



Hopton school house Playgroup and OOSC policies

4.1 Key Person and Settling-In Policy

Policy Statement

At Hopton school house, we recognise that children thrive when they feel safe, secure, valued, and emotionally supported. We understand that starting at an early year's setting can be a significant transition for children and their families.

We are committed to providing a welcoming, nurturing, and inclusive environment where strong relationships are developed between children, families, and practitioners. The Key Person system is central to helping children build secure attachments, develop confidence, and settle successfully into the setting.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Support children to settle happily and confidently into the setting.
- Promote children's emotional wellbeing and sense of belonging.
- Establish positive partnerships with parents and carers.
- Ensure every child has a designated Key Person.
- Support continuity of care and learning.
- Meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Legal Framework

This policy is based on:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice
- Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

The Key Person Approach



Hopton school house Playgroup and OOSC policies

In accordance with the EYFS, every child will be assigned a Key Person when they start at the setting.

The Key Person plays an important role in helping children feel safe, secure, and supported whilst building strong relationships with families.

A buddy or secondary key person will also be identified to provide continuity when the Key Person is absent.

Responsibilities of the Key Person

The Key Person is responsible for:

Building Positive Relationships

- Developing warm and trusting relationships with children.
- Helping children feel secure and valued.
- Supporting children's emotional wellbeing.
- Promoting children's confidence and independence.

Working with Parents and Carers

- Acting as the main point of contact for families.
- Sharing information about children's progress and development.
- Supporting communication between home and the setting.
- Encouraging parental involvement in children's learning.

Supporting Learning and Development

- Observing children's learning and development.
- Completing assessments and records.
- Planning experiences based on children's interests and needs.
- Monitoring progress across the EYFS areas of learning.

Safeguarding and Welfare

- Monitoring children's wellbeing.
- Identifying concerns and reporting them appropriately.
- Supporting children's personal care needs.
- Promoting children's health and safety.



Hopton school house Playgroup and OOSC policies

Supporting Transitions

- Helping children settle into the setting.
- Supporting transitions between rooms where applicable.
- Assisting children when moving on to school or other settings.

Responsibilities of the Manager

The Manager will:

- Allocate Key Persons appropriately.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Key Person system.
- Support practitioners in their Key Person role.
- Ensure continuity arrangements are in place.
- Promote strong partnerships with families.

Settling-In Procedures

We recognise that every child is unique and may require different levels of support when settling into the setting.

Settling-in arrangements will be flexible and tailored to individual needs.

Before a Child Starts

Prior to admission, the setting will:

- Arrange visits where possible.
- Provide information about the setting.
- Gather information about the child's routines, interests, preferences, and needs.
- Introduce the child and family to their Key Person.
- Discuss any concerns regarding separation or transition.

Parents will be encouraged to share information that will help staff support their child effectively.

Initial Visits

Children and families may be invited to attend introductory visits before their start date.



Hopton school house Playgroup and OOSC policies

These visits provide opportunities to:

- Explore the environment.
- Meet staff and children.
- Become familiar with routines.
- Develop confidence and familiarity.

Settling Children into the Setting

The Key Person will:

- Welcome the child and family.
- Build a trusting relationship.
- Provide reassurance and comfort.
- Support the child in exploring the environment.
- Observe the child's emotional wellbeing.
- Communicate regularly with parents.

Children will be encouraged to settle at their own pace.

Separation from Parents and Carers

We understand that separation can sometimes be difficult for both children and parents.

Staff will:

- Respond sensitively to children's emotions.
- Offer reassurance and comfort.
- Distract and engage children in activities where appropriate.
- Communicate honestly with parents about how their child is settling.

Parents are encouraged to say goodbye clearly and positively rather than leaving without informing their child.

Supporting Children's Emotional Wellbeing

Practitioners will:

- Provide comfort and reassurance.
- Acknowledge children's feelings.
- Maintain predictable routines.



Hopton school house Playgroup and OOSC policies

- Encourage positive relationships.
- Create a welcoming and nurturing environment.

Children's emotional needs will always be prioritised.

Children with Additional Needs

Some children may require additional support when settling.

Where appropriate, the setting will:

- Work closely with parents and carers.
- Consult with other professionals.
- Develop personalised settling-in plans.
- Make reasonable adjustments to support inclusion.

Particular consideration will be given to children with SEND, medical needs, or previous adverse experiences.

Monitoring Settling-In Progress

The Key Person will monitor how well a child is settling by considering:

- Emotional wellbeing.
- Engagement in activities.
- Relationships with adults and peers.
- Confidence and independence.
- Attendance patterns.

Any concerns will be discussed with parents and appropriate support identified.

Transitions Within the Setting

Where children move between rooms or groups, the setting will:

- Plan transitions carefully.
- Introduce new practitioners gradually.
- Share information between staff.
- Support children through familiar routines.



Hopton school house Playgroup and OOSC policies

Transition to School

The Key Person will support children preparing for school by:

- Promoting independence skills.
- Sharing information with receiving schools where appropriate.
- Supporting children's confidence.
- Helping children discuss and understand changes.

Parents will be involved throughout the transition process.

Partnership with Parents

We value parents as children's first educators.

The setting will:

- Encourage open communication.
- Share information regularly.
- Listen to parental views and concerns.
- Work collaboratively to support children's wellbeing and development.

Strong partnerships help children feel secure and supported.

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Learning and Development Policy
- Equality and Inclusion Policy
- Transitions Policy
- Confidentiality Policy