



# Settling in and Transitions Policy

## STATEMENT OF INTENT

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy at Totterdown Preschool and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents/carers to have confidence in both their child's well-being and their role as active partners within the preschool.

### Aim

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

### Methods

- Before a child starts to attend the preschool, we use a variety of ways to provide their parents/carers with information. These include written information (including our information leaflet), displays about preschool activities, information days and evenings and individual meetings with parents and children. We also have a website, Instagram and Facebook page and closed Facebook groups.
- During the half term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and their parents/carers to visit the preschool and stay for part or all of the sessions. We also organise a home visit with two members of staff in order that the child can meet us in their environment. These visit sessions are free of charge.
- When a child starts to attend, we work with their parents/carers to decide on the best way to help the child to settle into Totterdown Preschool.
- We allocate a key person to each child and their family who welcomes and looks after the child and their parents/carers. However, we expect all of our staff to know the child so parents can feel happy talking to anyone.
- The key person becomes the first point of contact for the child and their family and is involved in the child's care and play throughout the sessions. Where possible the key person will continue in that role throughout the child's time at the preschool. If the key person is not available then a senior member of staff will be available.
- Our settling in sessions are designed to increase a child's confidence in their parents/carers leaving them. In the first instance we encourage parents to bring their children with them when looking around so we can see how the child reacts in

a new environment. During our settling in period, we will conduct a home visit and then a few days later invite the child and parent in to play for an hour. Following that the child then comes in on their own for an hour and then if their sessions include staying for lunch, another settling in sessions allows for this to happen too. If this proves successful the child will then start their normal sessions in full, however if a child needs more time to settle either with or without their parents present then this will be arranged.

- All children have different experiences and needs when they start at the preschool and we understand that the parent/carer knows their child best.
- Parents/carers are welcome to telephone at any time during the session to check on their child. Their child's key person will be available at collection time to discuss the child's progress and involvement during the session.
- We discourage the use of dummies in the preschool because of the effect they can have on speech and language skills. However we acknowledge the role that these and other comforters can have in helping a child settle into a new environment; therefore we work with parents/carers to reduce a child's need for these by creating a safe and welcoming environment. As the child becomes settled we remove the comforters to a safe place to be returned at collection time.

## **Transition**

Following a successful introduction to the setting we want the child's next transition to nursery or reception class to be as successful.

- We work with parents/carers to try to place children in groups with others who will be attending the same reception class. This helps children in their first days at the new setting.
- We actively pursue links with other settings; inviting teachers/support staff to visit the children at the preschool in the period leading up to transition.
- When teachers/support staff cannot visit then we offer to meet with them for a professional discussion on the children in our care.
- Before any approaches are made to external bodies the support and consent of the parents is sought.
- During the final half term at the preschool, activities are organised to reflect the transition process, and children are given the opportunity to express any concerns or fears they may have. These are discussed within the activities and shared sensitively with parents/carers.
- The preschool will provide a copy of each child's records to the parents/carers for them to keep. If they wish these can also be shared with the receiving setting. A formal

discussion takes place with the forwarding school and if possible a visit by the new teachers to preschool is encouraged.

Agreed by Claire Childs and Shamira Lumsden

Reviewed on August 2021

#### STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have read this policy and will adhere to it in future practice: