Key Person and Settling-In Policy

Statement of Intent

Little Monsters Day Nursery recognises the importance of secure, caring, and consistent relationships in supporting children's emotional wellbeing, learning, and development.

We operate a Key Person system in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the expectations of **Ofsted**.

We believe that children settle best when they form strong attachments with a named practitioner who understands their individual needs and works in partnership with their family.

Our aim is to ensure that every child feels safe, valued, confident, and supported within our setting.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Support children to develop secure emotional attachments.
- Promote children's wellbeing and confidence.
- Build strong partnerships with parents/carers.
- Support smooth transitions into the setting.
- Ensure each child's individual needs are met.
- Provide continuity of care.

The Role of the Key Person

Each child is allocated a named Key Person before they start attending the setting.

The Key Person is responsible for:

- Welcoming the child and family into the setting.
- Supporting the child during the settling-in process.
- Developing a secure, trusting relationship with the child.
- Working in partnership with parents to support wellbeing, care, and learning.
- Providing consistent emotional support and reassurance.
- Being the main point of contact for parents.
- Liaising with other professionals or carers involved with the child, where appropriate.

- Maintaining and updating learning and development records.
- Sharing progress regularly with parents.
- Encouraging positive relationships within their key group.
- Supporting children during transitions.

A Co-Key Person is also allocated to ensure continuity of care in the absence of the main Key Person.

Partnership with Parents

We recognise parents as children's first and most important educators.

We work closely with families to:

- Share information about children's routines, interests, and needs.
- Agree personalised care and learning plans.
- Exchange information about learning at home and in the setting.
- Review progress regularly.
- Support transitions and changes.

Open and respectful communication is always encouraged.

Settling-In Procedure

We understand that starting nursery is a significant transition for children and families. We provide a flexible and supportive settling-in process.

Before Admission

Before a child starts, we:

- Provide parents with written information, policies, and prospectus.
- Offer visits to the setting.
- Arrange individual meetings with families.
- Allocate a Key Person.
- Gather information about the child's background, routines, and preferences.
- Complete registration documentation.

Settling-In Process

When a child begins attending, we:

- Explain the settling-in process to parents.
- Agree a personalised plan with each family.
- Encourage parents/carers to stay with their child initially.
- Gradually increase the child's time independently.
- Adapt the process to suit each child's needs.
- Provide reassurance and emotional support.
- Maintain regular communication with parents.

Parents are encouraged to remain during initial sessions and gradually withdraw as their child becomes more confident.

Supporting Individual Needs

We recognise that:

- Some children need longer to settle than others.
- Younger children may require extended support.
- Children returning after absence may need re-settling.
- Children with additional needs may require personalised arrangements.

Settling-in plans are flexible and reviewed regularly.

Indicators of Successful Settling

A child is considered settled when they:

- Seek comfort from their Key Person.
- Show confidence in the environment.
- Engage in play and activities.
- Interact positively with peers.
- Separate from parents with increasing confidence.
- Demonstrate emotional security.

Staff continue to monitor wellbeing even after children appear settled.

Goodbye and Separation

We encourage parents to:

- Say goodbye clearly and positively.
- Reassure their child they will return.

- Avoid leaving without informing the child.

We do not believe that leaving a distressed child to cry supports emotional development. Staff will always comfort and reassure children.

If a child remains distressed, settling arrangements will be reviewed with parents.

Children's Records and Progress

Within the first 4–6 weeks of attendance, the Key Person will:

- Begin the child's learning and development record.
- Carry out baseline observations.
- Share initial progress with parents.
- Agree next steps in learning.

Records reflect learning both at home and in the setting.

Safeguarding and Wellbeing

The Key Person plays a key role in safeguarding by:

- Knowing children well.
- Identifying changes in behaviour.
- Supporting emotional needs.
- Reporting concerns in line with safeguarding procedures.

Children's safety and welfare are always prioritised.

Roles and Responsibilities

Manager

- Ensures effective implementation of the Key Person system.
- Monitors practice and compliance.
- Supports staff training.

Staff

- Follow this policy.
- Build positive relationships.
- Support children's emotional wellbeing.
- Communicate with families.

Parents/Carers

- Share relevant information.
- Participate in the settling-in process.
- Work in partnership with staff.

Monitoring and Review

- This policy is reviewed annually.
- Feedback from parents and staff is considered.
- Practice is evaluated to improve outcomes for children.
- Changes in legislation are reflected in updates.

Policy Adoption

Name of Setting: Little Monsters Day Nursery
Date Adopted:
Signed: _____
Role of Signatory: _____