

WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, HEDGEHOGS NURSERY & SUNBEAMS CLUB



Settling in & Transition Policy



Updated: Sept 2026
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Settling and Transition Policy

At Woodlands Primary School and Hedgehog Nursery our aim is to work in partnership with parents to help them become familiar with the setting and offer a settled relationship for the child. We know children learn best when they are healthy, they feel safe and secure. We aim to build positive relationships with parents to ensure we can meet children's individual needs and help them settle quickly into nursery life.

All our staff know about 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 into the nursery.

Our settling in procedure includes:

- Allocating a key person to each child within 2 weeks of the child starting - this gives the child time to settle and make bonds with key adults - all key staff in the room are available when he/she attends..
- The key adult in the room will welcome and look after the child alongside the other staff in the room, ensuring that their care is tailored to meet their individual needs. He/she offers 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.
- Reviewing the nominated key person if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child's needs are supported.
- Providing parents with relevant information about the policies and procedures of the nursery
- Working with parents to gather information before the child starts on the child's interests, likes and dislikes and their favourite things available at settling sessions, e.g. their favourite story or resource, as well as completing a baseline of the child's current development to plan, and meet, the individual needs of the child from the first day.
- Encouraging parents and children to visit the nursery before an admission is planned.
- Planning settling in visits and introductory sessions, as appropriate.
- Welcoming parents to stay with their child, where possible and applicable, 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.
- Encouraging parents to send in family photos to display to help settle the child .
- Welcome Booklet given to parents.
- Reassuring parents whose children seem to be taking a little longer to settle in and developing a plan with them, for example shorter days, where possible.
- Providing regular updates and photos of the children settling through Tapestry.
- Encouraging parents, where appropriate, to separate themselves from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences.
- Assigning a buddy or back-up key person to each child in case the key person is not available, ensuring parents are aware of this, to support the settling process and attachment,
- 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 as they settle in.

Transitions

We recognise that young children will experience many transitions in their early years; some of these planned and some unplanned. We are sensitive to the impact of such changes to children and this policy sets out the ways in which we support children going through these transitions.

Some examples of transitions that young children and babies may experience are:

- Starting nursery
- Moving between different rooms within the setting
- Starting school or moving nurseries
- Family breakdowns
- New siblings
- Moving home
- Death of a family member or close friend
- Death of a family pet.

Staff are trained to observe the children and to be sensitive to any changes in their behaviour and personality. We respectfully ask that parents inform us of any changes in the home environment that may impact on their child so staff can be aware of the reasons behind any potential changes in the child's behaviour.

Starting nursery

We recognise that starting nursery may be difficult for some children and their families. We recommended setting in sessions to help support the transitions into nursery.

Moving rooms procedure

When a child is ready to move to a different room in the setting i.e., from Hedgehogs to Squirrels, we follow the process set out below and work with the parents to ensure this is a seamless process in which the child is fully supported at all stages. This may include a handover meeting between the existing key person, new key person and parents.

- This will be planned according to the individual needs of the child.
- For the majority of children, in the term after the child turns 2, they will move up to the Squirrels room, provided there are spaces for them in that room.
- Squirrels will transition into Foxes the September before they are due to start Reception.
- Enabling the child to spend short sessions in their new room, with a key adult, prior to the permanent move so they feel comfortable in their new surroundings and have a familiar person present at all times.
- Wherever possible transitioning groups of friends together to enable these friendships to be maintained and support the children with the peers they know.
- Keeping parents informed of all visits and the outcomes of these sessions, e.g., through photographs on tapestry, daily handover sheets, verbal handovers.
- Only transitioning the child when they feel settled and ready to move. If a child requires more support this will be discussed between the key person, parent, EYFS lead and Nursery Room Leader agree how and when this will happen.

Other early years providers

Where children are attending other early years settings or are cared for by a childminder, we will work with them to share relevant information about children's development. When a child is brought to nursery or collected from nursery by a childminder, we will ensure that key information is being provided to the child's parent by providing the information on a daily handover sheet.

Family breakdowns

We recognise that family breakdowns and parental separation can be difficult for young children and may affect their emotional wellbeing and behaviour. We aim to provide a safe, secure and supportive environment during these changes.

To support children and families, we will:

- Work sensitively with parents and carers to understand any changes in family circumstances.
- Provide reassurance, emotional support and consistent routines through the child's key person.
- Monitor changes in behaviour and wellbeing, offering additional support where needed.
- Remain neutral in parental disagreements, always prioritising the child's best interests.
- Respect confidentiality and ensure relevant staff are aware of any changes to care or collection arrangements.
- Follow safeguarding procedures and any relevant court orders, ensuring parental responsibility is respected.
- Signpost families to additional support services where appropriate.

Moving home and new siblings

We recognise that both these events may have an impact on a child. Normally, parents will have advance notice of these changes and we ask parents to let us know about these events so we can support the child to be prepared. The key person will spend time talking to the child and providing activities that may help the child to act out any worries they have, e.g., through role play, stories and discussions.

Bereavement

If parents feel that their child requires additional support because of any changes and/or transitions in their life, we ask that you speak to the nursery manager and the key person to enable this effective support to be put into place.