

# Summertown Montessori Nursery

## Settling-in Policy

### Statement of intent

We want children to feel safe and happy in the setting, feeling secure and comfortable with staff.

We want parents to feel assured about their child's well-being in the nursery setting.

### Our Approach

The setting is a welcoming place to support the child to settle-in quickly and easily, with due consideration to the individual needs/circumstances of the child and the family.

### Procedure

#### Pre-start

- We provide child's parents/carers with information during the initial visit or by an email follow-up.
- If the child attends the visit, we engage him/her in building a rapport, relaxing them and allowing them to browse freely to get to know the environment.
- We use an **All about me** booklet for information about the child's interests and family background, finding out special words. If English is not the family's home language, we identify a few key words in the home language.

#### Allocation of a Key Person

- Each child is assigned a Key Person (KP), the attachment figure for the child at the setting. Although we assign a nominal KP before the child starts, the actual assigned KP may be the person whom the child naturally bonds to during the initial sessions. We are guided by this evolving process in assigning the KP.

### First Attendance

- We suggest the parent/carer or close relative stay for a short time (30 min at most) to settle the child during the first session. (Evidence during lockdown when parents/carers were not allowed inside suggests children settle more quickly.)
- When parent/carer leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- Some children can take longer to settle in, while those who have been absent for a while may require their parent/carer to be present on their first day back.
- We recognize that **some children will settle more readily than others** but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left, so we request the parent/carer make themselves available to return to the nursery during the first few sessions if possible.
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's **distress will prevent them from learning** and gaining the best from the setting.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left.

### Post-settling

- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person; for example, the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- Within the first few days of starting, we create the child's progress records using our MyMontessoriChild learning platform.