

Key Person Policy

At Bell House Nursery, we ensure that every child in our care feels safe & secure, allowing them to enjoy the experiences & opportunities offered within our setting. Not only are the first few months of a baby's life important for the development of attachment, but we believe the first 5 years are significant as they underpin who the child will become later in life.

Every child registered to the nursery is allocated a Key Person. This person helps support their charge during times of transition but is also there as a port of call for parents. The key person system enables the child to bond with a familiar adult whilst promoting their overall development. Each child also has a Key buddy who will step in to support them and their development if their key person is absent from the Nursery.

We organise the nursery by approximate age groups, as follows: (the emphasis is that we recognise each child develops at different rates.)

Ladybirds- 3 months-15 months
Butterflies- 15 months-2 years
Bumble Bees- 2 years -3 years
Dragonflies- 3 years- School age

In order to promote continuity of care within our setting, we place members of staff as key persons in a particular age group, on a permanent basis where possible. If there is a period of time that a member of staff is on holiday or absent from nursery, we put the 'buddy system' in place. The 'Buddy system' allows the child to be able to settle in to the room with another member of staff to ensure continuity of care for the children. The Key person and the Buddy share information on their key children, and work together to complete termly trackers to track the child's development and look for any areas for improvement or concern.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (E.Y.F.S) framework has 3 themes, one being "Positive Relationships", which emphasizes the importance of a 'key person' system. Each child must therefore be assigned a key person.

Monitoring Progression and Development

The key person is also responsible for the observation and assessment of each child's development within their key group of children. The Early Years Outcomes within the Early Years Foundation Stage (practice guidance) supports the practitioners to observe and then plan next steps for each child, which will also ensure exciting opportunities and experiences, specifically identified for the individual child's interests.



Having a key person system is vital for the child, however their role is also to communicate and build 'positive relationships' with parents/careers to ensure they are kept up to date with information concerning their child's development and welfare whilst attending our setting. We intend to make links between the home and nursery environment to provide continuity of care, for example, handovers to parents every day and emails to parents with new information relating to the room.

There are 4 rooms within the nursery, the emphasis is on recognising children develop at different rates and only when a child is ready to transition into the next room will we begin the settling in process.

When a child is ready to move into the next age group, the current key person will settle their key child into the next room slowly introducing the new key person. This will ensure that the transition is seamless and that the new key person is equipped with enough information relating to the child to continue planning for their development.

The key person approach has been described as: A way of working in nurseries in which the whole focus and organisation is to enable and support close attachments between individual children and individual nursery staff."

"The key person approach is an involvement, an individual and reciprocal commitment between a member of staff and a family. It is an approach which has clear benefits for children and parents, the key person and the nursery." Elfer, Goldschmied and Selleck (2002)

Reviewed by Clare Hayes and Amelia Pullen

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