

Chollerton Pre-School Ltd

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Chollerton Pre-school **Transition and Settling In Policy**

At Chollerton preschool, we recognise that young children manage changes in their lives on a daily basis, some of these are planned transitions and some are unplanned. We are sensitive to the impact of such changes to children and this policy sets out ways in which we support children going through these transitions.

When small changes are supported by responsive, knowledgeable adults, children will gradually discover that the world is a safe and predictable place. As strong and competent learners, this will stand them in good stead when faced with the challenge of experiencing the bigger changes that will inevitably come their way.

Young children are faced with several transitional changes before they reach the age of 5. Some examples of transitions that young children and babies may experience are -

- Starting nursery
- Starting school or a new setting
- Family breakdowns
- New siblings
- Moving home
- Death of a family member or close friend
- Death of a family pet

Children will respond in different ways, some with confidence, others with more apprehension, but so many adjustments are likely to have profound and long lasting effects if the importance of maintaining coherence and continuity is not well understood. Children's confidence will be enhanced when changes happen gradually and when time is prioritised to support these transitions with sensitive planning and preparation. 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 preschool

We recognise that starting preschool may be difficult for some children and their families. Practitioners and especially the child's key person are sensitive to this and will work closely with families to meet each child's unique needs.

We value the parent as the child's first educator and would ask that you work with the key person to complete the 'Getting to know you book'. We would like to invite parent's to supply photographs of their child and their family to display in the preschool or to make an 'All about me' book that will help your child to keep home in mind and show families that we value them in our preschool.

We have a clear welcome procedure

After receiving your completed enrolment form, we will send out a 'Welcome Pack'. This will include a welcome letter confirming your sessions and start date along with a parent's guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage child's allocated key person to complete the 'Getting to know you booklet'. We allocate a key person to each child before your child starts at preschool based on the sessions that you have chosen. The key person welcomes and looks after your child on their first session and throughout the settling in process. If the child displays a stronger attachment to another member of staff then we will look to see if it is possible to transfer them to a new key person.

Daily Transition

Children are allocated key workers to help support the child whilst they are at preschool, however there are other practitioners that can care for your children throughout the week.

Transitional items or comforters -

We as a setting understand the importance of transitional items, they can be an object which reminds or comforts them in times of separation. When a child leaves the main carer they can become upset and this item compensates this. Taking this object away can cause distress and upset for the child, so we do encourage and support transitional items at the same time with providing security of a key person for them to feel comfortable within the setting so explore and become engaged in play.

Ideas to help children play but still feel comforted -

- Children could bring special bags in to put there objects in
- They could have a box in the room as well as the cloakroom, where they could put their objects so they are still in sight.
- Reduce the amount of transitional items and have one 'special' one that is easily transported.

Moving from preschool into school -

Chollerton preschool aims to maintain good relationships, built on professional respect, with all of our local school, we share the same building. Staff from school are invited to visit your child within our preschool room during the summer term prior to transition to make the key person in the receiving school aware of the likely emotional needs of the child. We have activities / sessions where we join class 1. Break times are often spent outside with the whole school.

Other early year's providers -

Where children are attending other early year's 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 preschool or collected from preschool 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 email or telephone.

Family breakdowns -

We recognise that when parents separate it can be a difficult situation for all concerned. We will work closely with parents / carers and the preschool will always act in the best interest of the child.

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 this may be a very difficult time for children and their families and we will offer support to all concerned should this be required.

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

Settling in -

Chollerton preschool aims to work in partnership with parents / carers to settle the child into the group environment to ensure they feel safe, secure and comfortable with staff and their surroundings. We aim to give consideration to the individual needs of children and families and give confidence to parents, enabling them to feel comfortable that the needs of their child will be met.

Before a child starts to attend Chollerton preschool, we will use a variety of ways to engage with the children and their family by offering them a visit to preschool. We will use this visit to provide his / her parents / carers with information about the preschool such as the preschool policies and procedures, activities available within the setting, information days and evenings and individual meetings with parents.

Procedure

- A key person will be allocated to your child on the basis of the sessions that you have enrolled your child for and we will invite them and their parents / carer for some stay and play sessions providing the parents / carers with the opportunity to complete any outstanding enrolment information including the child's 'Getting to Know you Booklet'
- When a child attends their Stay and Play sessions, your key-person will explain the process of settling-in with his / her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting. We do have an expectation that the parent / carer will stay for most of the Stay and Play session in order to gather as much information about the child as possible and to provide the child with a familiar adult
- Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be on hand to re- settle them
- Your child's key person will welcome you and look after the child and his / her parents at the child's first session and during the settling-in process
- On their first session children will be introduced to the staff members, to other children and shown around the rooms in the setting.
- Parents will be encouraged to say goodbye to their child, if the child and parent feel comfortable with this, and explain that they will be coming back at the end of the session.

Practitioners are mindful to treat every child as an individual and reiterate to parents that every child is different and will, therefore settle at different rates. Some children will settle more readily than others, but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not necessarily ready to be left. The preschool reserves the right not to accept a child into the preschool without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with two year old children as we don't believe that they will be able to learn and gain the best from the preschool.

Regular discussion will take place with parents around their child's progress and how their child is settling in. These will be based on relationships with staff and peers, participation in activities, familiarity with routines and the whereabouts of resources and equipment.

During this settling-in period, the practitioners are able to build up a picture of the child, using information that is gathered through communication with parents and observing the child. They are able to see what the child's interests are, their stage of development and how we can best support them through this particular time. Practitioners are aware of how to accommodate children's needs and the settling-in period is organised around children's home routines. Parents are kept informed about how their child is settling and are given adequate notice if the settling in period is to be extended.

Within the first six weeks of starting, the key person will use the information they have gathered from the parents, the completed 'Getting to Know you booklet' and their observations of the child to complete their Early Assessment Review. This will then be discussed with parents about their child will be supported in the preschool along with ideas about how they can support them at home.

At the end of each term, the key person will summarise the child learning through a progress summary or a Two year check.

If you have any questions regarding this transition and settling in policy, then please speak to a member of staff.

This Policy has been agreed by the Chollerton preschool committee

Signed by Pre-School Manager

Signed on behalf of the committee

This Policy was reviewed in June 2023