



Bo-Peep Corner Pre-School Playgroup

Settling In Policy

PRINCIPLES

“Settling-in is an interim stage in the transition between home and the outside world. Children’s whole future attitude to new experiences could be affected by how this situation is managed. Due care and attention must be paid to a child’s need for time to settle in to any new setting” NIPPA (1996).

STATEMENT OF INTENT

At Bo-peep Corner Pre-school Playgroup, we aim to ensure that children feel safe and secure in the absence of their parents/carers. For many, it may be the first real contact that they have with children of their own age and also the first time that they have been parted from their parent/carer for any length of time.

We will therefore endeavour to make the settling-in process a positive experience for children and will work closely in partnership with parents/carers to ensure this is achieved.

We recognise that in some cases there may be particular difficulties experienced by children, parents/carers and staff during the settling-in period. All children are individuals and we plan to meet their individual needs and resolve any difficulties quickly and smoothly.

PROCEDURES

To help achieve this we will ensure that:

- Prior to enrolment, exchange of information with parents/carers will be offered at an Open Day and through our Information Booklet and registration form.
- If necessary, a home visit may be arranged to allow the playgroup supervisor to gain more insight into a child’s background and needs.
- Parents/carers and their children are encouraged to visit the playgroup before admission to familiarise themselves with the group setting.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to provide playgroup staff with information on their child’s likes/dislikes, interests etc.
- Our centre offers phased/staggered settling-in, particularly for younger children.

- Parents/carers and their children are encouraged to get to know the key worker.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to stay until the child feels comfortable and then to leave the child for short periods of time. This may be for five or ten minutes or half an hour, it depends on the child. We will always reassure the child that the parent/carer will be back.
- When a child has familiarised his/herself with the staff and surroundings and still is unwilling to let the adult go, we may advise you to leave the child and go quickly at the door. The child may be distressed but in most cases the tears stop quickly. We never allow a child to remain distressed for long and will telephone the parent/carer if they do not settle within a reasonable period of time.
- Staff will provide support and encouragement to parents/carers during the settling-in period should the transition be difficult.
- If a child does not settle into playgroup within a reasonable period of time, it may be that he/she is not ready for it. Different children mature at different rates so we may advise that, rather than have the child distressed, it may be better to try again at a later date. A few months can make a tremendous difference!
- We always stress that children should be collected on time no matter how confident they may appear.

There are many ways for us to help a child settle in. It may be sitting listening to a story on someone's knee, eating a few Cheerios while we are making necklaces, or going home happy with their parent/carer after just an hour of playgroup - whatever it may be, we are always mindful that the child must be happy, feel safe with us and enjoy themselves to get the most benefit from our playgroup. All our staff are loving, caring and give plenty of support to every child in playgroup in order to help each child achieve this.