



Transition & Settling-in Policy

The Montessori approach understands that each child and family is unique and will approach transitions in different ways. This means that different strategies will be used to support children and their parent/carers through times of transition. We aim to assist children within the nursery achieve a smooth transition whether it be into nursery, within the nursery or when they start a new setting such as school.

A high quality early years experience provides a firm foundation on which to build future academic, social and emotional success. Key to this is ensuring continuity between all settings and that, children's social, emotional and educational needs are addressed appropriately. Transition should be seen as a process, not an event, and should be planned for and discussed with children and parents. Settings should communicate information which will secure continuity of experience for the child between settings.

EYFS (revised): Key themes & commitments:

- Children learn best when they are healthy, safe & secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. (EYFS 3.1)
- Each child must be assigned a key person. Their role 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 & build a relationship with their parents. (EYFS 3.26)
- ...Providers must enable a regular two-way flow of information with parents and /or carers, and between providers, if a child is attending more than one setting... (EYFS 3.67)

Effective Practices

Staff

Transitions within the nursery

- All children, parents and carers are welcomed personally by staff. It is hoped that they *feel* valued in the nursery. *Oaklea* encourages informal discussions, dialogue and questions between staff and parents.
- Staff acknowledge parents' fundamental role in providing a secure attachment base and as their child's primary educator. They recognise that parents' involvement is crucial to their child's learning and development.
- *Oaklea* acknowledges that most children will be affected by transition at some time at nursery. Staff will *always* lovingly support a child who is upset. They will always inform parents of these events and facilitate dialogue on how best to mutually support children through these episodes.
- *Oaklea* prepares children for settling into nursery in different ways. In some instances, it may be appropriate to undertake a home visit

(SenCo, key person). *Oaklea* writes to parents at the time of confirmation with guidance on how best to prepare their child for nursery (see attached 'welcome letter'). This *may* include a nursery visit to make contact with the key person.

- Staff facilitate children's engagement in hands-on activities which will absorb them in order to help them settle more quickly at nursery.
- The key person plays a particular role in settling children into the setting. In certain circumstances, the key person may change in response to children's wishes and needs. However, as children settle in nursery, most staff will be involved with all the children's learning in a way that complements the vertically grouped nursery.
- All staff use certain phrasing and language as stated in the attached 'welcome letter'. This helps to build trust as they are the phrases suggested to parents.
- Staff empathise with and find ways to support parents who find their children's transitions difficult.

Transition to other settings including school

- *Oaklea* prepares children for transition to other settings.
- We support parents with the admissions process to school by providing information about the schools and their admission policies and application forms to be completed. We signpost families to the ECC Admissions team and support directly and indirectly as required.
- Through communication with parents, we identify which schools children will be attending and we obtain parental permission to share relevant information.
- We provide a book list and some other helpful suggestions for parents to use in preparing their child for transition at home.
- We provide information about the school using their prospectus, photographs of the setting and staff, examples of uniform and any other information they feel is appropriate.
- We encourage the children to participate in small group activities using story books, role play with uniform and puppets to give children the opportunity to express any concerns, share experiences of their visits and to become familiar with the new language associated with attending school
- We liaise with receiving schools and invite staff to meet the Key Person and the child in the setting or where appropriate visit the school with the child
- We put up displays of all relevant information, highlighting what we do.
- We liaise with the area SENCo as appropriate to provide any additional support for individual children.
- *Oaklea* endeavours to make contact with every setting a child moves on to in order aid their transition.

- The 'transition box' will be used with children who are facing transition to school.

Parents

- Prospective parents are encouraged to prepare their children for transition to nursery in ways that are detailed in the 'welcome letter'
- Parents' needs during transition are understood. They are encouraged to share their concerns with staff in a spirit of openness and respect.
- Parents are informed of and encouraged to celebrate their children's achievements in settling in and transition situations
- Parents are encouraged to say 'goodbye' to their child on every occasion, before quickly departing. This helps build trust. It is suggested that in the early days they wait until their child is actively involved with hands on activities before leaving.
- *It is vital that parents use the opportunity at the start of the session to disclose any information that might affect their child's wellbeing at nursery. This includes: the child's health, accidents that have occurred in the last 48 hours, changing circumstances at home etc.*

Children

- Children will manage their own transition needs differently. Their needs will determine the resources that are provided for them to choose, which may include:
 - Transitional role play activities
 - More opportunities for outdoor activities
 - Caring for animals
 - 'Easy' practical activities, where they feel less challenged
 - Quiet 'communication friendly' spaces
 - Use of the persona doll
- Children are encouraged to talk about their experiences – at times this will include the experience of transition.
- Children are often best placed to support one another. This is encouraged and facilitated where appropriate.