Little Buds believes that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with staff in the absence of their parents. They should recognise other adults as a source of authority, help and friendship. They should be able to share with their parents afterwards the new learning experiences enjoyed in the pre-school. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the setting.

We aim to make the setting a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

The procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children who are in settings.

**Little Buds Admission Criteria**

1. Child has returned to Little Buds for their pre-school year (only 6 places available)
2. Child has turned 2 Years and 10 months old between 1st July- 1st Feb
3. Child has turned 2 years and 10 months
4. Child has parents who work in Mount St Catherine’s P.S or St Catherine’s College
5. Child has older siblings in Mount St Catherine’s P.S
6. Child has no siblings
7. Child has had siblings previously in Little Buds Playgroup
8. Child has siblings in other primary schools

**Procedures**

* Children will be notified if there is a place for them approximately 6 weeks before they start.
* Places cannot be booked for after Christmas unless in extreme circumstances.
* We allocate a key person before the child starts.
* The key person is responsible for the induction of the family and for settling the child into our setting.
* The key person offers unconditional regard for the child and is non-judgmental.
* The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child’s well-being, care and leaning.
* The key person acts as the key contact for the parents and has links with other carers involved with the child, such as a childminder, and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child’s development with those carers.
* A key person is responsible for developmental records and for 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.
* The key person encourages positive relationships between children in her/his 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 staff and children.

**Settling-in to Little Buds Playgroup**

* Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our procedures and policies), displays about activities available within the setting, information days and evenings and individual meetings with parents.
* We encourage parents to take the child for visits to the playgroup before they start. These should last 15-20mins and how many of these will depend on the child. The parent will stay for each visit. When the child turns 3, parents will then be given the option to leave the child for an hour to see how they react.
* We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend; the key person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her 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 his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
* Young children 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 may request you to collect your child early in the first few weeks of attendance if they are having trouble settling in.
* 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. This is especially the case with very young children.
* Within the first four to six weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to start to create their child's record of achievement.

**Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the management team to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

This policy was adopted by Little Buds management team.

Signed: …………………………………………………………………………………..

(on behalf of the management team)

Position: …………………………………………………………………………………..

Date: …………………………………………………………………………………..

Reviewed on:

Date: ……………… Signed: …………………………………………..

Date: ……………… Signed: …………………………………………..

Date: ……………… Signed: …………………………………………