**Transitions**

**(Including settling in)**

| EYFS: 1.16-1.18, 2.1-2.18, 3.1 |
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At Ashridge day nursery we recognise that young children will experience many transitions in their early years; some of these planned and some unplanned. We are sensitive to the impact of such changes to children and this policy sets out the ways in which we support children going through these transitions.

Some examples of transitions that young children and babies may experience are:

* Starting nursery
* Moving between different rooms within the nursery
* Starting school or moving nurseries
* Family breakdowns
* New siblings
* Moving home
* Death of a family member or close friend
* Death of a family pet.

Staff are trained to observe their key children and to be sensitive to any changes in their behaviour and personality. We respectfully ask that parents\* inform us of any changes in the home environment that may impact on their child so staff can be aware of the reasons behind any potential changes in the child’s behaviour.

**Starting nursery**

We recognise that starting nursery may be difficult for some children and their families. All our staff know about the importance of building strong attachments with children. They are trained to recognise the different stages of attachment and use this knowledge to support children and families settling into the nursery.

Our settling in procedure includes:

* The first “settling in” session allows parents to meet with their child’s key person and staff in the room, share their child’s interests, dietary needs and usual routine and is the first opportunity to build the relationship between nursery and home.
* Further settling in sessions are offered to support the needs of each child and their families
* Photos and verbal handovers are shared to ensure families are kept up to date as their child settles

**Moving rooms procedure**

When a child is ready to move to a different room in the nursery, we follow the process set out below and work with the parents to ensure this is a seamless process in which the child is fully supported at all stages. This will include handover meetings between the existing key person, new key person and parents and:

* Basing on the individual needs of the child and when they are ready to move based on age/stage of development
* Enabling the child to spend short sessions in their new room prior to the permanent move to so they feel comfortable in their new surroundings with their key person initially, so they have a familiar person present
* Keeping parents informed of all visits and the outcomes of these sessions e.g. through photographs, discussions or diary entries
* Only transitioning the child when they feel settled and ready to move. If a child requires more support this will be discussed between the key person, parent, manager and room leader of the new room to agree how and when this will happen. This may include moving their key person with them on a temporary basis.

**Starting school or moving childcare providers**

Starting school is an important transition and some children may feel anxious about the move. We will do all we can to facilitate a smooth transition and minimise any potential stresses. This following process relates to children going to school. However wherever possible, we will adapt this process to support children moving to another childcare provider e.g. childminder or another nursery.

* We provide a variety of resources that relate to the school, e.g. uniform to dress up in, a role play area set up as a school classroom, photographs of all the schools the children may attend and of the teachers. This helps the children to become familiar with this new concept and will aid the transition
* Build relationships with local schools where possible
* We invite school representatives into the nursery, where possible
* Where possible we plan visits to the school with the key person. Each key person will talk about the school with their key children who are due to move to school and discuss what they think may be different and what may be the same. They will talk through any concerns the child may have and initiate activities or group discussions relating to any issues to help children overcome these
* Where needed we complete reports to share with schools, or offer a telephone consultation to share the children’s development

**Other early years providers**

Where children are attending other early years settings or are cared for by a childminder, we will work with them to share relevant information about children’s development. Where a child is brought to nursery or collected from nursery by a childminder, we will ensure that key information is being provided to the child’s parent by providing the information directly to the parent via telephone.

**Family breakdowns**

We support families going through separation by working closely with the parents to establish the most effective transition and support. We understand that this can be a difficult time and support a child’s emotional well-being and report any significant changes in behaviour to the parent. Parents are signposted to relevant services and organisations for support for the whole family, where required.

**Moving home and new siblings**

We recognise that both these events may have an impact on a child. Normally, parents will have advance notice of these changes and we ask parents to let us know about these events so we can support the child to be prepared. The key person will spend time talking to the child and providing activities that may help the child to act out any worries they have, e.g. through role play, stories and discussions.

**Bereavement**

We recognise that children and their families may experience grief and the loss of close family members or friends or their family pets whilst with us in the nursery. We understand that this is not only a difficult time for families, but it may also be a confusing time for young children, especially if they have little or no understanding of why their family is upset and why this person or pet is no longer around.

We aim to support both the child and their family and will adapt the following procedure to suit their individual needs and family preferences:

* We ask that if there is a loss of a family member or close friend that the parents inform the nursery as soon as they feel able to. This will enable us to support both the child and the family wherever we can and helps us to understand any potential changes in behaviour of a child who may be grieving themselves
* The key person and/or the manager will talk with the family to ascertain what support is needed or wanted from the nursery. This may be an informal discussion or a meeting away from the child to help calm a potentially upsetting situation
* The child may need extra support or one-to-one care during this difficult time. We will adapt our staffing arrangements so the child is fully supported by the most appropriate member of staff on duty, where possible the child’s key person
* We will be as flexible as possible to adapt the sessions the child and family may need during this time.

We will adapt the above procedure as appropriate when a family pet dies to help the child to understand their loss and support their emotions through this time.

We also recognise that there may also be rare occasions when the nursery team is affected by a death of a child or member of staff. This will be a difficult time for the staff team, children and families. Below are some agencies that may be able to offer further support and counselling if this occurs.

**The Samaritans:** [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org) 116 123

**Priory:** [www.priorygroup.com](https://www.priorygroup.com/) 0800 691 1481

**Child Bereavement UK:** [www.childbereavementuk.org](http://www.childbereavementuk.org) 01494 568 900

**Cruse Bereavement Care:** <https://www.cruse.org.uk> 0808 808 1677

**British Association of Counselling:** [www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk)

**SANDS:** [www.sands.org.uk](http://www.uk-sands.org)

If parents feel that their child requires additional support because of any changes/transitions in their life, we ask that you speak to the nursery manager and the key person to enable this effective support to be put into place.

*\* For the purpose of this publication the term ‘parents’ will be used to describe all types of primary caregivers, such as biological and adoptive parents, foster carers and guardians.*

| **This policy was adopted on** | **Signed on behalf of the nursery** |
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| *March 2024* | *Lisa Hubbard* |