

Settling-in at Wood St Nursery

We offer a settling-in process based on your child's needs and your circumstances. We provide 6 two-hour sessions ("settling in visits") for free to help your child settle into nursery before you begin paying for your place. Your child will then need to do more short days after these sessions for them to transition to nursery life. This is usually adding breakfast / lunch and then a sleep (if they have one) then extending out into the afternoon building up to being left for their full sessions. We tailor this process to individual children's needs.

During these first 6 settling in visits the parent or carer stays with the child. We encourage them to be a comforting presence, but slightly boring, reading a book and sitting in an adult chair, allowing their child to observe and then engage in nursery life and develop a relationship with their key person and other staff and children. Depending on the response of the child during these 6 settling in visits, we may encourage a parent to make short visits to have a cup of tea in the next door room, from about the 4th session.

Once the child starts to be left at the setting, the staff will discuss individual needs of both the child and the parents, and come to an agreement on how long the parent should leave their child each day. This time can then be gradually increased over the course of the next two weeks, or faster if the child is happy, until the child is staying without their parent for a full day.

The settling in process requires a parent or familiar adult to be available to stay at or be able to come into nursery for early collections for at least **3 weeks** and can take longer. Please bear this in mind when planning your return to work.

In some cases:

- the parent may wish to stay for longer periods, and for up to a few weeks
- a child may have no difficulties separating, and can be left quicker
- the child may have a comfort object that will be needed to aid separation; this can be brought in, but please name it and make sure your key person is aware

Generally, once a parent/carer is leaving their child at nursery. They will be encouraged to leave the child after five/ten minutes, as prolonging the moment of separation time can be counter-productive for the child. Parents may be encouraged to carry out some kind of "ritual" in leaving if the child is having difficulty separating, such as reading one story and then leaving.

Parents will always be encouraged to say good-bye and to hand the child over to the key-person, and discouraged from "sneaking out" without saying goodbye. This can result in more distress and anxiety for the child. As the child needs to develop an understanding of the process that their parent leaves and comes back; this is obvious to us as adults, but not so obvious to children.

Every effort will be made by the key person to give feedback to the parent when they return, but where this is not possible, another member of staff will give feedback on behalf of the key person. Parents may also phone in during the initial separation period to check on their child's well-being, or request a call from their key person.

Children will not be left to cry for long periods. If a child cannot be comforted or distracted, then the parent/carer will be asked to come back to the nursery and the settling plan revisited.