a new country and or accommodation, your child may gain an awareness that 'mummy and or daddy is worried about something'. So in the run-up to the big day it's important to try and keep a positive mindset to avoid transferring stress onto your child.

When you're feeling anxious, please try to remind yourself that your child will gain hugely from being a little more independent from you and we have very experienced caring staff in the nursery to support your child's transition into the nursery. Your child/ren will be getting used to new environments, making new relationships and learning important social skills - all fantastic 'life training' and great preparation for formal education.

2. Talk to your child about starting nursery

Be open with your child about what will be happening soon and the new change to their routine. Little children like the security of routine so it's important to prepare them by chatting with your child about their new nursery/childminder/nanny and giving them helpful reference points. Make a few 'trial runs' to the nursery so they become familiar with the location. Explain what nursery is all about - there will be lots of new friends to meet, lovely new toys to play with etc. Perhaps you could take a look at some books which look at this concept.

3. Use comforters if necessary

That could be a dummy (pacifier), a 'blankie' or a favorite cuddly toy. Any familiar reference from home can help assure your child during the early days of settling into nursery. Of course the transition to childcare might coincide with the time when you were hoping to wean your little one off their dummy or blankie, but it's probably not advisable to do so during a period of change in your child's life. There aren't many adults walking round sucking dummies or clutching blankets so don't stress about sticking to timescales for giving up comforters!

4. Keep your goodbyes as brief as possible

Saying goodbye at the nursery door can test the resolve of even the most practically-minded parent. But it's really important to handle your departure in the right way - a 'clean break' where your child is clear about what is happening is far more preferable to prolonging the experience and confusing your child. Experts agree that you should tell your child that you are leaving, give them a kiss and then leave; but make sure they understand that you will be coming back for them soon. It's a good idea to give them some kind of time-related reference, e.g. "Mummy will pick you up in time for tea".

Even if your child cries as you leave, hold firm and continue on your way. Don't leave then go back into the room if your child is crying, as heart-wrenching as that might feel. Your key worker will provide the comfort your child needs and there will be plenty of distraction to take their mind off your departure. This isn't easy, we agree, but keep in mind how much enjoyment your child will experience at the nursery. You can always give them a call when you're at work to make sure everything's going okay, a good way to put your mind at rest. Nurseries are more than happy for parents to call during the day to check on their little one's progress, especially during those early days.

5. Tears are normal

Your child may cry every day when you drop them off, for quite some time. Or you may find that just when you thought everything was starting to fall into place your child regresses and becomes tearful about drop-off for no apparent reason. But tears are just a normal form of expression for your child and do not necessarily indicate that there's a problem you need to follow up. But do be sure to talk to the nursery if your child seems unusually upset. Many children will cry when mum or dad leaves but are then comforted and perfectly happy for the rest of the day. It's just that children can be rather indignant about being left out of mum's plans - the tears are just a normal way of vocalizing this!

6. Don't underestimate tiredness

The settling-in period will probably be an incredibly tiring experience for your child. With a new environment to get used to, and lots of new people to get to know, there's lots for them to take on so try not to pack too many other activities or busy weekends into your schedule for a few weeks. Of course if your child is being particularly teary during these early days this could simply be a manifestation of physical and mental tiredness.

7. Keep updated on your child's progress

Once you've negotiated those tricky early days it's still a good idea to keep up your communication with your child's key person this helps you to feel in the loop and aware of any issues or developments relating to your child. All children will have a Foundation Stage profile that outlines their development and achievements. This is freely available to parents, who will be encouraged to contribute, sharing their child's achievements magic moments at home. Good childcare providers recognise that parents know their child/ren best and are happy to listen and share.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
26/7/19	<i>Barry Coote</i>	July 2020