



## **Settling in policy Reviewed November 2015**

### **Guidance for parents**

#### **Our aims**

- **To work closely with you**
- **To support your child in the move from home, family and familiar people, into the new community of the nursery**
- **To help your child make a strong attachment to her or his key person**
- **To help your child feel secure and confident at Free Rangers**
- **To work with you to help your child with any difficulties that might arise.**

#### **Helping your child to settle in.**

We would like to welcome you and your child to Free Rangers Nursery. We hope that you get to know us and have a happy and successful time at the Nursery. We look forward to getting to know you and your child/children.

Children settle into Nursery in lots of different ways. Some children will confidently move into the Nursery Room as soon as they come in and other children may be nervous and anxious about leaving their parent/career. Most children will be somewhere in between.

Please be reassured and try not to worry if your child experiences difficulties – it is a very normal part of a child's development to be anxious, nervous or worried about starting nursery. We also recognise that many parents will find this a difficult and sometimes upsetting process. We hope that we can use our experience to support you and your child in whatever way suits you.

Please remember that we require all parents and careers to help their children settle in. No matter how confident you feel your child is we will insist that you follow our settling in procedures. In our experience, all children benefit greatly when the nursery works closely with the family on settling in.

#### **The settling-in period**

- Different children need different amounts of time to settle in. We recommend that you plan for two weeks to support your child. Some parents have asked us to give an idea of what the process will be like. It is different for every child, but we have given a rough outline of what to expect at the end of this policy. The settling in period is this time when you are here with your child in the Nursery. It is a time for your child

to get to know his or her key person - with the reassurance of having you here too. As the relationship develops, your child will be able to trust that:

- The key person and the other staff in the nursery are able to meet her or his needs
- They can be helpful, comforting and deal positively with any problems
- They can provide interesting experiences which make it worthwhile to come to Nursery.

The settling in process gives **you** a chance to look at:

- What type of nursery this is
- How the staff work
- The kinds of experiences we offer the children.

You will be able to see how we:

- Play with children
- Talk with them
- Have fun together
- Set boundaries for children
- Deal with difficult behavior.

**You are always welcome to ask about how we work and how we deal with particular situations.**

In our experience, settling in takes about two weeks (although it will vary greatly from one child to another). Our aim is to settle children in using a one hour and two hour set session and then during their session times, once they have started. Each child is different and so we are able to alter this pattern slightly if a parent feels it would be better for their child/ children. We want starting nursery to be a positive experience and so will always do what is best for the individual child.

The process often goes like this:

**1. Your child spending time in the Nursery room with you (1 hour session).** During this time, you are available to support your child, to ease the transition for your child from home to Nursery and to help staff get to know your child. At this stage it might be best to be **available** to your child **but not too interesting!** In other words, it might be best to avoid getting deeply involved in your child's play at this time. This allows members of staff to make a judgment about engaging your child in experiences. However, you are the parent and we will support you in judging how to handle this for the best. We are aware that both you and your child may be feeling stress at some points, and your child may not appear to be on "best behaviour". Please don't worry about this – it is all part of the process. As adults, if we try to relax as much as possible and remain confident, this will help the children. During this hour you will also be asked to complete more detailed paperwork and share any important information with your child's key worker.

**2. Your child spending time in the Nursery room whilst you are away (2 hour session).** This means that your child has the opportunity to explore the nursery room and have her or his needs met by the key person and the rest of the staff. This might be for quite a short period of time at first, and then for longer stretches of time. During this time you are welcome to stay in the staff room, or equally you may wish to leave the nursery site and return after the two hours. It is very important that you say clearly to your child that you will be leaving the nursery room. It's tempting to nip out when your child is busy, but if your child turns round a few minutes later to find you have unexpectedly gone, she or he may be really distraught. It is essential that you do not leave the building without talking with your key person first.

**3. Finally, it is for you to judge—with the support of the key person—when your child is ready to be left in the nursery with the staff.** Your child might be very sad at the moment of parting, but if the settling in process has gone well she or he will be able to manage this with the support of the key person and other members of staff. If your child continues to be upset after you have gone, please be reassured that we would contact you and **would not** put your child through an ordeal. It is still important for you to say goodbye to your child clearly, so that your child knows what is going on and can express how he or she feels about it. We ask that you limit the amount of time you stay for at dropping off as in our experience this is easier for the child, but please do ask for support or advice if it will be helpful. It is not uncommon for a child to settle very well into the nursery, and then unexpectedly a few weeks later to find it difficult to come in. This might be for any one of a variety of reasons, and again we will offer our support or help if you would like it.

**5. At any stage of the process**—if you would like to talk to someone, or need ideas, or support, or help ... then please talk to your key person, or the manager. It is best to arrange to do this in a private space – not in front of your child.

*As a staff team, we are committed to working closely and supportively with parents and careers. We look forward to developing a relationship with you.*

This policy was first adopted at a meeting of Free Rangers held on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2011.

Signed:

Role: Owner

Signed:

Role: Nursery Manager