

Settling in

The first few weeks when your child is settling into the preschool is of paramount importance to their later happiness within the setting. Each child is an individual and therefore where some will quickly adapt to their new surroundings and change of routine, others may take longer to feel comfortable and secure.

Below you will find a few guidelines to help prepare and support your child through this transition.

Parent's promise:

1. Recognise that separation anxiety is a healthy emotion. It's your child's way of saying you are my safe base and I need to develop confidence in alternative carers. By acknowledging that separation anxiety can cause problems, you can prepare for the event and turn it into an adventure.
2. Visit the setting with your child prior to their start date, so they can familiarise themselves with the setting and the staff team.
3. Familiarise yourself with the preschool's daily routine (see page 7 on parent start up information pack) and activities (see our facebook page for regular updates) so you can talk your child through what will be happening and when you will be collecting them.
4. Read stories with your child about starting preschool.
5. Talk to your child in a positive way about any concerns they may have. For example if they are worried about needing the toilet say "You can tell _____ (keyworkers name) if you need the toilet". Therefore positively telling them what they can do to eliminate the concern, whilst familiarising them with someone from the preschool.
6. Prepare for the separation by leaving them for short periods with extended family members or close friends.
7. Appear confident, cheery and positive at all times whilst referring to the preschool, as children can be quick to pick up on your feelings and apprehension.
8. Don't be tempted to slip away, as this can lead to your child becoming anxious. Make sure your child knows when you are leaving and exactly when you will be back. Some parents prefer to just leave their child for a shorter period initially, whilst others prefer to see how it goes, through telephone updates from the staff.
9. If you are concerned about the transition period, please feel free to speak to your child's key worker.

Staff promise:

1. We will assign a key worker to your child, who will act as a link between parents and the setting. You can choose to have a telephone call or home visit from this person, before your child's start date.
2. We will familiarise ourselves with each child's start up documentation so we have a better understanding of their needs prior to them starting with us.
3. We will work with you to agree how you would like to settle your child in. For many children this will just consist of staff providing telephone updates on how their child is getting on, however some parents prefer to leave their children for shorter periods initially.
4. We **will** contact you if your child appears upset or distressed throughout the session so we can agree how to manage this.

5. We will keep you up to date on your child's progress/ any concerns etc verbally each session and during parent's meetings, where your child's learning diary can be viewed.

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