Little Crickets at Park School Key Person Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework states that every child must be assigned a key person. At Park School and Little Crickets, the commitment to meet each child's individual needs underpins all work with the children, and the role of the key person is recognised throughout as being essential to each child's wellbeing.

In our nursery settings, all children are allocated a key person upon entry. In Reception, the key person is the class teacher, supported by the teaching assistant(s).

Organisation

In accordance with the EYFS statutory framework, providers must plan and organise their systems to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs.

The Role of the Key Person

The EYFS Statutory Framework states that the role of a key person is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child, and build a relationship with their parents and/or carers. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

A key person is a named member of staff assigned to an individual child to support their development and act as the key point of contact with the child's parents or carers. The key person will:

- Support the child's emotional wellbeing and development.
- Lead the child's settling-in process.
- Build positive relationships with parents and carers.
- Observe, assess and contribute to planning for the child's learning and development.
- Ensure children's individual needs, interests and next steps are understood and supported.
- Support information sharing between home and nursery.
- Work with outside professionals where appropriate, including SEND and safeguarding services.
- Contribute to transition arrangements both within the nursery and when children move on to school.

Implementation of the Key Person System at Little Crickets at Park School

The key person is one area of practice within the theme of Positive Relationships within the EYFS statutory framework. The principle of this commitment is "children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships". Parents are informed of their child's key person before the start of every academic year or entry point if this is mid-year.

The allocation of a key person differs through the various stages of the EYFS. In the Nursery, staff working in each of the rooms are allocated a group of key children, and each of these staff are responsible for the settling in, observation, and assessment of each child, as well as contributing to the individual planning. They also build a strong bond between the child, the nursery, and home, i.e., with parents and/or carers. This is the named member of staff who takes primary responsibility for supporting the child's care, wellbeing and development.

The key person in the Nursery will generally be the person who speaks to the parent at the start and end of the day, meets with the parent for parent consultation meetings, and is the first point of contact for parents. The key person has overall responsibility for ensuring observations, assessments and planning reflect the child's

current stage of development and interests, although all staff contribute to this process. All core room staff get to know each child and build a relationship with them.

In Reception, the key person is the class teacher. The class teacher maintains overall responsibility for assessment and the monitoring of children's learning and development, supported by the wider Reception team.

The Importance of a Key Person

A key person will enable their key children to become familiar with their new surroundings, feel confident and safe within them, and develop a genuine bond with the child and their family members and carers to enable the child to feel settled and form a close relationship. By offering individual children comfort and reassurance when joining a new learning environment, a key person will enable their key children to develop relationships and support them in interacting with others, thus promoting their confidence and supporting their wellbeing.

Key persons play an important role in identifying emerging needs, monitoring progress and working alongside the SENCO, parents and external professionals where additional support may be required.

The key person works closely with parents and carers to share information about children's achievements, interests, routines and wellbeing. Regular opportunities will be provided for parents and carers to discuss their child's development.

Key persons have a responsibility to monitor children's wellbeing and welfare and to report any concerns in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Settling In

Nursery
The Nursery has implemented a settling-in process that provides both children and their parents with a smooth introduction to each of the rooms to help ensure that children have a sensitive and gentle start to their time at Little Crickets at Park School.

Staff carefully plan 'settling in' visits for all children. In the Baby Room, these will be discussed with the parent or carer in respect of the returning to work commitments parents may have and any specific needs for a particular family. In the baby rooms, *staff plan a staggered entry for all children to ensure that within the first two weeks of term, only small groups of children are introduced to the room, the routines, and their new learning environment. This ensures that the key person can spend time with a small number of their key children in those first weeks, to build a strong attachment and support at drop-off and collection.*

The Oaks children also have a number of visits to Mini Maples, without their parents. The Mini Maples children have a number of visits to Maples, without their parents. The key person/room leader is available at drop-off and collection to allow them to liaise with parents. Key persons support children through all transitions within the nursery and into Reception. Information about children's learning, wellbeing, interests and individual needs is shared appropriately to ensure continuity of care and learning.

Reception
Reception children have the opportunity to visit their new classroom (see transition policy).

Policy Owner: LM/RM
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