



SETTLING IN POLICY

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Next review date	September 2028

Settling In Policy

AIMS:

- To enable children to feel secure, confident and happy, in order to make the most of all learning opportunities.
- To ensure families feel welcomed, valued and confident and that links between home and school are established and strengthened.
- To ensure this difficult time will become a very positive experience for all of us. Our teams are highly experienced at helping children settle in and quickly adapt to daily life in our school.

WE BELIEVE THE SETTLING IN PERIOD IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:

- Children are entering a new environment, and getting used to a large group of people (children and adults).
- It may be the first time they have been away from home/ separated from parents.
- At times, it can be bewildering for some children to have so much choice and to deal with new expectations. Children need to feel confident and secure if they are to be able to learn.
- It enables staff and parents to form a relationship in order that parents feel confident about leaving their children in the setting and sharing relevant information.
- It is an opportunity for parents to observe the practice in the school and learn about our philosophy.

OUR METHODS:

Initial Visit

Before you register your child, parents and children are invited into school to view the setting and meet the appropriate staff. Parents are given the opportunity to talk confidentially if necessary and to discuss any specific concerns they may have.

Registering Your Child

Upon registering, we will write to you to formally offering your child a place, and confirm the sessions requested. Once we have received your deposit securing your place, we will then write to you again confirming the place and arranging the settling in and start dates.

Before The Day

Before starting we will contact you to arrange a few short visits to the school. These visits will enable you to establish a positive relationship with the school team. The first visit will usually take place during the school morning session, when you will have an informal discussion with your child's key worker or room leader. During this time, you will be asked to fill out a 'Getting To Know You' form, giving us as much information about your child as possible. The staff member will discuss with you the curriculum, school routines, ethos and behavior expectations and answer any other questions you may have.

We will then invite you in again for another two short play session in our school morning sessions. This will last no more than an hour and gives your child a chance to take in their new environment and meet some new faces, all whilst having the parent there to support. We will ensure there is a two-way communication between parent and school and request that you provide us with details of your child's requirements and preferences prior to their first day. This means that the staff will then be equipped with the knowledge to ensure they can welcome

and settle your child into school as smoothly as possible. No question is ever a silly question and we encourage families to take an active role in school life.

Key Person Allocation

During this process we will allocate a Key-Person to your child. The key person is chosen according to varying factors- the sessions your child will be attending, parent request, siblings and their previous keyworker, child preference, specific developmental needs and so on. The key person will welcome and look after your child during their first sessions and will continue providing your child with support throughout the settling in process.

The Key Person will learn your child's preferences and any requirements so they feel at home as soon as possible. We consider it paramount for the key worker to provide all the necessary support your child needs to help him/her settle in well. Every child is treated with love, respect and dignity and assisted to settle peacefully within their new environment, particularly, enhancing their confidence

On The Day

We expect that you as the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for part/most of the sessions during the first week, gradually decreasing your time at the setting until your child is comfortable and well settled with us. If the child comes into school without distress parents may be asked to wait in another area of school until the staff are confident that the child is happy and settled.

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 for whatever reason may also need you as parent to be on hand to re-settle them. We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it too distressing to be left.

When you leave your child, we ask that you say goodbye and fully explain to them that you will be coming back later and letting them know when you'll be back. We consider a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their Key-Person. Each child should also be familiar with where things are and be happy to participate in activities.

CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT:

The staff will spend quality time over the first few weeks getting to know your child, observing what makes them happy, and taking note of their preferences. The sharing of information between home and school is invaluable to your Key Person and helps them to plan experiences, activities, opportunities and games for your child. From these discussions and observations they can quickly gain an understanding of your child's personality, likes and dislikes and develop routines which allow them to undertake the experiences, activities, opportunities and games which they find most fun or stimulating.

If parents or staff would like to, a settling in meeting is then called to discuss how your child has progressed in their first weeks and to agree upon their current stages of development. From this meeting parents are asked to continue to share information informally through verbal or written daily communication or structured parents' evenings and school reports. The Hall School strives to create an open door policy that allows parents to share information at any time. We ask that parents inform us of any changes in family circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour, mood or development.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

In the weeks prior to the 'big day' talk to them about the new journey they are about to embark on, mentioning all the new and exciting things they will be doing. Even babies will pick up on the positive messages you give about this transition.

Try not to be too anxious about leaving your child if he or she is crying. Our staff are experienced in dealing with these situations and have strategies to help them. We are always happy to arrange extra settling-in sessions if either you or we feel they would be beneficial. With a smile clearly explain that you will see them later. Aim not to prolong the goodbye, as hard as this maybe, it is better for your child, and they can then focus on getting on with their day.

Children will have so much to take in during their first weeks in the setting so please don't worry if it takes a while for your child to be fully settled into their new routine. A non-exhaustive list of those developmental achievements is listed below:

Knowledge of

Who their keyworker is and the names of all the other adults working in the school.

The layout of the school, in and out of doors

The daily routine e.g. snack time, activities, story time, tidy up time, home time and that they will be collected at the end of the session

That they need to take responsibility for clearing away any equipment that they have used

The school expectations/age-appropriate behaviour rules.

How to use equipment appropriately and to keep it in good condition

Basic hygiene e.g. washing hands, flushing the toilet

Skills

- to be able to cope with being part of a large group
- to be able to find their way around the environment
- to be able to share equipment and adult time
- to be able to express their needs and feelings
- to be able to use the resources appropriately and make choices
- to use appropriate self-help skills e.g. coats, aprons, buttons, toileting, hand-washing etc
- to be able to recognise their name labels by picture and/or name
- to be able to listen and take part in group activities
- to be able to explore different area
- to be aware of other children.

Attitudes

- to be able to let parent/carer go
- to begin to be confident to approach an adult
- to begin to be confident to make their needs known to an adult
- to begin to be confident to try new equipment/experiences
- to begin to be confident to use the whole environment
- to begin to be confident to make choices
- to begin to be confident to explore
- to begin to show a willingness to "have a go" as part of a group
- to begin to show care for themselves, for others, for equipment and for living things
- to enjoy coming to school.