

Sacred Heart Pre-school

Heys Street
Thornton-Cleveleys
FY54HL

Tel: 07835711921
EY 318019

**(22) Key Person (EYFS 3.27)**

**Policy statement**

We strongly believe that children experience the smoothest transition when they connect with a designated key person. This individual develops a deep understanding of both the child and their parents, catering to their unique requirements. Research underscores the benefits of this key person approach, fostering not only the child's growth and parents' confidence, but also staff commitment, resulting in a joyful and dedicated environment.

Our primary goal is for children to find enjoyment and happiness within our setting. Establishing a secure and harmonious bond with our staff is equally important. We aim for parents to trust in their children's well-being and consider themselves active partners in our setting. By meticulously considering the specific needs and situations of each child and their family, we strive to create an inviting atmosphere where children acclimate swiftly and effortlessly.

The role of the key person is outlined in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each child is assigned a key person, with a structured model in place to develop effective and positive relationships that align with these principles.

**Procedures**

* We allocate a key person before the child starts.
* The key person is responsible for:
* Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into our setting.
* Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
* Working with the parents to plan and deliver personalised care for the child’s well-being and learning.
* Acting as the primary point of contact for the parents of their key children.
* Keeping up to date developmental records and sharing information on a regular basis with the child’s parents to keep those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.
* Having links with other carers involved with the child and co-ordinating the sharing of appropriate information about the child’s development with those carers.
* Encouraging positive relationships between children in their key group, spending time with them as a group each day.
* We promote the role of the key person as the child’s primary carer in our setting, and as the basis for establishing relationships with other adults and children.

*Settling-in*

* Before a child starts to attend our setting, we use a variety of ways to provide their parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), displays about activities available within the setting, visits to the setting, stay and plays and individual meetings with parents.
* During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and their parents to visit the setting – which we call a ‘Stay and Play’ session. Additionally, if the child is over the age of two – they are invited to come for one free ‘settling in’ session.
* The key person welcomes and looks after the child and their parents at the child's first session and during the settling in process.
* When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling in with their parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
* If a child struggles with the transition – we may suggest that a parent, carer or close relative, will stay for some of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child; increasing this time as and when the child is able to cope.
* Younger children may 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.
* We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person for example, the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
* When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
* We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others, but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left. We do **not** believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the setting.
* We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left.
* Within the first couple of weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to begin to create their child's learning journey.

*The progress check at age two*

* The key person carries out the progress check at age two in accordance with any local procedures that are in place and referring to the guidance *‘Progress Check at Age Two’ (2022)* [*https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/1076430/Progress\_check\_at\_age\_two\_non-statutory\_guidance\_for\_the\_early\_years\_foundation\_stage\_.pdf*](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1076430/Progress_check_at_age_two_non-statutory_guidance_for_the_early_years_foundation_stage_.pdf)
* The progress check aims to review the child’s development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their child’s development and also aligns with the two-year check that a health visitor conducts when your child is two. You can give the two-year progress check to your health visitor.
* Within the progress check, the key person will note areas where the child is progressing well and identify areas where progress is less than expected.
* The progress check will describe the actions that will be taken by us to address any developmental concerns (including working with other professionals where appropriate) as agreed with the parent(s).
* The key person will plan activities to meet the child’s needs within the setting and will support parents to understand the child’s needs in order to enhance their development at home.

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**Policy adopted/implemented by SACRED HEART PRE-SCHOOL in:**

August 2023

**Date to be reviewed:**

August 2024

**Signed on behalf of management team:**

Chelsea Porter (Deputy) – 24/8/23

**Reviewed by:**

Hannah Curtis (Manager) - Sept 2024